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PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL MODERATING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB DEMANDS, JOB RESOURCES AND JOB BURNOUT

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Abstract

Job burnout was conceptualized as multi-component construct which contains emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduce personal accomplishment. Job burnout is related with emotional disorders of high work demands and less job resources to complete the work assignment. It is a chronic job stress that needs attention because it does not only give direct impact towards individual but it might harm other people's life. By reviewing literature review, the researchers indicate inconsistence of variable job resources, job demands and job burnout relationships. This situation happens due to this variable of relationship which emphasizes more on environment factors rather than personal factors. On the other side, psychological approach believes that these inconsistence relationships between variable causes due to human behaviours are affected by their interaction between personal and environment factors. This research aims to explore job burnout effect on commercial airline pilots in Malaysia aviation industries. Furthermore this paper proposed conceptual model to further understand the moderating role of the psychological capital in influencing job resources, job demands and job burnout relationships.

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Keywords: Psychological Capital, Job Resources, Job Demands, Job Burnout, Aviation Pilot.

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1. Introduction

Since 1970s job burnout can be categorized as an important concept. The concept has been introduced by Freudenberger (1974) and Maslach (1976) more than 40 years ago, and since then more research have been conducted in this area to further understand this phenomenon. Job burnout can be categorized as early concept that critically captures people experiences with work. Researchers usually have their own definition based on their understanding when represent and defined job burnout, however there are two famous metaphors usually adopted by researchers to represent job burnout. First, Job burnout often being described as the draining of energy. It implies that even though a fire was burning, it cannot continue to burn brightly unless there are sufficient resources that keep being replenished (Schaufeli, Leiter, & Maslach, 2009). Second metaphors usually being adopted by researchers to represent job burnout is suffering from doing “people work”, it implies that over the time employees who are effected with job burnout may lose their capacity to provide the intense contributions and impact towards their work (Kristensen, Hannerz, Høgh, & Borg, 2005; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998).

Recently, on year 2015 airline pilot has been categorized as top ten most stressful job in the world (CareerCast, 2015) and top five stressful job in Asia (Rahman, 2015). According to Paul (2012) career as airline pilot provides privileges such as good amount of salary, airline pilot gets to travel a lot, receives travel benefit with their family and friends, lots of time off and good retirement benefit for example travel benefit being extend for life. However, with emergence of economic threat and trends, the aviation industries also change accordingly and airline pilot career is now considered as a tough profession in Malaysia due to pilot supply exceeds demand and downsizes of main players of airline organization in Malaysia (Lim, 2014). It has been observed such as advantages no more exist. Therefore it encourages global civil aviation industries research being conducted by International Transport Workers Federation to know job burnout phenomena better on civil aviation industries (Fanjoy, Harriman, & DeMik, 2010).

Job burnout is related with emotional instability because of high work demands and less work resources to complete the task (Khan, 2015). Job burnout is a chronic job stress problem that needs to be given attention because it does not only give direct impact toward individual but it leads to quality and stability of social service. Generally, the review of previous literature regarding predictors of personal and environment job burnout among aviation pilots indicated shortened rest periods, adverse weather, aircraft maintenance issues and pressure to meet on time performance become contributors to pilot job burnout (Fanjoy et al., 2010). Other research conducted by Kearney (2008) mentioned that airline pilots covered job stressors like work overload, organization politics and undervalued reward system have impact on personal and professional work that lead to job burnout. Bennett (2003) on his research, conducted interview with airline pilot at UK addressing the findings were job stress need to be reviewed closely on aviation industries. Therefore, when airline pilot are under stress, their personal and professional life will be affected.

The researchers suppose that in the context of Malaysia aviation industries, all of the aforementioned factors exist which are causing job burnout among airline pilot. For instance, Harris (2014) mentioned a total 186 Malaysia Airline crew (cabin crew and pilot) quit between January to July due to family pressure from not doing their job. The review of the research generally in the world and specifically in Malaysia as mentioned earlier proved that the problem of job burnout exists in Malaysia airline industries. Therefore,

the current study examines the different contributing factors of job burnout among Malaysia airline pilot. In the past three years, Malaysia airline industries have suffered from a number of airline accident series. In addition, the investigations regarding the accident still continue. Moreover due to global economic downturn and high job demands, the social and working life of Malaysia airline pilot have been badly affected (Paul, 2012), the problem ultimately expand, which are compounded with problems like lack of resources. In order to fully understand nature of this phenomenon process, the present research will use different types of job resources and job demands in shape of job burnout on Malaysia aviation industries.

2. Problem Statement

Reviewing past research, the present research will continue with existing research about burnout in developing countries, as it will give more attention of job burnout problem among pilot in Malaysia aviation industries by accessing the relationship between job demand, job resources, psychological capital and job burnout. The review of existing literature on job demand and job resources reveals that majority of research have been conducted on between variable of job resources, job demands and job burnout as construct (Alarcon, 2011; Crawford, LePine, & Rich, 2010; Halbesleben, 2010; Joudain & Chênevert, 2010; Faisal Khan, Yusoff, & Khan, 2014; Nahrgang, Morgeson, & Hofmann, 2011). These researches represent inconsistency of the relationship between variable job resources, job demands and job burnout (Crawford et al., 2010). In addition, review from literature also indicated the same thing where Hakanen, Schaufeli, and Ahola (2008) indicated that the job resources have only weak negative impact on job burnout and Nahrgang et al. (2011) on their research indicated the job demands have negative relationship with job burnout. Furthermore the dimension of job burnout such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduce personal accomplishment have not been fully studied with job demand dimension (Khan, 2015). Therefore the current research focuses to examine these relationships.

Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli (2001) introduced job resources, job demands and job burnout model (JD-R), indicated relationship between job resources and job burnout have negative relationship and relationship between job demand and job burnout has positive relationship. Job resources, job demandsand job burnout relationships variable received many attentions by previous researchers and several studies have been conducted to explore these relationships (Bakker, Demerouti, De Boer, & Schaufeli, 2003; A. B. Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti, & Xanthopoulou, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001; Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Llorens, Bakker, Schaufeli, & Salanova, 2006; Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). In addition most researchers agree on nature how Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R) function, where Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R) will function in two conditions. First condition employee will utilize all mental and physical capabilities in term of extent a large amount of effort to cope with job demand, in long run all effort will tend to be depleted and burnout will occur. On second condition, job resources will help to motivate employee to perform their job and replenish their mental and physical capabilities (Nahrgang et al., 2011).

Llorens et al. (2006) indicate that Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R) is consistence across countries however the strength of the relationship is different. The Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R) research has been conducted in various occupational groups as an example white-collar workers, nurse, home care professionals, teachers, call-center employee and blue-collar workers. In addition, the model

also has been tested as well as in many countries like an example Germany, Netherlands, Greece, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, South Africa, China, Australia, Spain and Finland (Bakker, 2016). Schaufeli and Taris (2014) indicated that although with various research conducted with finding supports prediction of the model, there has been a numbers of key issue cannot be resolved regarding Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R) such as meaning and difference of “demands” and “resources”, epistemological model status, the difference between physical and mental impairment and the motivation process, incorporation personal resources, the model is designed to be used beyond individual capabilities and the issue of reciprocal causation.

Research conducted by Crawford et al. (2010) indicated that job resources and job demands play a significant role in job burnout however it is highly dependent on the nature of job resources and job demand. In addition, Hakanen et al. (2008) indicated that there are many job resources and job demands present in working environments, and it is important to understand which job demand decreases mental and physical and which job resources are motivating employee to engage with organization. The extent to which the Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R) generalizes across industries are still unclear Nahrgang et al. (2011). Research conducted by Hakanen et al. (2008) addressed that Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R) emphasizes more on work environment. However most psychological approaches believe that human behaviour are affected by their interaction between personal and environment factors (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). From this point of view it can be concluded that relationship among Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R) and job burnout dimension are inconsistency because the model introduced does not include the personal factor as indicator.

Psychological capital can be considered as dimension that includes in personal factor (Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Peng et al., 2013). Psychological capitals can moderate between independent variable (job resources, job demands) and dependent variable (job burnout) relationship. On top of that previous research conducted indicated two dimensions of psychological capital (self-efficacy and resiliency) compliment between job resources, job demands and job burnout relationship(Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2007). All research findings address in line with core self-evaluation theory that psychological capital dimensions (self-efficacy and resiliency) play a significant role in employees functioning at work (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Psychological capital has greater impact that generally linked to individual ability to control and impact their environment successfully (Hobfoll, Johnson, Ennis, & Jackson, 2003). Previous research conducted by Chen, Gully, and Eden (2001) also indicated the same meaning where psychological capital gives positive effect on physical and emotional well-being. Furthermore previous empirical research have generally supported the psychological capital dimension such as self-efficacy and resiliency moderating relationship between work characteristics and negative outcome (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007).

Furthermore psychological capital can be considered as important element and have significant impact towards job burnout (Peng et al., 2013). In addition, previous research conducted amplify allegations were psychological capital have a clear impact in reducing job burnout effect on social workers (Luthans & Youssef, 2004). Other finding on relationship job burnout and psychological capital found psychological capital can be a moderating and mediating variable to burnout, when psychological capital plays as mediating to burnout it will bring positive influence to reduce the negative effect of work stress on social

workers (Luthans, Norman, Avolio & Avey, 2008; Peng et al., 2013). On the other hand when psychological capital plays as moderating to burnout it also will bring the same effect such as mediating role (Zhao & Zhang, 2010). However, researchers less emphasize the importance of the need of moderating effect between psychological capital and job burnout. Therefore in this research, the researchers use psychological capital dimension as moderating variable on relationship between job resources, job demand and job burnout.

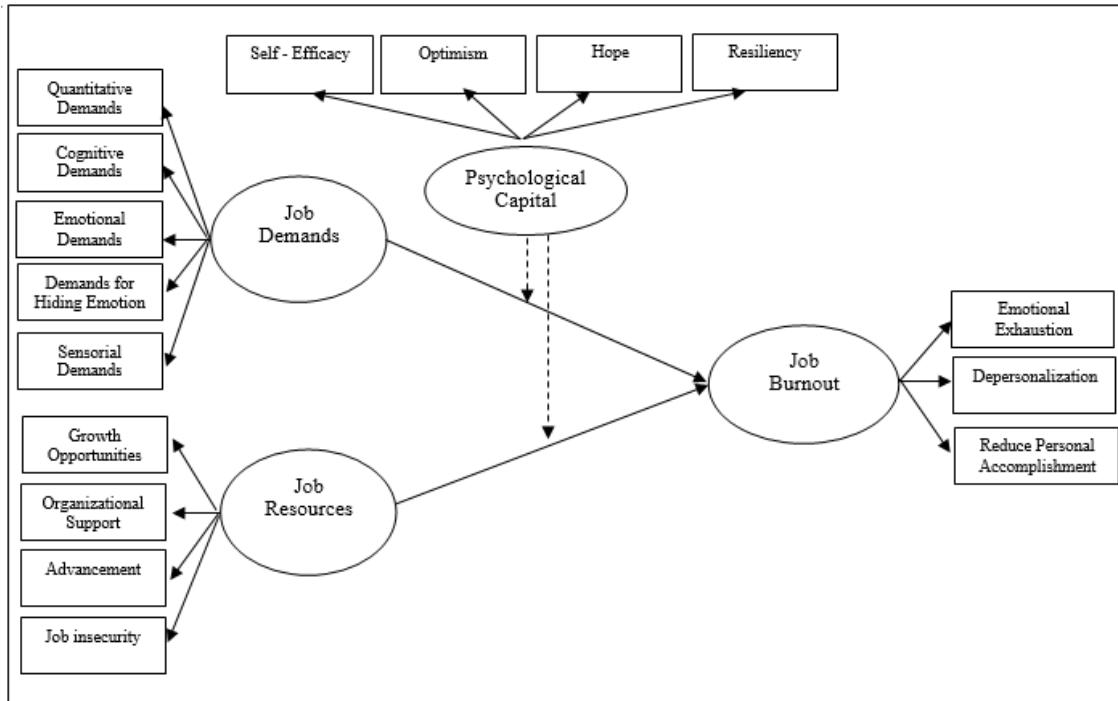


Figure 01. Research Framework

The present research consists of relationship between job resources dimension (growth opportunities, organization support, advancement and job insecurity), job demands dimension (quantitative demands, cognitive demands, emotional demands, demands for hiding emotions and sensorial demands), job burnout dimension (emotion exhaustion, depersonalization and reduce personal accomplishment) and psychological capital dimension (self-efficacy, optimism, resiliency, hope). Figure 1 represents the relationship between all variables on Malaysia aviation industries. The job demands will increase rate job burnout meanwhile reduce in job resources, while the moderating variable psychological capital will promote Malaysia aviation industries pilots to overcome job burnout effect.

3. Research Questions

This research examines the relationship between job demands, job resources, job burnout and psychological capital among pilots on Malaysia aviation industries. Researcher therefore defined the research questions for this research as to identify psychological capital dimension (self-efficacy, optimism, hope and resiliency) moderate the relationship between job demands dimensions (quantitative demands, cognitive demands, emotional demands, demands for hiding emotion and sensorial demands), job resources dimension (growth opportunities, organizational support, advancement and job insecurity) and job burnout

dimensions (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduce personal accomplishment) among pilot in Malaysia aviation industries.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study to investigate job burnout phenomenon on profit oriented organization such as Malaysia aviation industries and in developing countries such as Malaysia because across literature review regarding job burnout research conducted to industries that not related to profit organization in develop counties. This research aims to explore the key factor affecting job burnout and then determine the relationship of job demand, job resources. Furthermore this research also looks into the moderating role of the psychological capital.

5. Research Methods

Based on the review of job resources, job demands, psychological capital and job burnout dimension, the questionnaire contains two main parts. In the first part, the question asks regarding demographical information about respondent such as gender, material status, education level, races, age, residential and occupational tenure. The second part is further divided into four sections. In the first and second section, the questionnaire items regarding independent variable (job resources and job demands dimension) and the third section contains the questionnaire regarding moderating variable (psychological capital dimension) and the fourth section, all questions related to dependent variable (Job burnout dimension). The population of this research were the pilots of Malaysia aviation industries that work with three Malaysia airline organizations which are: Malaysia Airline Berhad, Airasia and Malindo Air. The total population for this study is 6669 according to Department of Civil Aviation Malaysia annual report (Aviation, 2015).

Sample size recommended for qualitative research is within minimum 30 and maximum of 500 is acceptable (Sekaran, 2000). In order to increase the robustness of the research, the large sample size should be chosen. GPower version three is being adopted to determine the sample size of this research. Furthermore in this research type of design is adopted as ‘linear multiple regression: fixed model, R² deviation from zero’ the effects sizes f² is 0.15, the probability of a beta errors is 0.05, the power is 0.95 and numbers of predictors is 13 by using GPower the total sample sizes for this research is 189. All 189 sets of questions distributed to pilots of Malaysia aviation industries. There will be no other formal requirement or qualifiers for the population as long as they are commercial airline pilots that work with Malaysia aviation industries. Data from the respondents will be collected and analyzed by the researchers.

6. Findings

Psychological capital defined as positive development of individual on area of psychological and behaviours towards organization. Luthans et al. (2004) on their research indicate that there is negative relationship between psychological capital and job burnout and this relationship may reduce the effect of job burnout among employees. Zhao and Zhang (2010) on their research indicate that psychological capital has mutual negative relationship with emotion exhaustion, depersonalization and reduce personal

accomplishment, all three dimensions of burnout. In addition, researchers also indicate that employees who have higher psychological capital would experience less job burnout rather than who have lower psychological capital. Research conducted by Peng et al. (2013) also indicate the same finding where psychological capital has negative effect on job burnout, where the increasing of psychological capital will reduce job burnout effect among employee. The research conducted by Xanthopoulou et al. (2007) on the role of personal resources in the job demands resources model found that self-efficacy and optimism moderating the relationship between job demands and emotion exhaustion as one of the component in job burnout dimension.

On others side across the literature review, it is proven that psychological capital has positive relationship with job resources, while job resources have a negative relationship with job burnout, but psychological capital have negative relationship with job burnout. These relationships can be proven through research conducted by Xanthopoulou et al. (2007) on the role of personal resources in the job demands resources model, self-efficacy and optimism the dimension of psychological capital dimensions moderate the relationship between job resources and depersonalization as one of the components in job burnout dimension. When psychological capital is decreased, it will increase the level of job burnout. Furthermore, if psychological capital is increasing, it increases the job resources and resulted job burnout to decrease.

7. Conclusion

This research examines the relationship mentioned before by keeping in view the recent changes that have occurred in Malaysia aviation industries especially pilot, where their job demand increases in performing daily job requirement such as follow tight flight schedule (Lim, 2014). This research will adopt theoretical model of Demand-Resources model (Demerouti et al., 2001) to test the relationship among the variables and these variables will be further investigated with moderating variable psychological capital. In this way, the JD-R model of burnout could be further extended. Moreover, the current research will focus to examine the dimension of job resources, job demands, job burnout and psychological capital and their relationship to fill the existing gaps in the literature

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