

Applying Critical Concepts of Business Research

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Introduction

“The findings suggest that there is a positive relationship between employees’ beliefs regarding training benefits and employees’ organizational commitment” (Al-Emadi & Marquardt, 2007, p. 49). “The stories were analyzed through the use of constant comparison, which resulted in the development of two models: (1) a framework for ethical leadership illuminating valued aspects of ethical leaderships and the value perspectives called upon when making ethical decisions, and (2) a model explaining how the executives’ ethical frameworks developed. The paper concludes with a brief discussion on virtue ethics, experiential learning, and human resource development “ (Marsh, 2013, p. 13).

These two separate papers and separate methods, quantitative and qualitative, touch on a lot of the same key issues: employees and their relationships with the organization.

What is the business problem?

While the Al-Emadi paper focuses more specifically on the relationship of training benefits and the organization’s commitment (2007), Marsh looks at little broader and ethical frameworks and the development of human resources (2013).

What is the specialization?

As mentioned, Al-Emadi is specifically, using quantitative research, addressing areas of training benefits as relates to employees in the organization (2007), whereas Marsh talks more broadly, a qualitative study of 28 participants, about the overall ethical relationship of the employee and the organization. Engagement takes place on managers specifically addressing individual employee’s issues (2013). At the Qatari petroleum company, specific training for employees prepares them for better work and futures with the organization (Al-Emadi & Marquardt, 2007).

Are these appropriately related?

In that both papers are focused on the employees, they are both related – with different specific points-of-view – training benefits, Al-Emadi (2007), and frameworks for ethical manager leadership and development, as viewed by Marsh (2013).

What is the applied business research or research method and design (or both)?

Marsh utilizes a qualitative, interviewing approach (using a constant comparative process) of multiple managers and individuals in organizations, where Al-Emadi takes on the research with a quantitative approach, as described as: ‘This quantitative study utilized survey methodology with associational or nonexperimental correlational-descriptive research design’ (Al-Emadi & Marquardt, 2007. p. 56).

What is the value (worth) of examining the problem as applied to business?

The primary value of both studies is to gain a better business understanding of employee’s relationship to an organization to promote greater loyalty and improve the overall quality of their work. This ultimately improves the organization and brings greater profits. Additionally, as Marsh notes “leadership may be the primary determinant in ethical action” (Marsh, 2013, p. 13). First must be ethical leaders if we are to promote ethics within our organization.

Upon whose research did the authors seek to build, that is, what is the scholarly justification for the research?

Marsh initially mentions using the works of Gini (1998), Pollard (2005), and Quinn(2004) as her starting point. She then lists numerous other ethical leadership perspectives and finally ends up with a framework for such leadership:



(Marsh, 2013, p. 574).

Al- Emadi initially looks at the work of Kontoghiorphes and Bryant (2004) where they state that such work has been one of the most focused areas, employees and organizational research, for the last three decades (Al-Emadi & Marquardt, 2007). Like Marsh, they also cite numerous other studies to support their research initiative.

What is the purpose of the study?

The Marsh work, from a qualitative perspective, was looking to better define ethical leadership as a means of creating and supporting employee's ethics within an organization. Al-Emadi was looking to clearly define the role of training within an organization and ending with three implications of theory, practices, and areas of future research. As they state:

“Understanding the relationship between employee training and organizational commitment is a critical factor in assisting organizations reduce costs associated with recruiting, hiring and training” (Al-Emadi & Marquardt, 2007. p. 66).

What is the alignment between the research purpose and problem identified by the authors?

Both the Marsh and Al-Emadi studies focused on their preliminary stated purposes and identified problems through both the process of their studies and the implications of their work. They both concluded with results that added to the knowledge of the areas they were focused upon.

In summary, what actions did the authors take to ensure the ethical protections required in applied business research?

Al-Emadi only included Qatari national employees at the senior staff level. Lower junior level, non-Qatari employees, and temporary employees were all excluded. Marsh interviewed 28 business executives for her data. Both had focused only on managers and did not work with the junior or lower level employees, thereby eliminating them from the study.

Were specialized terms used?

How do the articles differ with respect to their foundational theories and concepts?

Marsh frequently spoke to the term “ethical leadership” where Al-Emadi looked at areas described as “affective organizational commitment,” “continuance organizational commitment,” “and “normative organizational commitment” (Al-Emadi & Marquardt, 2007. p. 59).

The primary difference between the two articles is one of quantitative analysis vs. qualitative analysis. Where Marsh uses a constant comparative approach (from grounded theory), Al-Emadi used a statistical model approach creating tables and statistical results with the help of SPSS software. While both articles came up with specific conclusions and areas for

future research, they both achieve the goal of expanding our knowledge in the areas of organizational training and ethical leadership.

Reference

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