THE MODERATING EFFECTS OF JOB DEMAND BETWEEN JOB RESOURCES, WORK-LIFE ENRICHMENT, AND CORE SELF-EVALUATIONS ON WORK ENGAGEMENT AMONG ACADEMICS IN MALAYSIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between job resources (i.e. perceived organisational support, immediate superior support, colleague support, autonomy, recognition, job prestige, and perceived external prestige), work-life enrichment and core self-evaluations on work engagement among academics in Malaysian public universities. In addition, this study also examined the moderating effects of job demands on these relationships. The survey questionnaire was designed to elicit responses from the participants. A total of 756 questionnaires were distributed to the academics from 18 public universities in Peninsular Malaysia. Three hundred eighty five (385) usable questionnaires were returned, yielding a response rate of 50.9%. The data were analysed using multiple regression analysis. The results indicated that immediate superior support, perceived external prestige, work-to-personal life enrichment, personal life-to-work enrichment, and core self-evaluations were positively related to work engagement. On the other hand, colleague support was found to be negatively related to work engagement. Result from hierarchical regression analysis showed that job demands only moderate the relationship between work-to-personal life enrichment and work engagement. This means the effect of work-to-personal life enrichment and work engagement is strengthened when academic staff is confronted with high job demands. This study shows that systematic training programs are needed to enhance more supportive supervisory practices. To reduce the adverse impact of colleague support on work engagement, academics should be exposed to how communication content can have profound influence on both emotional and instrumental functions of different sources of support. The management should recruit and develop academics with positive core self-evaluation. Besides, efforts to promote prestige image of the universities is likely to bear fruitful results in enhancing the work engagement. In addition, the management should assist employees in achieving greater balance between their work and personal life through work life policies and programs. Last but not least, the limitations of the present study and some suggestions for future research are discussed as well.

Keywords: work engagement, job resources, job demands, work-life enrichment, core self-evaluation

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisa hubungan antara sumber-sumber kerja (persepsi sokongan daripada organisasi, sokongan penyelia, sokongan rakan sekerja, autonomi, pengiktirafan, prestij kerja, dan persepsi prestij luaran), pengayaan kerja-kehidupan peribadi, dan penilaian utama diri terhadap penglibatan kerja. Selain itu, peranan permintaan kerja sebagai penyerhana di antara pembolehubah-pembolehubah tersebut turut dikaji selidik. Sebanyak 756 borang kaji selidik telah diedarkan kepada para akademik daripada 18 buah univesiti kerajaan di Semenanjung Malaysia. Seramai 385 akademik telah memulangkan soal selidik yang boleh digunakan, jadi kadar maklum balas adalah sebanyak 50.9%. Data yang diperolehi telah dianalisa melalui regresi berbilang. Keputusan daripada analisa tersebut menunjukkan sokongan penyelia, persepsi prestij luaran, pengayaan kerja–kepada-kehidupan peribadi, pengayaan kehidupan peribadi-kepada-kerja dan penilaian utama diri mempunyai hubungan positif dengan penglibatan kerja. Selain itu, sokongan rakan kerja menunjukkan hubungan negatif dengan penglibatan kerja. Keputusan regresi hirarki berbilang menunjukkan hanya permintaan kerja mengantara antara hubungan pengayaan kerja-kepada-kehidupan peribadi dan penglibatan kerja. Ini bermaksud kesan pengayaan kerja-kepada-kehidupan peribadi dan penglibatan kerja meningkat apabila staf akademik menghadapi permintaan kerja yang tinggi. Program latihan yang sistematik diperlukan untuk meningkatkan amalan-amalan penyelia yang menunjukkan lebih banyak sokongan terhadap pekerja. Untuk mengurangkan kewujudan kesan negatif daripada sokongan rakan sekerja, para akademik perlu didedahkan terhadap bagaimana kandungan komunikasi yang disampaikan terhadap seseorang boleh mempengaruhi fungsi emosi dan instrumental daripada sumber di mana sokongan diberikan. Pengurusan universiti adalah digalakkan untuk merekrut dan membentuk para academik yang mempunyai penilaian diri yang positif. Selain itu, usaha yang lebih diperlukan untuk mempromosikan imej baik universiti. Usaha ini akan membuahkan hasil yang berkesan dalam meningkatkan penglibatan kerja para akademik. Tambahan pula, pihak pengurusan patut membantu pekerja untuk mengecapai keseimbangan antara kerja dan kehipupan persendirian melalui polisi dan program yang berkaitan. Limitasi dan cadangan untuk kajian masa akan datang turut dibincangkan.

Kata kunci: penglibatan kerja, sumber-sumber kerja, permintaan kerja, pengayaan kerja-kehidupan peribadi, penilaian utama diri

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

COR	Conservation of Resources
CSE	Core Self-Evaluations
CSES	Core Self-Evaluations Scale
HEI	Higher Education Institution
JD	Job Demands
JD-R	Job Demands-Resources
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
MSA	Measure of Sampling Adequacy
MRA	Multiple Regression Analysis
NHESP	National Higher Education Strategic Plan
PEP	Perceived External Prestige
POB	Positive Organisational Behaviour
PLWE	Personal Life-to-Work Enrichment
QS	Quacquarelli Symonds
THE	Times Higher Education
UWES	Utrecht Work Engagement Scale
WPLE	Work-to-Personal Life Enrichment

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

Quite a number of researches in organisational behaviour have explained that enhancing human potential is very important in improving organisational performance (e.g. Luthans & Youssef, 2007; Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008). The increased attention on positive organisational behaviour, such as work engagement inspires scholars to continuously emphasize on theory building and perform relevant research in relation to this area. Such efforts would enable more effective application of positive traits and behaviour among employees in the work place (Luthans & Youssef, 2007).

In view of today's competitive and dynamic environment, various organisations are facing with greater challenges in attracting and retaining talented employees, which are critical in determining an organisation's performance and sustainable competitive advantage. Besides, it is also equally important for an organisation to prepare an avenue that allows employees to unleash their full potential and be engaged in their work. The above issues not only concern the corporate sector, but also the higher education institutions (HEIs), particularly the universities. No doubt, human resources would be a crucial factor to enable the universities to produce competent graduates and enhance the institutions' position internationally.

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