Bolstering Transformation Delivery through Employee Engagement and Innovative Work Behaviour in Malaysia Public Services: A Conceptual Paper

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ABSTRACT

The debut of National Transformation 2050 validates that Malaysia is committed in standing tall amongst the developed nations. Over the years, numerous transformation programs have been introduced to enhance the wellbeing of the nation and its people. Among the agenda is to overcome challenges in public services delivery which include the improvement of services by the counter service team and frontliners as well as the enhancement of reliability and integrity, issues of productivity, and many more. Public servants are an important source of innovation for an organisation that needs to be continuously nurtured. To accelerate the outcome, engagement was reportedly found to be the key enabler for sustainable success in any change or transformational-related event. Fostering employee engagement will nurture many prodigious advantages such as augmenting people's innovative mindset and will greatly enhance the likelihood for a successful transformation program to happen. Along with the derivation of theoretical concepts guided by Social Exchange Theory (SET), the proposed concept is further reinforced through the best practices obtained from developed countries that have adapted best practices in employee engagement and innovation. The critical key area to a developed nation is always the wellbeing of its public services. In shaping Malaysia to be one of the most prominent figures in the future, everyone needs to be a builder.

Keywords: Public Services, Transformation, Engagement, Innovation

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Emerging from a humble beginning, Malaysia is now thriving to stand tall amongst the top countries in the world. The launching of National Transformation 2050 (*Transformasi Nasional 2050)* proves that the

nation is stern in achieving the monumental vision. With every passing moment, Malaysia has embarked on numerous transformation efforts since the day of its independence. The 60-year period of rapid development from the independent day has shown a fruitful endeavour for its people. Inspirited by the great strides made in the last half decade, the government of Malaysia continuously reaffirms its commitment to a vision of growth that is anchored by the prosperity and wellbeing of its people or more commonly known as *rakyat*. The nation has evolved remarkably over the years into a prosperous nation with a strong economy. The outlook for the economy in the first quarter of 2017 seems favourable with expanding economic growth with many prestigious performance indications from the growth of gross domestic product (GDP), increase in private consumption, and healthy streams of fiscal consolidation (Malaysia Economic Monitor, 2017). The country is now bearing a modern economy with a healthy society and is still transforming into an even greater nation.

Looking at the past and present transformation track of Malaysia, the country has set three colossal stepping stones with many gargantuan visions.

1. The New Economic Policy (1971-1990) (NEP) – A great transformation programme that envisioned national unity, harmony and integrity, socio-economic restructuring, and eradicating poverty in the country. The programme called for aggressive improvement of economic status and standard of living for all Malaysians through public facilities, training, physical capital, and access to land. This NEP was initiated under the Second Malaysia Plan (1971-1975) and lasted until the Fifth Malaysia Plan (1986-1990).

2. Vision 2020 (1991-2020) – The vision calls for a monumental achievement for a developing nation set to achieve a self-sufficient industrialized nation by the year 2020. Vision 2020 would encompass social well-being, economic prosperity, world class education, political stability, and psychological balance. However, amidst the financial crisis of 2007-2010, a recalibration of the timeline was made (Pakiam & Adam, 2009).

3. Transformasi Nasional 2050 @ TN50 (2021-2050) – Gauging the momentum from the predecessor of the transformation programmes, National Transformation 50 seeks an even bigger aim of becoming amongst the top countries in the world. Five trends are introduced to be the pillars of the transformation: society, environment, economy, technology and connectivity, and governance. This is the latest initiative introduced by the government of Malaysia.

Accordingly, all the transformations made to Malaysia prove that the nation is capable of delivering the future that is desirable and deserved by the *rakyat*. This signifies the government's commitment in fulfilling the aspirations of the people. Nonetheless, among the many aspects of the transformations made, one critical key aspect that should be emphasized by the government of Malaysia is the advancement of its public sector. In each coming year, the challenges faced by the government will be much more complex due to technological and cultural changes, demographic shifts, and the ever-faster movement of money, goods, and people.

The increasing affluence and exposure to global services have led to more sophisticated demand and supply, thus indirectly increasing the expectations from the *rakyat*, further escalating challenges in public service delivery. The Eleventh Malaysia Plan has outlined several powerhouses to make the governance more citizen-centric while focusing on improving the productivity and efficiency of the public services. The question remains, how can the public service employees embrace such a variety of changes in their day-to-day activities? The answer relies on employee engagement where the concept has been validated to bring many prodigious benefits to any transformation effort.

1.1 The Current Indicators

The current Malaysian governance is constantly embracing new challenges and opportunities. The demand and needs of population dynamics and technological trends force the government to deliver a bigger output day by day. The current outlook on trend seems to put a great requirement for the government to be more citizen-centric with bigger productivity output through the competent and agile structure. The emphasis will be more on enhancing government units to be the catalyst for development. This will go beyond the

effort of strengthening the Malaysian traditional values of harmony, integrity, equity, and trustworthiness as the public service needs to display flexibility, innovativeness, and high adaptability for rapid betterment.

Based on the Eleventh Plan (2016-2020) report, there are several indicators for measuring the efficiency of public service delivery. Striving to become the best, Malaysia continued to benchmark and monitor its ranking through various top global indices. They are:

1. World Competitiveness Yearbook (WCY) by International Institute for Management Development (IMD).

2. e-Government Development Index (EGDI) by the United Nations (UN).

3. Corruption Perception Index by Transparency International (TI).

However, there were some changes in the ranking throughout the years, some were climbing up the ranks while others were going down (Eleventh Malaysia Plan, 2015). In 2014, the societal framework position of Malaysia dropped from 25 to 32 and the position of availability of online services also dropped from 20 to 31. Such unfavourable results were attributed to the lack of citizen-centric services. The inefficiency of public service delivery will cause many unfavourable outcomes. This was reported in the survey of satisfaction with public and private services which showed that citizens were 2.5 times more likely to be dissatisfied with public services as their level of satisfaction depended on speed, process, channel preference, access to information, and value for money (Chin et al., 2015). Looking at the other perspective, the are many rooms of opportunities to improve in terms of public service delivery. As a start, such initiative should be implemented in the public service unit itself rather than directly to the *rakyat* since the public service employees will be the ones to bridge the coming initiative to the people.

In the coming years, the government of Malaysia will shift away from the traditional approach of agency-based service delivery towards a whole-of-government approach based on services and information that adopt the perspective of the *rakyat* to be the main focus. For years to come, the government of Malaysia introduces five focus areas that are necessary for public service transformation, aiming at improving productivity and efficiency (Pakiam & Adam, 2009); focus area A which seeks to enhance service delivery which revolves around the *rakyat*, focus area B which aims at rationalising public sector for bigger productivity and performance, focus area C which attempts to strengthen talent management in the public service of the future, focus area D which aims at enhancing project management for better and faster outcomes and focus area E which seeks to capitalise local authorities for standard quality services.

With all these development plans and strategies, the question remains as to how can the public sector propel and deliver these promises to the *rakyat* in realizing the successful transformation objectives?

1.2 The Issues and Challenges

The public sector needs to be more innovative to overcome the challenges through employee engagement and innovative work behaviour. Accordingly, the importance of innovation in public services has been recognized over the past decade (Vrabie & Ianole-calin, 2020). Innovation in the context of public services can evoke many benefits to the organisation such as increasing effectiveness in problem-solving at the workplace and better momentum at gaining competitive advantage (Hughes et al., 2018; De Vries et al., 2016). Nonetheless, although innovative work behaviour has accumulated a considerable amount of attention over the years there is still a gap to be explored. Among the notable gaps is much of the research has been made primarily on the private sector (Chatchawan et al., 2017) and the factors of innovative work behaviour are rather undetectable and inconsistent (Carlucci et al., 2019; Bos-nehles, 2017). Additionally, engagement is one of the primary themes of interest in organisational science research as there has been abundant research concentration in relation to employee engagement (Sonnentag, 2011). It, therefore, remains a relevant subject to be ventured further in academia (Ridwan et al., 2020). Hence, the gap mentioned served as sound evidence to support further research to be done in this avenue.

The data gathered from 2016 to 2019 arguably implied that further research should be conducted in Malaysian public services. From 2016 to 2019, the Public Complaints Bureau has received complaints regarding the public services rendered to the people. The four-year statistics showed an upward trend in most of the categories. Employees are the frontliners when it comes to service delivery. The weightage of

such responsibility is further escalated as employees are one of the important sources of innovation in any organisation (Iqbal et al., 2020). The Malaysian public sector has achieved numerous benefits out of innovation as it has developed ways to optimize its productivity, increase reliability, comprehensiveness, and appropriateness (Ali & Buang, 2016). Nonetheless, such innovation may not be favourable if such complaints are received by PCB persisting in trend.

Table 1: Category of Complaints received from the year 2016-2019 by Public Complaints Bureau

No.	Category	2019	2018	2017	2016
1	Failure to adhere set of procedures	1312	1364	933	1053
2	Unsatisfactory Quality of service Including Counter and Telephone	1294	1107	1135	954
3	Failure of enforcement	2025	1014	980	1145
4	Actions that do not meet complainants' requirements	1897	1012	916	1692
5	Lack of public amenities	1201	584	482	532
6	Unfair action	397	529	412	533
7	Abuse of power / Misappropriation	262	283	211	253
8	Misconduct civil servant	239	228	192	217
9	Inadequacies of policy implementation and law	162	186	136	139
10	Others	388	123	119	N/A

Source: Public Complaints Bureau, 2016-2019.

With the placement of public service at the epicenter between the transformation programme and the *rakyat*, the focus should be on enhancing the public service performance since they are the catalysts for the transformation delivery. This situation applies to all government agencies. One notable way which has proven to be very successful in ensuring the government projects and programmes are well received is through employee engagement and innovative work behaviour. Thus, it is crucial for the government to give more attention to emerging critical sociological perspectives on the engagement with the psychological perspectives that are currently in tandem with the fast-paced transformation programme.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is discussed accordingly based on the variables of interest in this study which are employee engagement, behavioural engagement, and innovative work behaviour.

2.1 Employee Engagement

In recent years, engagement has become one of the prominent concepts in management (Crawford et al., 2014). Employee engagement can be defined as the extent to which employees are motivated to contribute to business success and are willing to apply discretionary effort in accomplishing tasks that are important for the achievement of stated business goals (PwC Employee Engagement, 2014). Another simplified definition given from the industrial perspective, engagement is the psychological state and behavioural outcomes that lead to better performance (Hewitt, 2015). Employees who are found to be engaged are deeply committed to their employer which leads to key improvements in business outcomes including lowering the rate of absenteeism and turnover, safety incidents, and others (Robinson, 2012).

In addition, the report of 2012 Employee Engagement: A Changing Marketplace defined employee engagement as a tangible metric that speaks to the satisfaction, excitement, loyalty, and commitment of the workforce, which is often used as a critical indicator of organisational culture, a warning indicator for turnover, and an outcome metric for talent management efforts. Employee engagement is a desirable condition. It has an organisational purpose and connotes involvement, commitment, passion, enthusiasm, focused effort, and energy, so it has both attitudinal and behavioural components. From the practical field, work engagement has become relevant to organisations and practitioners because of its links with

performance and other positive indicators such as extra-role behaviour and affective commitment (Bakker & Damerouti, 2008).
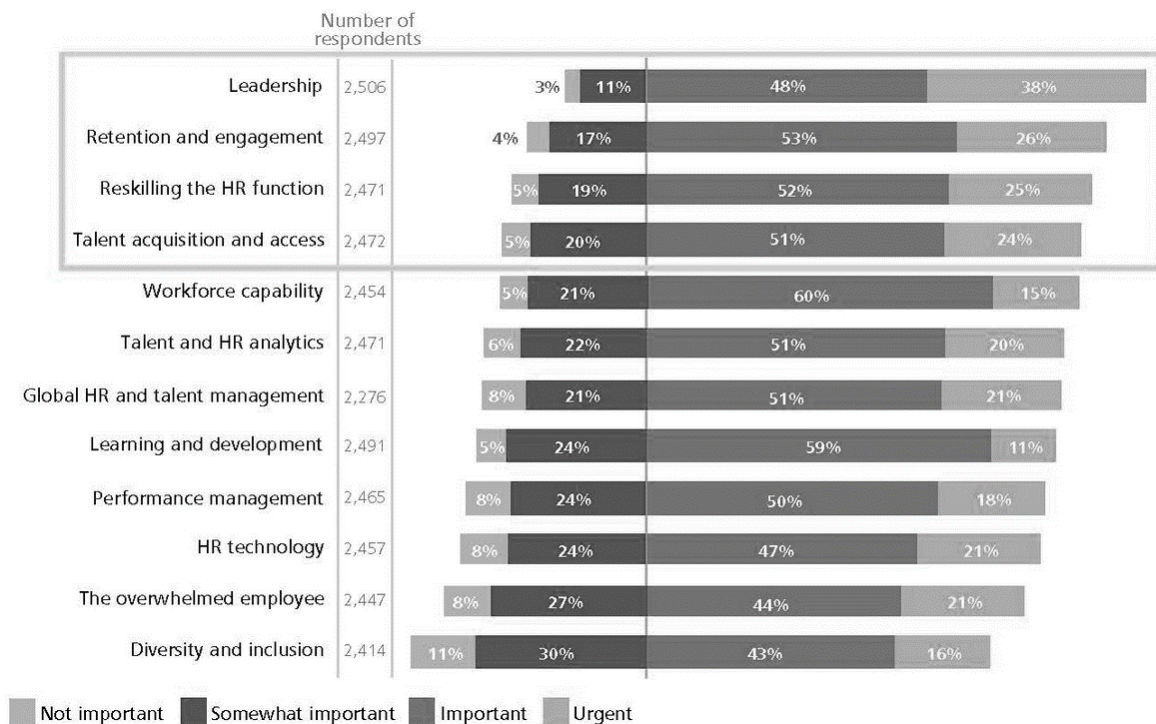

Figure 1: Perceived Urgency of 12 Global Trends. (Source: Stephan et al., 2014)

Another report from Global Human Capital Trends 2014: Engaging the 21st-Century Workforce emphasized that retention and engagement are perceived as one of the top global trends in perceived urgency. From the global survey in the report (See Figure 1: Perceived Urgency of 12 Global Trends (Stephan et al., 2014), it was cited that the most highly urgent categories of human capital trends are; leadership, retention, and engagement, reskilling the HR functions and talent acquisition, and thus by far leadership dominated the urgency of the 12 global trends. Looking at the theoretical perspective, much of these trends are originated from the employee engagement framework.

2.2 Trait Engagement

Trait engagement comprises several personality-based categories, including an autotelic personality, trait positive affectivity, proactive personality, and conscientiousness (Macey & Schneider, 2008). This depiction of trait engagement can be closely related to social cognitive theory. Human agency is a central component of social-cognitive theory (Bandura, 2001). It refers to people's ability to exert control over their ideas and intentions, allowing them to actively influence their current circumstances in ways that aid the accomplishment of desired future results. Nonetheless, while everyone possesses human agency, there is individual variance in the degree to which it is manifested characteristically. Additionally, it was further supported by Hirschfeld and Thomas (2008) which highlighted that the construct of trait engagement is relevant for employee engagement. For instance, the concept of an autotelic personality relates to a general propensity to mentally transform potential threats into enjoyable challenges (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Secondly, positive affectivity implies a tendency for active interaction between an individual and the environment (Staw, 2004). Thirdly, the proactive personality component entails continually acting to improve circumstances and persevering in the face of adversity (Bateman & Crant, 1993). Finally, conscientiousness consists of two key components: goal attainment and dependability (Dudley et al., 2006).

2.3 Psychological State

Psychological state engagement is characterised by feelings of vitality, enthusiasm, and other equally pleasant affective experiences (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Another component is commitment, which is defined as a state of attachment or binding force between an individual and an organisation. Job involvement refers to an employee's psychological attachment to his or her job and the tasks performed within it (Macey and Schneider, 2008), and it is related to the absorption element of state engagement as stated in the previous study (Schaufeli, 2006). Macey and Schneider (2008) investigated probable conceptual antecedents of observed employee engagement behaviours. They contended that psychological elements such as organisational commitment, job happiness, job involvement, and psychological empowerment contribute to behavioural employee engagement without directly affecting it. Additionally, psychological connections between employees and their work were vital in the information and service economy of the twenty-first century (Laake, 2016). Thus, from a conceptual standpoint, an employee's psychological state of involvement preceded apparent engagement behaviour.

2.4 Workplace Condition

Workplace conditions can be considered as physical and cultural settings that shape the psychological environment in which work is organised and performed (Hills & Joyce, 2013). The notion of workplace conditions can give a variety of effects that span from positive to negative effects. For instance, a pleasant workplace condition can influence employee satisfaction which eventually can make employees happy and display a vibrant attitude to clients (Howard & Gengler, 2001). This association can lead to employee-customer satisfaction and better firm performance. Nonetheless, an unpleasant working condition can be harmful to the employees' wellbeing. Research by Howell and Annansingh (2013) highlighted that an insufficient supply of information and a lack of communication impair employees' ability to perform their jobs more effectively. In terms of safety, a lack of awareness results in unsafe work which can potentially cause workplace accidents which include loss of work time and fatalities (Boone et al., 2011). Overall, working conditions are considered an influential component in the business environment (Cottini, Kato & Westergaard-Nielsen, 2011).

2.5 Behavioural Engagement

Behavioural engagement is a critical dimension that is included in practically all definitions and measures of engagement (Fredricks et al., 2011). It is a more powerful predictor of long-term accomplishment than emotional involvement (Ladd & Dinella, 2009), and has also been employed as a mediator in research on emotional engagement (Li, Lerner & Lerner, 2010). Macey and Schneider (2008) indicated that employee engagement may be a directly observable behaviour in the workplace but argued against literature that characterised behavioural engagement exclusively in terms of "effort" from a particular frame of reference. They discovered that behavioural employee engagement is frequently quantified in terms of extra time, brainpower, energy, duration, or intensity. However, establishing a reference point (another organisation or other individuals inside an organisation) and converting additional effort into quantifiable results were hurdles. Further elucidating behavioural engagement, Macey, and Schneider (2008) argued that average task performances such as showing up on time and fulfilling manager or supervisor job expectations do not (usually) indicate involvement. Instead, behavioural engagement is strategic in nature, organisationally relevant, and is associated with adaptive and inventive performance.

2.6 Innovative Work Behaviour

There have been many studies of innovative work behaviour across social science studies. Researchers have provided various definitions of innovative work behaviour. According to the recent systematic literature review of the topic, the definition which is often used to describe innovative work behaviour is from the description given by Jannsen (Botha & Steyn, 2020). Innovative work behaviour is defined as the intentional creation, introduction, and application of new ideas within a work role, group, or organisation in order to benefit role performance, the group, or organisation (Jannsen, 2000). Accordingly, among the updated definitions of the term is given by Abbas and Raja (2015) which described it as the ability of employees to generate novel ideas for service improvement and to adopt other's ideas that are new in the current workplace. Though the variety of definitions that reflect the innovative work behaviour in multistage conceptualization, researchers often differ in labelling the stages. Some researchers opt to test

the variable in less complex models or a single construct (De Jong & De Hartog, 2010; Jannsen, 2000; Scott & Bruce, 1994).

The importance of practicing innovative work behaviours has been highlighted in many studies. For instance, past research found that innovative work behaviour is a strong predictor of various organisational outcomes such as employee performance, increase in commitment, better motivation, and enhancement of leadership capabilities (Atatsi et al., 2019; Hughes et al., 2018; Miao et al., 2017; Hakimian et al., 2016).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The current study was conducted through a review of secondary data sources from various academic journals and the government initially identified through word searches on "public services", "employee engagement" and "innovative work behaviour". The articles identified were then screened for titles, abstracts, keywords, frameworks as well as headings and subheadings. To gain updated comprehension of the variables, most of the relevant journals were selected since 2010 and above. The relevancy of previous studies and the credentials of the authors have become the selection criteria for this study. As such, all the journals were taken from indexed publications and published government reports. Criteria for the concept paper were emphasized based on recommendations from Gilson and Goldberg (2005) such as providing an integrated framework, proposing new relationships among constructs, developing arguments for associations, and extending the scope of academia.

4.0 RESULT: A PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

In the context of nation-building, the public sector should be efficiently supplied with an adequate amount of engagement to achieve innovative work behaviour to perform any transformation programme. So how can we implement employee engagement in the public service? The answer lies in the well-established employee engagement framework which consists of trait engagement, psychological state, workplace conditions, behavioural engagement, and desirable organisational outcomes (Laake, 2016). In this context, the desirable organisational outcomes are replaced with innovative work behaviour. As discussed earlier, innovative work behaviour has strong relationships with many organisational outcomes which can lead to transformational delivery. Therefore, a conceptual framework of this research is proposed as depicted in Figure 2. This framework is grounded based on social exchange theory (SET). This theory is one of the most valuable principles and is widely used in workplace behaviour research (Cropanzano et al., 2017). The social exchange theory connotes voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring typically from others (Blau, 1964). This idea is predicated on the premise that expectations are frequently reciprocal (Mitonga-monga, 2020). Additionally, the most prominent framework in the development of the idea of efficacy is the social cognitive theory, which has been used to investigate the relationships between behaviour, cognition, and other personal and contextual elements (Bandura, 1997; Robert Wood & Bandura, 1989). Therefore, the proposed framework hypothesized that employees who are well engaged can bring out innovative work behaviour to their workplace.
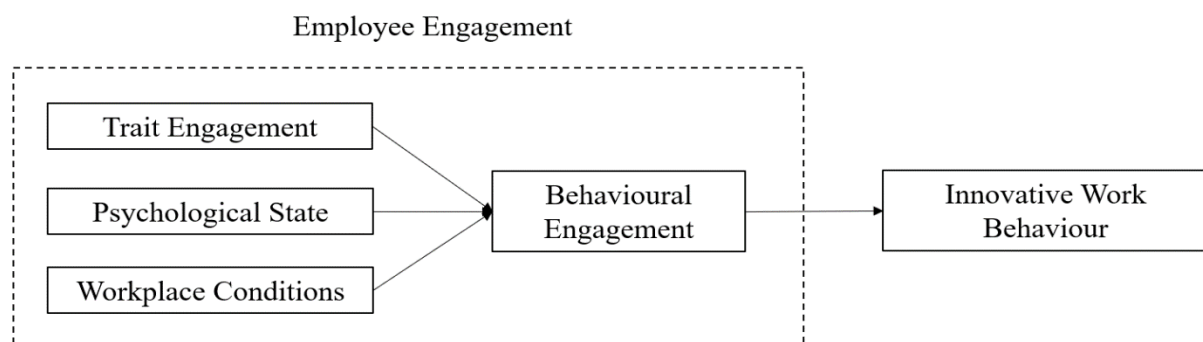

Figure 2: Employee Engagement Framework (Source: Adapted from Laake (2016)

The conceptual framework provides a specific direction that can be undertaken through the four variables each with its components. A study found that trait engagement antecedents which consist of dispositional influences such as proactive personality, autotelic personality, conscientiousness personality, and trait positive affectivity can influence organisational experiences and have the potential to give an impact on psychological state and behavioural engagement (Macey & Schneider, 2008). The notions of workplace conditions were expanded to include a wider perspective of working conditions which include leadership, trust and justice, community and value, and these were found to influence psychological state and behavioural engagement (Laake, 2016). The derivation of psychological state; commitment, satisfaction, involvement, and empowerment connote an inclination with regard to work that can affect the positivity and negativity of an individual (Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova, 2016). Healthy trait engagement and conducive workplace conditions will generate a positive psychological state among the public service employees (Finegan, 2000). This will indirectly affect behavioural engagement in the workplace which alleviates innovative behaviour, organisational citizenship, proactive initiative, role expansion, and adaptability to change (Macey & Schneider, 2008).

The result from the interactions of trait engagement and workplace conditions with the psychological state will directly affect the degree of behavioural engagement which will induce employees to contribute and go beyond what is required (Macey & Schneider, 2008). From the framework, we can further hypothesize that behavioural engagement will influence innovative work behaviour. To support this claim, past research discovered that engaged employees can bring out their best ability to solve problems, connect with people and develop innovation (Leiter & Bakker, 2010). Additionally, research that has been done involving public service on Finnish dentists demonstrated that there was a positive relationship between work engagement and work-unit innovativeness (Bakker et al., 2011; Hakanen et al., 2008). To further build up the evidence, past research also found that work engagement has a significant positive relationship with individual innovation (Arye et al., 2012).

5.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

There are many interesting success stories and best practices that we can gain from engaging the workforce. One particular example of how we can enhance our practices is by looking at how our neighbouring country, South Korea, transforms their public-sector productivity through innovation. South Korea is one of the Four Asian Tigers known for its wealthy high tech industrialized developed country which undergoes rapid industrialization, technological innovation, and development. Despite the national history of the war between North Korea and South Korea, the nation continues to thrive exponentially with economy soared at an annual average rate of 10% consistently for over 30 years (Republic of Korea, 2014) during a period of transformation called the Miracle of the Han River as the nation spectacular performance was fuelled by annual export growth and from savings and investment. Looking at the brief history of the Korean government's nation-building and development, South Korea has put a great emphasis on innovation in its administration that aims at putting its employees and culture first. This engagement will lead to the creation of sustainable government innovation and transformation through innovation of employees and culture, performance-oriented changes, and an integrated innovation system (Kim, 2016). The innovation should be supported by employees who are well engaged and understand the vision of the nation. In keeping track of the transformation effort, the government of South Korea will check each progress in real time via the government's online policy task management system. The Prime Minister Office (PMO) will prepare implementation updates to present to the national policy task review council every quarter to revise the tasks given according to the changing environments both locally and internationally, making new additions and amendments as well as checking if the completed tasks have achieved desired goals.

Another prominent success story that can be learned is through the best practices of the United Kingdom (UK), a world-class government. This nation itself is perceived to have a strong record of innovative government and is often seen as the best practice in the design and delivery of public services (Chin et al., 2014). The UK government in the sense of global standards has been receptive to the experience of other countries over the past years, importing innovations and remaining innovative in its public services. Through employee engagement, the public services were well-equipped to embrace the coming changes to be made. For example, the UK government introduced digitization programmes that have focused primarily

on improving service delivery in order to make these services "digital by default" which is more efficient. This indirectly gives the benefit of cost reduction in the governance which is also by default. Another example is the Austrian government which has been gradually digitizing the country's justice system which has resulted in 69 percent of civil enforcement and 95 percent of applications for civil actions that can be processed digitally. The outcome was that the ministry was able to cover more than 70 percent of its expenditure from revenue, especially from the streamlining of past administrative practices. The same thing goes with Estonia and the Dutch government which have put great emphasis on public service delivery through digitization. Most Estonians are now using online channels to access the government services including tax filing while the Dutch relieved two-thirds the number of offices due to budgetary pressure by serving the public needs virtually (Heidemann, Muschter & Rauch, 2013).

It is apparent that these countries put great value in innovation through the transformation of public service. In creating momentum for the employees involved to have an innovative mindset, they need to be well engaged. Employee engagement is interwoven significantly in organisational outcomes (Markos & Sridevi, 2010). Well-engaged employees are more likely to exceed the industry average. In the context of nation-building, transformation is likely to be achieved with well-engaged public service employees. The service delivery would be more efficient and effective to the public. So, what happens when employees are disengaged? The answer is the total opposite. Employees will have more tendency of spinning, settling, and splitting as well as more misgivings about their organisations' performance measures. A survey of employees from 41 various organisations in the world's 10 economically strong countries discovered that both operating margin and net profit margins were reduced over a three-year period in organisations with low levels of engagement (Meere, 2005). Drawing a conclusion from this evidence, it is apparent that the statement of engagement and innovation are the prime factors for desirable organisation outcomes.

Additionally, it is necessary to perform periodic audit quality on any transformation programme. This will significantly help to track and monitor the progress of such efforts being made. Although audit quality is a critical concept in both the public and private sectors, there is no methodology for defining and operationalizing audit quality (Phan, 2016). The audit quality is contested but little understood, and despite the definitional variances, there is little agreement on how to define audit quality (Massod and Afzal, 2016). The most generally used definition of audit quality is that of DeAngelo (1981), who defined it as the possibility that an auditor will both discover and disclose a breach in a client's accounting system. Even though audit quality is defined differently, two fundamental elements are generally considered when evaluating the definition of quality: the auditor's capability to detect and declare misstatements, as well as the auditors' independence (Al-khaddash, Al Nawas, and Ramadan, 2011; Usman, Sudarma, Habbe, and Said, 2014; Octavia and Widodo, 2015).

The public sector's definition of audit quality differs from the private sector's since it is fundamentally different from the sector in various areas, including accounting and financial reporting. The public sector is distinguished from a private organisation, for example, by the absence of a profit motive (Samelson, Lowensohn, and Johnson, 2006). The public sector is required to appoint only public sector auditors to conduct audits of its administration, which results in a public sector auditor monopoly (Masood and Afzal, 2016). The absence of competition at the public sector level degrades audit quality. However, public sector governance can be improved if auditors have a firm foundation of knowledge and skills (Masood and Afzal, 2016). Ultimately, such an audit on the transformation programme needs to be transparent.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The demand and needs of population dynamics and technological trends force the government to deliver even bigger output day by day. The current outlook on trend seems to put a great requirement for the government to be more citizen-centric with bigger productivity output through the competent and agile structure. The emphasis will be more on enhancing government units to be the catalyst for development. This will go beyond the effort of strengthening the Malaysian traditional values of harmony, integrity, equity, and trustworthiness as the public service needs to display flexibility, innovativeness, and high adaptability for rapid change and betterment. The government of Malaysia needs a strong in tandem transformation effort to deal with this new ascending challenge. Nevertheless, in doing so the public sector

employees need to be well engaged and the situation demands all hands to be on deck with an innovative mindset. The current and future transformation will put a heavy demand on the efficiency of public service delivery. However, more of the same will be insufficient, so learning from the experience of others particularly from the developed nations is important to drive transformational change within and across the government of Malaysia. In the meantime, the government should deliver more for less. The future trends would have people expect more choices, convenience, and efficiency since they pay a fair share of their income through taxation, and they would expect the same level of services while the government should aim at minimizing the expenditure. Processes of change in government are a necessity to build a better nation. The ever-quicker succession plan of transforming certain areas will mean that public service employees will experience a change in a continuous manner. Meeting these challenges will depend on every government agency to have a healthy employee engagement culture. The employee must embrace the world of volatility to change when needed just the same as private enterprises would do to improve their quality and productivity, thus gradually improving the people's confidence in every transformation programme made by the government.

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