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KEADAAN KERJA DAN PERCANGGAHAN EMOSI: KAJIAN HOTEL DI SABAH

WORK CONDITIONS AND EMOTIONAL DISSONANCE: A STUDY OF HOTELS IN SABAH

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Abstrak: Walaupun industri perhotelan memainkan peranan penting dalam ekonomi, ia juga merupakan salah satu daripada sektor perkhidmatan yang terdedah kepada percanggahan emosi kerana sifat perindustrian mereka. Selain itu, kajian juga telah menyatakan bahawa persekitaran kerja sesebuah organisasi boleh menganggu konsistensi emosi pekerja. Oleh itu, kajian ini dijalankan untuk mengkaji hubungan antara keadaan kerja dan percanggahan emosi dalam industri hotel. ntuk menangani isu ini, soal selidik yang ditadbir sendiri disalurkan kepada 171 pekerja hotel dengan menggunakan kaedah persampelan bertujuan. Responden kajian ini dikategorikan kepaada dua iaitu rumah depan dan belakang rumah yang terdiri daripada beberapa jabatan seperti jabatan pengeluaran makanan dan minuman (dapur), jabatan pembersihan, jabatan pengurusan, jabatan ketibaan dan keberangkatan tetamu, serta jabatan hidangan makanan dan minuman. Data kajian ini diuji menggunakan teknik structural equation modelling berasaskan varians dengan menggunakan perisian Partial Least Square PLS 3.0. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa keadaan kerja mempunyai hubungan dengan percanggah emosi dalam pekerja hotel. Implikasi hasil kajian juga dibincangkan dan arahan untuk penyelidikan masa depan juga ditawarkan.

Kata Kunci: Keadaan Kerja, Percanggahan Emosi, Industri Perhotelan

Abstract: While hotel industry plays an important role to the economy, it is also one of the service sectors that are prone to experience emotional dissonance due to their industrial nature. Correspondingly, it is postulated that emotional inconsistency are affected by the work environment of an organization. Therefore, this study is conducted to examine the relationship between work conditions and emotional dissonance in hotel industry. To address this issue, a

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structured self-administered questionnaire was distributed to 171 hotel employees by utilizing purposive sampling technique. The respondents for the study involve two categories which are front-of -the house and back-of-the-house that comprised of several departments such as producing of food & beverages (Kitchen), housekeeping, management, guest arrival and departures, along with serving of food and beverages. The data of this study is tested by using variance-based structural equation modelling technique of Partial Least Square PLS 3.0. The finding indicates that emotional dissonance among hotel employees is significantly influenced by work conditions. Implications of the findings are discussed and directions for future research are offered.

Keywords: Work Conditions, Emotional Dissonance, Hotel Industry

Introduction

The service industry, hotels in particular, is an important factor that contributes to economic growth of a country (Mohajerani & Miremadi, 2012; Lahap et al., 2016; Sauian, Kamarudin & Rani, 2013). It is among of the growing industries in the global services trade (UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2009). At the same time, Sabah is found to be one of the busiest states in hotel industry due to overwhelming tourist arrival (Tourism Malaysia, 2016). As hotel industry is service-natured, this implies that the industry is heavily dependent on human labour in providing high quality customer service. Inevitably, unfavourable work environments often occurred such as constant time pressure, extensive workload, long working hours, and low job autonomy (Kristensen et al., 2002) due to the robustness of the industry. This is also supported by Lo and Lamm (2005), whereby hotel employees are frequently exposed to poor working conditions while being offered a rather low wage (Ahmad & Zainol, 2011; Jauhari, 2006). Most studies seen these work conditions as job-related stressors since they provide negative outcomes i.e. high turnover rate (Hoboubi et al., 2017; Ariffin & Che Ha, 2014), reduced productivity (Kim, Im & Hwang, 2015), and job dissatisfaction (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Mobley et al., 1979). Additionally, researchers also postulate that employees are emotional labourers as they are bound to manage and display their emotions as desired by the organization (Lashley, Morrison & Randall, 2005). While it assists in providing excellent services (Lashley et al., 2005), emotional labour can become dysfunctional towards an employee when there is a mismatch between felt and displayed emotion. According to Hochschild (1983), this dissonance is harmful towards employee's well-being because it is a separation of authentic emotion.

Literature Review

Person-Environment Fit (P-E Fit) Theory

In an earlier perspective of the theory, French *et al.* (1974) theorized that the inability of an employee to adjust with work environment would eventually lead to strain. The latter version (French *et al.*, 1982), however, extended two attributes that are determinant towards employee's well-being; (1) fitting of personal values with organization's supply and (2) fitting of skills with job demand. They justified that unfitting in any of the two attributes can cause job stress (Edward, 1996). There are several researches conducted to examine the relationship between P-E fit theory with several factors such as personal resources (Hobfoll *et al.*, 2003), demographic characteristics (Maslach *et al.*, 2001), and personality (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002). Previous research conducted in China by Yang, Che, and Spector (2008) concluded the degree of fit is related to job satisfaction, turnover intention, also physiological and psychological well-being. Another study by Pseekos, Yohwell, and Dahlen (2011) indicated that when fit

between employee's personality and work environment increases, so does the level of job satisfaction. In relation to this, the theory will be utilized to further illustrate the relationship between work conditions and job stress.

Work Condition and Emotional Dissonance

In general, work conditions cover a broad range of topics and issues, from working time to remuneration, as well as the physical conditions and mental demands that exist in the workplace (International Labor Organizaton, 2016). According to Koeske and Koeske (1993), they can also be referred as environmental stimuli that are perceived by employees as troublesome or disruptive. In hotel industry, it is often reported that work overload (Schaufeli et al, 2008; Ali & Farooqi, 2014) and time pressure (DeZoort & Lord, 1997) are among of the common experiences, while, supervisor's support is found as a major determinant on employees' performances (Thanacody et al., 2009; Blanch & Aluja, 2012; Lee & Ashforth, 1996). In any labor-intensive industry such as hotels, employees are expected to maintain their composure in any situation, especially frontline workers. Based on SERVQUAL model, the attributes such are empathy, reliability, responsiveness, and assurance; are dependent on the behaviour of employees. Therefore, it is explainable that organization is exercising control towards employees' emotional display (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003). However, as remarked by Ashford and Humprey (1993, p. 96), "emotional labour is a doubleedged sword" and previous studies have shown that restricting autonomy in expressing genuine feelings is related to emotional dissonance (Cheung & Tang, 2007; Giardini & Frese, 2006; Zapf & Holz, 2006) This may become overbearing among employees (Heuven & Bakker, 2003; Bakker & Heuven, 2006). For example, employees are expected to entertain guests even when they have to deal with excessive workload. Based on a study by Cheung and Tang (2010), they concluded that work characteristics including service-cultured is found to have a significant relationship with emotional dissonance. However, there is still limited study conducted to focus on the common work conditions in hotel industry. Therefore, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Time pressure is positively related to emotional dissonance

H2: Work overload is positively related to emotional dissonance

H3: Supervisor's support is positively related to emotional dissonance

Research Methodology

Sample and Procedure

The study utilizes random sampling of non-managerial operational employees among 4-star and 5-star hotels in Sabah. For this study, Thomas *et al.* (2016) and Kristic *et al.* (2015) are used to categorize the hotel departments; back of the house and front of the house, which include several departments such as producing of food and beverages (kitchen), housekeeping, management, guest arrival and departures, along with serving of food and beverages (server). As most of these hotels are located in the main city of Sabah, thus, selected hotels are within the vicinity of Kota Kinabalu. The sample size is calculated using G* Power Statistical Software and the generated sample size adequate for the study is 146.

Before the data collection, a pre-test with 20 non-managerial operational employees was conducted to assess content adequacy. Based on feedback from the pre-test, several items were slightly reworded for a better comprehension, while, item such as work shift and number of children were edited as suggested by the respondents. An invitation email letter was sent to

several hotels requesting distribution of the questionnaire to their employees, while, phone calls were made following the pursuit of confirmation upon receiving the email.

A total of 250 self-administered questionnaires were subsequently distributed, while only 205 questionnaires were returned rendering a response rate of 82%. However, after performing a case wise diagnostic, only 83.9% of the data collected are valid for data analysis, thus the sample size used for the study is 171.

Measure

All constructs in the study were measured on five-point Likert scale, anchored from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The reliability test showed that these measurements demonstrated adequate levels of internal consistency reliability by showing alpha values well above the suggested cut-off of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). Work overload was measured by nine-items drawn from Karasek et al. (1998). The items were developed to assess the experience of heavy workload among employees and this measurement has been utilized by Mansour and Trembley (2016) in hotel settings. Time pressure was measured by six items from Sampson and Akyeampong (2014). Supervisor's support was measured by using a seven-item measurement from several researchers (Thompson et al. (1999; Karasek et al., 1998; Fernandez; 1986) Emotional Dissonance was measured by using a ten-item measurement from Chu and Murmann (2006).

Data Analysis and Results

Characteristic of Respondents

To run the data of the respondents, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 23 was used and summarized as follows;

Table 1: Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variables	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	78	45.6%
	Female	93	54.4%
Age range	18 to 25 years old	115	65.7%
	26 to 33 years old	43	24.7%
	34 to 51 years old	13	7.8%
Marital Status	Married	40	76.6%
	Single	131	23.4%
No. of Children	None	137	80.1%
	1-3	25	14.6%
	3-5	7	4.1%
	More than 5	2	1.2%
Level of Education	PMR/SRP	2	1.2%
	SPM	72	42.1%
	STPM	28	16.4%
	Diploma	50	29.2%
	Degree	16	9.4%
	others	3	1.8%
Current Position	Non-managerial level	171	100%
Department	Producing food & beverages	16	9.4%
	Housekeeping	30	17.5%
	Management	32	18.7%

	Guest arrival & departures	45	26.3%
	Serving of food & beverages	48	28.1%
Tenure	Less than 5 years	94.2%	161%
	6-9 years	5.8%	10%
Working Hour	40 hours per week	17	9.9%
	41-48 hours per week	140	81.9%
	49 hours and above per week	14	8.2%
Shift type	Fixed day shift	45	26.3%
	Rotating day shift	115	67.3%
	Rotating night shift	11	6.4%

Convergent Validity

To test the reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the model, this study adopted the suggestion by Hair *et al.* (2013), in which all loadings must be higher than 0.600 and the constructed Average Variance Extracted (AVE) must exceed 0.50 (Bagozzi, 1981). According to Table 1, all loadings are within the requirement. Table 1 shows that the entire constructed of AVE ranged from 0.502 to 0.695, thus, the convergent validity of this research model is acceptable due to the AVE of all items exceeded 0.50.

Table 2: Measurement model

Construct	Item	Loadings	AVE	CR	Cronbach's	Mean
		Ü			Alpha	
Time Pressure	TP2	0.751	0.695	0.872	0.779	2.921
	TP3	0.842				
	TP4	0.813				
Work Overload	WO2	0.712	0.502	0.858	0.807	3.499
	WO3	0.800				
	WO4	0.672				
	WO5	0.683				
	WO6	0.622				
	WO7	0.704				
Supervisor's	SS1	0.684	0.554	0.896	0.866	2.520
Support	SS2	0.735				
	SS3	0.713				
	SS4	0.817				
	SS5	0.748				
	SS6	0.838				
	SS7	0.658				
Emotional	ED1	0.880	0.650	0.936	0.920	3.116
Dissonance	ED2	0.897				
	ED3	0.817				
	ED4	0.872				
	ED5	0.793				
	ED6	0.853				
	ED8	0.626				
	ED10	0.668				

Note: TP1, TP5, TP6, WO1, WO8 ED7 & ED9 were deleted due to low loading.

Discriminant Validity

The cross loading measurement criteria by Fornell and Larcker (1981) were used to determine discriminant validity of this study. A higher indicator factor compared to other constructed measurement specifies that cross loading has occurred. Table 2 display that the measurement of model discriminant validity is acceptable; all square root of the AVE for each construct are higher compared to each inter-correlation value between the construct. Thus, the Fornell and Larcker's criterion was met.

Structural Model

In order for the study to estimate the structural model using the SmartPLS, a resample of 500 for bootstrapping module was conducted. This allows for the t-values for each construct in the model to be generated and the latent variables related to each other are specified within the model. Thus, allows the constructs and path between them to be depicted.

Hypothesis Testing

The study used path analysis to test the three hypotheses. The R^2 value of 0.376 for work conditions towards emotional dissonance indicated that 37.6% of the variance is explained by work conditions (time pressure, work overload, and supervisor's support). The proposed hypotheses were validated using the structural model and the level of acceptance of the path coefficients advocated by Hair *et al.* (2011) and Wetzels *et al.* (2009), whereby a minimum of 0.1 path coefficient needed to have an impact on the model. The suggested significant level of the coefficients must be at least 0.05 (i.e. 95% confidence level). The result obtained from Table 3 stated that time pressure is found to be positively related with emotional dissonance (β = 0.242, t = 3.573; p < 0.01). Thus, H1 is supported. Similarly, it is also found that work overload has a positive correlation with emotional dissonance (β = 0.223(t = 3.381; p < 0.01). As such, H2 is supported in this study. Finally, supervisor's support is found to be positively related with emotional dissonance, therefore, H3 is also supported (β = 0.335, t = 4.773; p < 0.01).

Table 3: Hypothesis Testing

Hypothe	Std	Std	t- value	p-	Result
sis	Beta	Error		value	
H1	0.242	0.068	3.573*	0	Time pressure is positively related to emotional dissonance
H2	0.223	0.066	3.381*	0.001	Work overload is positively related to emotional dissonance
Н3	0.335	0.070	4.773* **	0	Supervisor's support is positively related to emotional dissonance

Note: * t-value >1.65 at p<0.1; ** t-value > 1.96 at p<0.05; *** t-value >2.58 at p<0.01.

Discussion and Implications

This study attempted to explore the work conditions that lead to emotional dissonance. Based on Person-Environment Fit Theory (French *et al.*, 1982), it is hypothesized that (1) time pressure is positively related to emotional dissonance, (2) work overload could lead to emotional dissonance, and (3) supervisor's support also causes emotional dissonance among employees in hotel industry. The results of this study are found to be consistent with the theories and previous finding (Cheung & Tang, 2010; Cheung & Tang, 2007; Giardini & Freses, 2006; Zapf & Holz, 2006; Karabanow, 2000). As predicted, the result of this study showed that these common work conditions in hotel industry are leading to emotional dissonance. Hotel employees who experienced time pressure and work overload in their line of

work are expected to control their expression of frustration or tiredness in public, thus, concealing their true emotion to achieve organizational demand. Meanwhile, lack of supervisor's support is also found as among of the contributor towards emotional dissonance. This is because supervisory support is needed to reduce strain (Lee & Ashforth, 1996), at the same time, become an antidote to job demands (Thompson *et al.*, 2005). Meanwhile, it is important to note that emotional dissonance has detrimental effects towards employees' well-being and organization's performance (Heuven & Bakker, 2003; Bakker & Heuven, 2006). As such, based on the findings, the following implications are proposed; (1) hotel managers can provide assessment and training programme to help employees cope with work stress by utilizing effective emotional-regulation techniques, (2) hotel managers may need to conduct formal and informal interviews to assess their level of emotional dissonance, by doing so managers are able to identify suitable preventive measures, and (3) hospitality organization should focus on the role of supervisors in workplace; provide intensive training and tests before promoting or hiring a supervisor.

Limitations and Suggestion for Future Research

Although the results were promising, this study has certain limitations that must be considered when interpreting results. The first limitation is the industry coverage, although hotel industry is important towards the economy, contributions from other sub-services sectors should be considered as well (Sauian, Kamarudin & Rani, 2013). As such, future research could take into account these sectors and their work conditions, which may possibly lead to emotional dissonance. Secondly, the scope of the study only focuses on Sabah. According to Tourism Malaysia (2016), the top five states with the highest hotel guests are Pahang, Johor, Penang, Sabah, and Sarawak. The hotel work conditions among these states might be different from the central of this study. In relation to this, there is a need to discover its effect towards emotional dissonance.

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