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KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND ACADEMICIAN WELL-BEING: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Academicians and practitioners have considered knowledge management practices as the keys to organizational competitive advantage which would contribute to the success of a business organization. Previous studies on knowledge management practices and employee well-being, however, have received little attention. Hence, the purpose of this paper is to empirically investigate the relationship between knowledge management practices, specifically knowledge acquisition, knowledge sharing, knowledge creation, knowledge codification and knowledge retention on academicians' well-being. A questionnaire-based survey was conducted to gather data from academicians in selected private universities in Malaysia. Questionnaires were distributed and gathered with a total of 170 usable responses. The analysis of the findings was conducted using structural equation modeling (SEM-PLS). The findings suggested that knowledge acquisition, knowledge creation and knowledge retention are likely to improve academicians' well-being. The findings also revealed that knowledge sharing and knowledge codification are not significant with academicians' well-being. This paper is limited to academicians in private higher education institutions. Hence, this limits the generalizability of the results. Future research could therefore test the applicability of these findings beyond the higher education sector. Studies comprising the relationship between the five main knowledge management

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practices and academicians' well-being are still lagging in the academic literature. This study provides theoretical as well as practical information on a relatively unexplored area.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions not only function as a provider of knowledge but also as pertinent sectors for the nation's growth and societal well-being (Mabaso and Dlamini, 2018). The universities are known as knowledge-based organizations and serve as knowledge reservoirs. According to Krishnan and Kasinathan (2017), educational institutions are experiencing a paradigm shift in which the employees are dealing with a more and more demanding working environment. Private universities in Malaysia face numerous challenges to compete in the private higher education industry in order to achieve the government's vision to transform Malaysia into an education hub in the Asian region. Four Malaysian private universities have been listed in the QS World University Rankings of 2020 (QS Asia University Rankings, 2020).

Since 2010, there has been a rapid expansion of private universities which then contributed to an increase in the number of foreign students, which led to private universities intensely competing to get equipped with potential academicians and at the same time, to retain greater profitability (Manogharan and Thivaharan, 2018; Krishnan and Kasinathan, 2017). Besides that, private universities must ensure that they provide high-quality educational services and produce a skilled workforce (Choong et al., 2013). It is therefore not surprising that the rise in establishment of private universities demonstrates that knowledge management practices are also important in educational institutions as they are in the corporate world. Academicians play a vital role in determining the quality of a private university. Hence, efforts to transform organizational practices that can improve the well-being of academicians are highly desirable (Othman, Lamin, and Othman, 2014).

The gravity of declining well-being can be clearly observed from a report published by the Malaysian Employers Federation which

highlighted the education sector in general has been reported to have a high turnover rate. The turnover rate remained high at 29.8% and decreased to 16.6% for the period of July 2017 to June 2018 and July 2018 to June 2019 respectively (Malaysian Employers Federation, 2019). Although there was a decreasing trend between the years 2018 and 2019, it is noticeable that the turnover rate among academicians remains high and improvement is progressing slowly. The issue of turnover, well-being, and adequate quality of human resources remains an exhausting issue for many developing countries, including Malaysia. Hence, this impacts on Malaysia to achieve high-quality labor and high-productivity employees with healthy physical and mental conditions (Arshad and Malik, 2015).

Employee well-being is the most researched topic in organizational behavior and psychology; however, it is rarely approached from a KM perspective. Employee well-being can be described as "an individual's life satisfaction and happiness" (Huang et al., 2016). As recommended by Kianto, Vanhala, and Heilmann (2016), KM can be "added to the toolbox of managers, consultants and other organizational developers attempting to improve the conditions for well-being at work". There is a significant gap in the literature in offering a comprehensive well-being concept that has been analyzed and proven. Only a relatively small number of empirical research studies, however, has focused on employee well-being from the perspective of KM (Kianto et al., 2016; Chumg et al., 2016; Chumg et al., 2014). Drawing on the conservation of resource theory (COR) that links KM practices and well-being is hypothesized in the following section. As a result, the purpose of this study will be to investigate the relationship between knowledge management and employee well-being among academicians in Malaysia's private higher education sector.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

Well-being is used interchangeably by scholars with other concepts or terms such as satisfaction, happiness, and quality of life (Achour et al., 2017; Kefeli et al., 2017; Kianto et al., 2016). It is frequently mentioned as a component of a multidimensional quality of life. Physical well-being, material well-being, social well-being, emotional well-being, and development and activity are the five dimensions of

well-being (Kefeli et al., 2017). Since this study focuses on employee well-being, it is perceived as workplace well-being or quality of working life (Chan and Wyatt, 2007). The term that specifically defines well-being at the organizational level has evolved and broadened over time. In general, the bottom line is that well-being can be defined as a positive evaluation of one's life satisfaction and happiness (Mellor et al., 2016; Hills and Argyle, 2002).

Research has found that various instruments and concepts have been studied for an individual's well-being. According to the study conducted by Caesens, Stinglhamber, and Luypaert (2014), job satisfaction, perceived stress and sleep disorders are indicators of one's well-being. Their findings have revealed that work engagement is positively linked to the well-being indicator. Similarly, work engagement has been shown to lead to a decline in illness and contribute to better well-being for both life satisfaction and job performance, while workaholism has resulted in a lack of employee well-being. Shimazu et al. (2015) looked at well-being with various indicators including psychological distress, physical complaints, job satisfaction and family satisfaction.

Further, Kianto et al. (2016) examined the impact of KM practices on job satisfaction among Finnish municipal organizations and pointed out that KM had a connection to employee job satisfaction. KM is a crucial element and should be an organization's current focus with the aim of improving employee well-being at work. This is because job satisfaction is closely related to the concept of well-being and it is well-known as a well-being indicator by many scholars (Chumg et al., 2016; Kianto et al., 2016; Shimazu et al., 2015; Caesens et al., 2014). In the same vein, Alzyoud (2016) highlighted a positive relationship between job satisfaction and employee well-being. Job satisfaction is commonly characterized as well-being; however, job satisfaction differs from well-being as it is actually only part of employee well-being. People's job satisfaction depends largely on their workplace well-being. This is because job satisfaction is highly interrelated and associated with individual life satisfaction (Chumg et al., 2014).

Most of the studies focused on a wide range of antecedents or determinants that will affect an individual's well-being which has been conducted in different settings or organizations. Nevertheless, it can be concluded that limited studies focus on the perspectives of KM and how this component can improve employee well-being. As such, it would be of great interest to investigate the subject matter and dwell

further on the practice of KM and employee well-being among academicians.

2.2 KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

KM refers to the process of identifying and influencing collective knowledge that contributes to organizational competitive advantage which would assist organizations to compete in their operating market (Kianto et al., 2016). Scholars discussed that KM practices can be divided into several categories (Kianto et al., 2016; Alavi and Leidner, 2001; Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995). Following Kianto et al. (2016), this study proposes that KM can be divided into five main practices: knowledge acquisition, knowledge sharing, knowledge creation, knowledge codification and knowledge retention. These five main KM practices are important as it is proven that KM impacts on "soft" human issues (i.e., satisfaction and well-being) which are largely unexplored in previous research (Pruzinsky and Mihalcova, 2017; Kianto et al., 2016).

Knowledge acquisition refers to the collection of external sources of information for an organization (Kianto et al., 2016). Knowledge acquisition is devoted to the task of transferring knowledge from one or more sources to other users (Pruzinsky and Mihalcova, 2017). Knowledge sharing can be defined as one of the fundamental KM practices that involve two or more individuals or groups to mutually exchange or share knowledge (Wang and Wang, 2012). Knowledge must be transferred or shared in order for it to have a broad organizational impact (Kianto et al., 2016).

Knowledge creation can be described as an organization's ability to encourage the development of proposing new or useful ideas and solutions (Kianto et al., 2016). Any business in the current highly competitive era, needs a solid knowledge creation setup in its organization. This helps in creating opportunities in setting up one's blue ocean strategy (Hashim, Talib and Alamen, 2014). Knowledge codification refers to the transformation activity of tacit knowledge into a codified or explicit form of knowledge which is known as "people-to-document" (Bettiol et al., 2012). Following Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995), the transformation of tacit knowledge into explicit forms of knowledge is through the externalization process. The process of codification is critical where sufficient resources are needed, such as proper tools or systems for communication and information technology (Kianto et al., 2016). According to Kianto et al. (2016), knowledge retention refers to activities related to managing

personnel turnover and the associated loss of expert knowledge which is the key strategic resource for an organization. According to Motshegwa (2017), this involves a process of focusing on critical knowledge that poses a risk of loss to an organization.

2.3 CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES (COR) THEORY

Conservation of Resources (COR) theory serves as the theoretical foundation for the antecedent of KM practices and the outcome of employee well-being in this study. The theory has been widely used and cited in organizational psychology and organizational behavior (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Avey et al., 2010; Hobfoll, 2002). COR theory suggests that people "seek to obtain, retain and protect resources or those things that they centrally value" (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Avey et al., 2010). It is a theory of human motivation that explains much of human behavior based on the evolutionary need to acquire or conserve resources. According to Hobfoll's definition of resources, anything that holds value to someone could be considered a resource (Halbesleben et al., 2014). On the other hand, resources are often loosely perceived as objects resources (e.g., car, tools for work), conditions resources (e.g., seniority, employment, tenure), personal resources (e.g., key skills, self-efficacy), energy resources (e.g., knowledge, credit, money) and other things that people value (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Halbesleben et al., 2014). These include commonly valued resources such as health, well-being, family, self-esteem, and a sense of meaning in life.

This study proposes that KM practices and employee well-being may be supplemented by the principles of the COR theory to better understand why they contribute to individual well-being. The resource investment principle of COR stated that people must invest resources in order to protect against resource loss, recover from losses and gain resources (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Hobfoll, 2002). This study, therefore adopts the COR theory, according to which people have an inherent need to grow and develop by acquiring and preserving their knowledge (personal and energy resources) for the protection and acquisition of their individual valued resources, the greater well-being. Employees must invest knowledge resources to protect themselves from losing their valued resources, which is their well-being.

Knowledge is considered as one's personal resources or energy resources and is embedded at the individual, group, or at the organizational level. Meanwhile, KM practices exist in both employees and organizations. This is related to the resource caravans

of the COR theory where Hobfoll (2002) theorized that resources do not exist individually but travel in packs or caravans, both for individuals and organizations. Organizations with successful KM practices would be perceived as an organizational resource that gives employees empowerment, trust, a feeling of happiness, well-being and energy at work (Yan et al., 2019; Kim, Lee, and Yun, 2016). Furthermore, many psychological researchers have taken the initiative to examine the impact of people's resources on their resistance to stress and well-being. Well-being is in fact a subjective experience. Avey et al. (2010) stressed that well-being is a primary resource, and it is secured by secondary work-related resources. Guler and Cetin (2019) emphasized that personal resources can increase employee well-being. In line with the resource investment principle of COR theory, this study proposed that acquiring, sharing, and creating resources through KM practices, can motivate employees to protect, preserve and improve their valued resources – employee well-being.

3. HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

3.1 KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

Employee well-being from the positive psychology perspective has been thoroughly studied in the existing literature (Shimazu et al., 2015; Caesens et al., 2014). Discussions on the relationship between KM and employee well-being, however, are scarce in the literature. This shows that KM scholars rarely addressed the effect of KM on "soft" performance issues, such as employee well-being. As the term job satisfaction is closely linked to the concept of well-being, past studies have shown a connection between KM and job satisfaction (Arif and Rahman, 2018; Pruzinsky and Mihalcova, 2017; Kianto et al., 2016). The research done by Kianto et al. (2016) involving Finnish municipal organizations also found that KM practices (knowledge sharing, knowledge codification and knowledge retention) in the working environment are linked to high employee job satisfaction. They also noticed that only knowledge acquisition and knowledge creation have no relation to job satisfaction. Consistent with this, Pruzinsky and Mihalcova (2017) concluded that only knowledge acquisition and knowledge creation have no connection with job satisfaction. Based on their study conducted among the public organization employees in south-eastern Slovakia, it was shown that there exists a relationship between KM practices involving knowledge

sharing, codification and retention with job satisfaction. Although some KM practices have a negative relationship with job satisfaction, more future studies are needed to enrich findings on the relationship between KM and job satisfaction (conceptualized as well-being) so that it can be accurately proven. It is noteworthy that scholars considered job satisfaction as a construct or dimension for well-being (Kianto et al., 2016; Shimazu et al., 2015; Caesens et al., 2014).

3.2 KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION AND EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

Singh and Sharma (2011) stated that knowledge acquisition enhances employee well-being based on research done among knowledge workers in Indian telecommunications organizations. Similarly, the effect of knowledge acquisition on student employability and improved well-being has been discovered by Xu et al. (2020). According to Kianto et al. (2016), KM practices will boost employee job satisfaction and thereafter become an additional organizational practice to enhance employee well-being at work. The results of his study on effect of KM on job satisfaction, however, showed that knowledge acquisition had little to no effect on job satisfaction. One could argue that the study that has been done thus far on knowledge acquisition and employee well-being is relatively limited and inconclusive. Knowledge acquisition is anticipated to have a beneficial impact and the ability to enhance employee well-being. Hence the first hypothesis is:

H1: Knowledge acquisition has a significant positive relationship with employee well-being.

3.3 KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

Job satisfaction is closely related to the concept of employee well-being. Employees' workplace well-being is expected to improve as the process of sharing knowledge internally within an organization is the key process for improving job satisfaction. Rafique and Mahmood (2018) conducted a systematic literature review to find empirical evidence on the current relationship between knowledge sharing and job satisfaction. Three studies were conducted in China, two in Taiwan, and one in Malaysia, with participants from a variety of public and private organizations including the higher education sector. The results clearly showed that knowledge sharing had a significant positive impact on job satisfaction (conceptualized as well-being). In

the same vein, Wang, Yang and Xue (2017) also identified the roles of knowledge sharing on individual innovation behavior and found that knowledge sharing positively influences employee well-being. On the basis of these arguments, it is possible to conclude that knowledge sharing practices play an important role in improving employee well-being.

H2: Knowledge sharing has a significant positive relationship with employee well-being.

3.4 KNOWLEDGE CREATION AND EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

Knowledge creation can be a source of competitive advantage because it contributes to the development of new and innovative ideas (Bratianu, 2015). Very little research considered the connection between knowledge creation and employee well-being. Maciocha et al. (2012) analyzed the relationship between knowledge creation and employee well-being and found that the knowledge creation process is the mediating factor to improve an organization's productivity and performance if the organization focuses on enhancing employee well-being. Since the study was conducted on the basis of relevant literature reviews, it advised on the need for empirical evidence on the relationship between knowledge creation and employee well-being. Kianto et al. (2016) emphasized that knowledge creation can be an important driver in improving employee well-being, but that more empirical research is needed. Regardless, knowledge creation has the potential to improve employee well-being.

H3: Knowledge creation has a significant positive relationship with employee well-being.

3.5 KNOWLEDGE CODIFICATION AND EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

Kianto et al. (2016) and Pruzinsky and Mihalcova (2017) discovered a significant positive relationship between knowledge codification and job satisfaction (conceptualized as well-being). Knowledge codification specifically improves well-being by enabling employees to easily search for new information as well as manage and discover new ways to perform their daily tasks effectively and efficiently (Pruzinsky and Mihalcova, 2017). Many organizations are aware of KM, but the impact of knowledge codification on employee well-being appears to be neglected in KM research. Empirical testing

should therefore be conducted (Arif and Rahman, 2018), and the following hypothesis is proposed in this study:

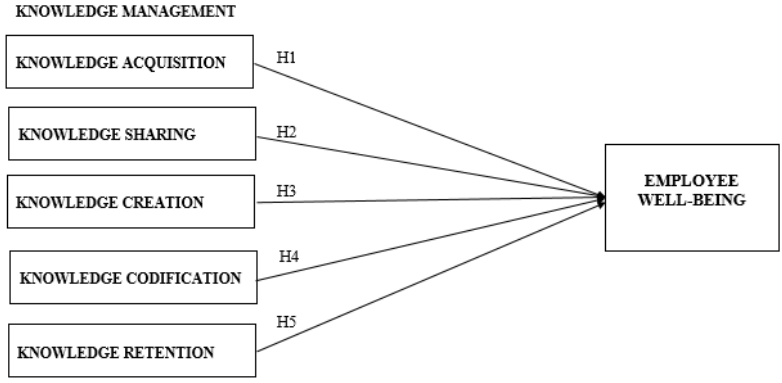
H4: Knowledge codification has a significant positive relationship with employee well-being.

3.6 KNOWLEDGE RETENTION AND EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

In a study conducted in a Finnish municipal organization, internal knowledge retention and knowledge sharing have been identified as key processes that can enhance job satisfaction (conceptualized as well-being) (Kianto et al., 2016). Furthermore, Pruzinsky and Mihalcova (2017) conducted a study on KM and job satisfaction among municipal employees in Slovakia. The findings indicated that knowledge retention is the key KM process that can improve employee job satisfaction. This means that continuous learning and knowledge retention among employees is critical to ensuring employee job satisfaction, thus improving employee well-being. It is therefore critical to reduce organizational knowledge loss through knowledge retention practices that improve employee well-being. The current study aims at investigating the effects of knowledge retention on academicians' well-being at selected Malaysian private universities. The research framework is illustrated in Figure 1:

H5: Knowledge retention has a significant positive relationship with employee well-being

FIGURE 1
Research Framework



4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 RESEARCH SETTING AND PARTICIPANTS

Based on the research philosophies of positivism, this study has adopted a deductive approach or quantitative research design. Deductive research emphasizes more heavily the need to explain causal relationships between variables, moving from theory to data, and the need to select samples in order to generalize conclusions (Saunders et al., 2007). Furthermore, this study is a descriptive study since the objective of this study is to "portray an accurate profile of reasons, events or situations" (Saunders et al., 2007). Mooi and Starsted (2011) explained that descriptive research is used to describe certain phenomena, characteristics, or functions. The quantitative method uses deductive reasoning and seeks to test the formulated hypothesis (McBurney and White, 2010). The main objectives of this research are to conduct hypothesis testing on KM practices (independent variables) and their impact on academicians' well-being (dependent variable).

Data were gathered through a survey; hence, multivariate normality was determined using web software; https://webpower.psychstat.org/models/kurtosis/, as suggested by Cain et al. (2017). The Mardia coefficient of multivariate skewness was 5.076 and the kurtosis was 59.811 (with cut-off values of ± 1 and ± 20, respectively, DeCarlo, 1997), indicating that the data were not multivariate normal. As a result, SmartPLS 3.0, a second-generation structural equation modeling (SEM) software, was chosen to perform bootstrapping on the model. As suggested by Memon, Salleh, and Baharom (2017) and Hair, Sarstedt, and Ringle (2017), recent advances in quantitative research suggest that second-generation methods of analysis, structural equation modeling, could have an impact on the literature by using PLS-SEM to examine the hypothesized model. Furthermore, Hair et al. (2017; 2014) proposed that PLS-SEM is the best statistical tool for social science studies, which frequently face the issue of unusual data characteristics (i.e., non-normal data).

The collected data were then analyzed by using structural equation modeling (SEM) which includes analysis of measurement models, structural models, and model fit. Results of factor loadings, as well as the average variance extracted and composite reliability, were evaluated to ensure the measurement items were valid and reliable. All of the criteria for the measurement model had to be established in this

study in order to meet the thresholds of all of the assessments involved. The evaluations begin with an examination of the internal consistency reliability, which includes the construct's convergent validity. Finally, in order to evaluate the structural model, discriminant validity had to be established (Hair et al., 2017; 2014). Next, the structural model analysis that represents the underlying structural theory of the path model in the research study was examined. Essentially, assessment of the structural model involved examining its predictive capabilities and the relationships between the constructs in the path model (Ramayah et al., 2018).

Data were obtained via a self-administered questionnaire among academicians from selected Malaysian private universities. The unit of analysis in this study was the individual employee, which refers to the academicians. The stratified random sampling approach was adopted in this study. As a result, from the total of 53 private universities, only 36 private universities would be the target population based on the regions located in the Klang Valley zone or Greater Kuala Lumpur. The sampling frame was first divided into geographic sampling areas, regions representing states and territories in Malaysia. This is because most private universities are located in the Klang Valley area which includes the central cities of Kuala Lumpur, Cyberjaya, and Putrajaya as well as adjacent cities and towns in the State of Selangor. In this study, 170 responses were usable for analysis, and this number exceeds the minimum sample size required for the study, which, based on G*Power statistics, is 138 minimum samples.

From the total respondents, female respondents accounted for 58.8% of all respondents, while male respondents formed only 41.2%. Most of the respondents were from the group of young and middle-aged academicians since the majority of respondents were between 26 to 45 years old (83.5%) and mostly held Lecturer and Senior Lecturer positions (94.7%). The remaining 5.3 % were senior academicians with the academic positions of Associate Professors and Professors.

4.2 MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENTS

Multi-item scales were used to measure the five knowledge management practices and employee well-being. A seven-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) was used so the respondents could answer based on how much they agreed or disagreed with the specific statements. A questionnaire was developed from past studies and modified to suit the context of this study. The

items for knowledge management practices have been developed by Kianto et al. (2016). It focused on the five main KM practices which are knowledge acquisition, knowledge sharing, knowledge creation, knowledge codification and knowledge retention. To measure employee well-being, items are adapted and adopted from the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) developed by Hills and Argyle (2002). This has been widely used and commended for its robust validity by previous scholars.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

To estimate the hypothesized model, the PLS-SEM method and statistical software SmartPLS 3.0 were used. In terms of analysis, two steps are required in evaluating PLS-SEM results, including the examination of measurement models and structural models (Memon et al., 2017; Hair et al., 2017). Structural models can only be tested if the measurement models meet all the necessary requirements (Hair et al., 2019). The assessment of the measurement model is to determine the indicator and construct reliability as well as the validity of the measurement model. Then, the structural model assessment is performed to examine the model's predictive capabilities and the relationship between the constructs in the path model (Hair et al., 2014).

According to Podsakoff et al. (2003), if the data were collected from a single source, common method variance needs to be examined. To further identify the common method variance in PLS-SEM, full collinearity tests are performed as suggested by Kock and Lynn (2012). In this context, Kock and Lynn (2012) proposed the full collinearity test as the comprehensive procedure for simultaneous assessment of both vertical and lateral collinearity. The threshold value for the result of variance inflation factors (VIFs) should be equal to or lower than 3.3 for the model to be considered as free of common method variance (Kock and Lynn, 2012; Kock, 2015). Table 1 shows the VIFs generated from a full collinearity test and the result indicates that no collinearity exists in the model of this study.

TABLE 1
Full Collinearity Estimates

Latent Variable	VIF
Employee Well-Being	1.452
Knowledge Acquisition	1.521
Knowledge Codification	2.401
Knowledge Creation	3.176
Knowledge Retention	2.371
Knowledge Sharing	2.509

5.1 MEASUREMENT MODEL

In this study, the five main knowledge management practices and employee well-being were tested as a first-order construct. To assess the measurement model, the literature suggests the researchers to look at convergent validity and discriminant validity (Memon et al., 2017; Sarstedt et al., 2017). As suggested by Hair et al. (2014), factor loading, average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability are to be considered in determining convergent validity. Additionally, indicators with an outer loading between 0.4 and 0.7 should be considered for removal from the scale. As a result, two items for knowledge management practices (KAC3 and KAC4) and three reversed coded items for employee well-being (EWB1, EWB4, and EWB8) were removed due to low loading. Finally, the results showed that all the items loading were valued higher than 0.5, the AVE was higher than 0.5 and also the CR was above 0.7 (Table 2).

In assessing discriminant validity, the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) of the correlation technique developed by Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2015) has been utilized. Following the guidelines by Kline (2011), the HTMT threshold value of 0.85 is a stringent criterion and the HTMT value above 0.9 resulted in a lack of discriminant validity of the constructs. Table 3 represents the HTMT values for all constructs and all values meet the HTMT criterion, with values ranging from the lowest value of 0.417 to the highest value of 0.815. This indicates that the discriminant validity is established for the constructs of this study. To summarize, the model assessments provide reliable evidence of validity and reliability for the operationalization of the study model.

TABLE 2
Measurement Model

Latent variable	Item	Loading	AVE	CR	Cronbachs Alpha
Knowledge Acquisition	KAC1	0.714	0.548	0.828	0.722
	KAC2	0.817			
	KAC5	0.690			
	KAC6	0.733			
Knowledge Sharing	KSH1	0.677	0.594	0.910	0.885
	KSH2	0.788			
	KSH3	0.844			
	KSH4	0.813			
	KSH5	0.694			
	KSH6	0.803			
	KSH7	0.759			
Knowledge Creation	KCR1	0.765	0.644	0.935	0.921
	KCR2	0.733			
	KCR3	0.830			
	KCR4	0.881			
	KCR5	0.834			
	KCR6	0.796			
	KCR7	0.754			
	KCR8	0.820			
Knowledge Codification	KCO1	0.812	0.707	0.923	0.898
	KCO2	0.824			
	KCO3	0.779			
	KCO4	0.904			
	KCO5	0.879			
Knowledge Retention	KRE1	0.908	0.823	0.933	0.895
	KRE2	0.901			
	KRE3	0.912			

TABLE 2 *(continued)*

Latent variable	Item	Loading	AVE	CR	Cronbachs Alpha
Employee Well-Being	EWB2	0.755	0.596	0.880	0.832
	EWB3	0.689			
	EWB5	0.811			
	EWB6	0.800			
	EWB7	0.800			

TABLE 3
Discriminant Validity (HTMT Ratio)

	Employee Well-Being	Knowledge Acquisition	Knowledge Codification	Knowledge Creation	Knowledge Retention
Knowledge Acquisition	0.561				
Knowledge Codification	0.417	0.546			
Knowledge Creation	0.546	0.601	0.789		
Knowledge Retention	0.505	0.557	0.746	0.770	
Knowledge Sharing	0.450	0.645	0.713	0.815	0.710

5.2 STRUCTURAL MODEL

Based on Table 4, the result indicated that out of five predictors for employee well-being, only three predictors had a significant positive relationship with employee well-being. Knowledge acquisition with β=0.25 and p<0.05, knowledge creation β=0.30 and p<0.05 and knowledge retention β=0.19 and p<0.05 had a positive relationship with employee well-being. Thus, hypotheses for H1, H3 and H5 were supported. On the other hand, knowledge sharing (H2) and knowledge codification (H4) did not have a significant relationship with employee well-being.

Following the rule of thumb, the R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 were explained as substantial, moderate, and weak levels of

predictive accuracy (Hair et al., 2019; Ramayah et al., 2018). The R^2 value for employee well-being is 0.311, which is above the 0.25 value indicating a moderate model. This shows that the five KM practices are able to explain 31.1% of the variance in employee well-being. Hair et al., (2014) have suggested that to examine the change in the R^2 value, f^2 needs to be examined. Table 4 shows the results of f^2. The guideline for assessing f^2 is that the values of 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35, respectively, represent the small, medium, and large effects of the exogenous construct (Cohen, 1988).

TABLE 4
Structural Model - Hypotheses Testing

	Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t-values	p-values	95% Confidence Interval	f^2	Hypotheses Results
H1	Knowledge Acquisition > Employee Well-Being	0.25	0.09	2.79	0.00	[0.102, 0.390]	0.06	Accep-ted
H2	Knowledge Sharing > Employee Well-Being	-0.03	0.11	0.28	0.39	[-0.192, 0.151]	0.00	Rejec-ted
H3	Knowledge Creation > Employee Well-Being	0.30	0.12	2.41	0.01	[0.119, 0.527]	0.04	Accep-ted
H4	Knowledge Codificatio n > Employee Well-Being	-0.05	0.11	0.49	0.31	[-0.221, 0.137]	0.00	Rejec-ted
H5	Knowledge Retention > Employee Well-Being	0.19	0.10	1.93	0.03	[0.012, 0.342]	0.02	Accep-ted

**Significance ($p<0.05$)

Coefficient of Determination

	R^2
Employee Well-Being	0.311

5.3 MODEL FIT

TABLE 5
Model Fit

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.053	0.052
d_G	0.816	0.814
d_ULS	1.469	1.461

The bootstrap-based test for exact overall model fit was used to assess overall model fit. The results displayed in Table 5 show that the values of the discrepancy measures which are geodesic distance (dG), SRMR, and squared Euclidean distance (dULS), fall below the corresponding critical value, namely the 95% quantile of the corresponding reference distribution. The results show that the specified model adequately fits the data. It demonstrates that the proposed model adequately captures the available information in the data.

6. DISCUSSION

Higher education institutions need to develop strategic knowledge management practices to enhance their academicians' well-being which would then contribute to better performance among academicians in the ever-changing business environment. This study has indeed contributed to the academicians' well-being by showing that KM practices, namely knowledge acquisition, knowledge sharing, knowledge creation, knowledge codification, and knowledge retention contribute to better employee well-being among academicians in the selected private universities. Specifically, the findings suggested that only knowledge acquisition, knowledge creation, and knowledge retention had a significant connection with employee well-being.

Also, findings have shown that knowledge acquisition is an important facet of KM practices among academicians in private universities. This could be due to the nature of the work performed by academicians, carrying the role of educators, who provide lessons to the students and constantly acquire new knowledge for self-improvement. This has to do with the job characteristics of academia which enable them to acquire new knowledge outside the university by attending academic conferences and setting up networking for

future partnerships or collaboration on research and the educational agenda. This finding was consistent with the previous work of Singh and Sharma (2011) which confirmed the said significant results.

Besides that, knowledge creation is a key KM practice that promotes employee well-being for academicians. Academicians experience a greater feeling of well-being and happiness when they are involved in the knowledge creation process. This has shown that such activity is strongly encouraged by organization whereby private universities believe that implementing knowledge creation helps the organization to generate new and innovative ideas that would eventually contribute to organizational development (Hashim et al., 2014). Hence, the creation of new knowledge and innovative ideas is critical for private universities to sustain their competitive advantage in the higher education industry. In the same vein, knowledge retention also had a positive significant relationship with employee well-being which was consistent with previous findings by Kianto et al. (2016) and Pruzinsky and Mihalcova (2017). This showed that the continuous learning and preservation of knowledge among academicians are important in safeguarding employee well-being. Therefore, knowledge retention practice is critical for private universities to minimize organizational knowledge loss, hence improving academicians' well-being.

Contrary to our expectations, the remaining two KM practices; knowledge sharing and knowledge codification – were shown to be unrelated to employee well-being among academicians at the private universities. Unexpectedly, knowledge sharing has no effect on employee well-being, and this is a rather surprising finding. There is still a lack of knowledge sharing culture in Malaysia and it remains the biggest challenge for many Malaysian organizations (Hashim et al., 2014). Similarly, findings have shown that knowledge codification has no relationship with employee well-being among academicians. This process requires additional time, energy and commitment from academicians. Since academicians are well-known for their busy schedules and need to cope with diverse workloads (Winefield et al., 2014), therefore knowledge codification practices are seen as a complicated process and out of their interest.

6.1 IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY AND PRACTICE

Even though this study has discussed the basic conceptual framework of KM practices and employee well-being, there is a huge opportunity for future research to expand the framework and explain the role of

the major construct that influences employee well-being. This study contributes in a number of ways to the literature and current body of knowledge. First, given the lack of prior relevant research, this study contributes to providing a better understanding of the importance of KM practices as additional tools for organizations to improve the current state of employee well-being. Previous research seemed to focus specifically on the effect of KM on organizational performance (Mustapa and Mahmood, 2016; Batra and Anand, 2014). As a result, further observance of KM effects on non-organizational performance such as employee well-being and satisfaction has been hindered. Therefore, the findings of this study provide empirical evidence that KM practices – knowledge acquisition, knowledge creation and knowledge retention – clearly benefit the institutions in enhancing well-being of academicians.

Second, the findings from this study support the COR theory as a theoretical basis to explain the relationship between KM practices and employee well-being. The resource investment principle of COR theory suggests that people must invest or acquire resources in order to protect against resource loss and gain valued resources. KM practices involving knowledge acquisition, knowledge creation and knowledge retention practices are found to be significant in influencing academicians' well-being. This indicates that by acquiring and gaining new resources (i.e., new knowledge) through involvement in knowledge acquisition, knowledge creation and knowledge retention practice, academicians can protect and gain their valued resources – their well-being. This study adds to the KM and organizational psychology literature by considering personal or energy resources (i.e., KM practices) in predicting the academicians' well-being.

In terms of practical implications, the new findings from this study may convince higher education institution management of the importance of KM practices. This is because the results show knowledge acquisition, knowledge creation and knowledge retention have a significant positive relationship with employee well-being. On the other hand, analytical results have shown that knowledge sharing and knowledge codification practices have an insignificant relationship with employee well-being. This may be attributed to the nature of most private universities wherein the academicians are reluctant to share and transfer knowledge and this contributes to resistance to the knowledge codification process. Therefore, managers should take a proactive approach to create an appropriate atmosphere to foster KM culture among employees.

Besides that, this study may convince top management of private universities to emphasize the outcome of human relations, which is the academicians' well-being. Managers tend to value the economic and rational outcomes more such as the Key Performance Index (KPI) than the human relations outcomes. Managers are usually more concerned with maximizing profit when implementing new policies or organizational practices than enhancing employee well-being. Hence, the private university management is encouraged to develop a well-being index to promote greater employee well-being.

7. CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

In summary, this study revealed that some facets of KM practices (i.e., knowledge acquisition, knowledge creation, and knowledge retention) in selected private universities have a significant relationship with employee well-being. Although another two KM practices -- knowledge sharing, and knowledge codification -- showed a negative relationship with employee well-being, this signifies that there is room for improvement in higher education institutions. Based on the research findings, this study provides insight into how to improve employee well-being through KM practices among academicians. This study also broadens knowledge in organizational behavioral or psychological studies, which helps the organization gain a better understanding of the importance of employee well-being. From a practical viewpoint, this study provides an important guide to private universities, specifically, organizations, policymakers as well as industry practitioners. In general, the findings of this study can help the private university to understand how academicians evaluate their level of well-being when involved in KM practices and how to encourage academics to engage in organizational KM practices. Eventually, both employees and employers will benefit from KM implementation practices within the organization. It is therefore important to develop a positive sense of well-being among employees by implementing the five KM practices. Employee well-being and KM practices are critical for any organization, and managers should prioritize KM practices to improve employee well-being.

Despite its novel findings, this study has the following limitations and several avenues that may be overcome by future research. First, it is recommended that future research should also include not only the academicians but also the non-academicians as well. To further validate the findings, future researchers should

include a wider population comprising private and public universities or organizations beyond the higher education sector. Second, this study applied cross-sectional research data that might limit the result since it is restricted by a certain time frame. This study is unable to identify the long-term or causal effects between KM practices and well-being. Thus, future studies could consider applying causal effects and longitudinal research methods.

In addition, this study focuses solely on the five KM practices as antecedents to the academicians' well-being in private higher education institutions. Many other factors, however, can be considered to enhance employee well-being. Future researchers may consider a different set of factors or antecedents that could improve employee well-being such as including knowledge types, knowledge hiding, and employee commitment which can be used as contingency variables. Besides that, potential fruitful avenues for future research may include adding closely related issues such as digital well-being and examining the connections between knowledge work performance, big data, and employee well-being, which would suggest and contribute to more interesting topics for future research.

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