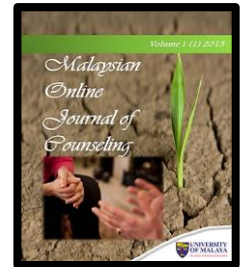


## THE EFFECT OF JOB RESOURCES AS MODERATING VARIABLE BETWEEN JOB DEMANDS AND WORK ENGAGEMENT ON UNIVERSITY LECTURERS

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### ABSTRACT

This study aim to examine the role of job resources as the moderating variable in the relationship between job demands and work engagement on lecturers. Three aspects of job demands (workload, emotional demand, and work-home conflict) and three aspects of job resources (autonomy, self development opportunity, and social support) were applied to the model. Data were collected from 83 lecturers in Yogyakarta. The moderated regression analysis was used to analyze the data. The result of the study showed : 1) job demands has negative correlation with work engagement ( $r = -0.073$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), 2) job resources has positive correlation with work engagement ( $r = 0.407$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), 3) job resource has significant role as moderating variables between job demands and work engagement ( $R = 0.533$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

**Keywords:** Job Demands, Job Resources, Work Engagement, Lecturer

## INTRODUCTION

The challenges of globalization are also faced by higher education institutions. Higher education's institutions have an important position to obtain a high quality in human resources. At the era of competition in the global higher education, higher education institutions need to maintain sustainability and continue to improve its quality. To achieve its goals, the organization needs to ensure that each person is running their task with optimal performance. Lecturers are in the first row to face this challenge. Without sufficient lecturers performance, it is impossible for higher education organization to achieve its goals.

Many studies have shown that the *work engagement* has a positive correlation with the key results of the performance, both for the worker and the organization. Work engagement is proven to improve individual performance, which will ultimately improve organizational performance. Workers with high work engagement will have the ability to display the good work because they invest the resources within themselves to the various aspects of performance (Halbesleben & Bowler, 2007). This is supported by research from Lorens, et al (2007), and Salanova, Bakker, & Llorens (2006) who found that work engagement, self-efficacy and the job resources create a positive spiral which is expected to lead to improved performance all the time (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008). In addition, workers with work engagement has high morale, enthusiastic with their work, and they are often immersed in his work (Macey & Schneider; May, Gilson, & Harter, in Xanthopolou et al, 2009) that tend to have high productivity.

There are several theories that can be used to explain the work engagement. One explanation most widely used is the *Job-Demands Resource Model* (Albrecht, 2010). Based on the theory of Job Demands-Resources Model, there are two main factors that affect work engagement, namely the *job demands* and *job resources*. *Job demands* are all aspects of physical, psychological, social and organizational of a job that requires effort and physical and psychic skills on an ongoing basis, thus requiring certain physical and psychological sacrifice. An example is the high-pressure jobs, physical condition are less supportive working environment, as well as emotional interaction with organization members.

*Job resources* is any physical, social, psychological and organizational aspects of a job, that functioning or in achieving work goals, reduce job demands and sacrifice associated physical and psychological, as well as stimulate the development and personal growth (Demerouti, et al, 2001). Job resources has potency to facilitate the development of intrinsic motivation and personal learning as well as the potential for extrinsic motivation by providing instrumental assistance or information specific to achieve the goal (Schaufelli & Bakker, 2004). Research shows that job resources (such as autonomy, social support, supervisory skills, feedback on performance, and opportunities for professional development) have a positive correlation with job attachment. Labor resources have an important relationship with work engagement, especially in conditions where high job demands (Xanthopolou et al, 2009).

According to Bakker (in Albrecht, 2010), there are two different processes in the Job Demands-Resources Model, namely the health impairment process and the motivational process, both of which play a role in the development of work stress and motivation. In the process of health imbalance, too high work demands will deplete the mental and physical resources of employees resulting in exhaustion of energy. As a consequence, work demands will cause stress, fatigue, burnout and health problems.

In accordance with Hockey (in Bakker & Demerouti, 2006) individuals use performance protection strategies under the influence of environmental demands. Performance protection is achieved through the mobilization of sympathetic nervous activation and or enhancement of subjective effort by using active controls in information processing. As the amount of activation and effort increases, the greater the physiological sacrifice is spent. This results in the depletion of energy possessed by the individual.

If individuals have relatively high job demands, this will have an impact on the employees' psychological well-being (such as burnout, work tension, and lack of job involvement). Many studies show that job demands such as workload, emotional demands, and vagueness of roles can lead to sleep disturbances, fatigue and poor health (Bakker & Demerouti, 2006). Based on many studies, among others undertaken by Schaufelli, Bakker, & Van Rhenen (2009), Hakkanen, Schaufelli, & Ahola (2008), Hakkanen, Bakker & Schaufelli (2006), and Bakker, Demerouti & Verbeke (2004) job demands will significantly cause burnout, and reduce work engagement.

In Job-Demands Resources Model, job resources are not only needed to keep up with the demands of work but also have their own urgency. Job Demands-Resources Model shows that work resources can be a buffer effect of work demands on burnout. Under the pressure of working conditions, workers with high resources will provide their own inventory so that they are better able to cope with high demands, as a result, they have a lower burnout (Bakker in Xanthopolou, 2007). Job resources have motivational potential that lead to high work engagement, low cynicism, and good performance. Job resources have a role as an intrinsic motivator because work resources encourage the development, growth and learning of individuals, as well as having a role as extrinsic motivator because it is instrumental in achieving the goals of work.

Job resources also fulfill basic human needs, such as the need for autonomy, competence, and connectedness to things outside of (relatedness). For example, appropriate feedback will encourage the learning process, thereby increasing work competence, while freedom of decision and social support can meet the need for autonomy and the need for belongingness. Work resources can also serve as extrinsic motivators because the work environment that provides a lot of resources will encourage someone to have a willingness to dedicate their effort and ability to work tasks (Bakker & Demerouti, 2006).

Job resources are needed to adapt the job demands and to achieve employment goals. This relates to the view that satisfaction of the fundamental psychological needs of autonomy, belongingness, competence, and work resources intrinsically motivates employees (Van den Broeck, in Albrecht, 2010). Based on previous explanation, this study will examine the role of job resources as moderator between job demands and work engagement among lecturer.

## RESEARCH METHODS

### *Participants*

Participants in this study are 83 lecturers from an university in Yogyakarta. The characteristics of the participants were: a) having work tenure at least for 1 years as lecturers, b) have been married. The last criteria was made because one of the job demands that will be measured was work-home interference, which will be suit if the participants had been married.

## ***Instruments***

The data in this study were collected by using 3 questionnaires:

1. Work Engagement Scale

Work engagement was measured using an adaptation of the *Utrecht Work Engagement Scale* (UWES) short version that consisting of 17 item (Schaufelli & Bakker, 2006). Response for each item ranged from 0 ("Never") to 6 ("Always"). Reliability test results showed overall scale reliability was very good with a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.934. The total-item correlation ranged from 0.435 to 0.797.

2. Job Demands Scale

Job demands were measured by using the Job Demands Scale and arranged by researcher. Three aspects were used to measure job demands, based on previous research by Bakker, Demerouti & Verbeke (2004), namely: *workload, emotional demands, and work-home interference*. Each aspect consists of 6 item. Response for the Job Demands scale ranged from 1 ("Never") to 5 ("Always"). Reliability test of *job demands* performed separately per aspects because each aspects of this scale does not come from a single construct. Reliability test results on *workload* produced 4 valid items. The item-total correlation ranged from 0.567 - 0.632 and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.783. Reliability test results on the *emotional* aspects produce 4 valid item with the item total correlation ranged from 0.430 - 0.732 and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.789. The *work-home interference* comprises 5 item with the item total correlation ranged from 0.480 - 0.723 and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients was 0.815

3. Job Resources Scale

Job Resources measured using Job Resource Scale and arranged by the researcher. There are three aspects of job resources to be used, based on previous research by Bakker, Demerouti & Euwema (2005), namely: *autonomy in work, self-development opportunities, and social support*. Each aspect consist of 6 item. Response for The Job Resource Scale ranged from 1 ("Never") to 5 ("Always"). Job Resources Scale reliability test was conducted per aspect because the aspect is not derived from a single construct. Reliability test results showed that there were 3 valid items for *autonomy*, with item total correlation ranged from 0.470 - 0.579 and Alpha coefficient was 0.698. Reliability test results for *self-development opportunities* produced all 6 item were reliable, with the item total correlation ranged from 0.440 - 0.692 and the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was 0.789. Reliability test results showed *social support's* item were reliable, with the item total correlation ranged from 0.394 - 0.595 and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.761.

## ***Data Analysis***

The moderated regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis. The analysis performed with SPSS for Windows version 21.

## **RESULT**

Data analysis to testing the hypotesis using moderated regression analysis can be divided into four steps. First step is to test the correlation between job demands and work engagement. The correlation between job demands and work engagement is expected to be negative and significant. Second step is to test the correlation between job resources and work engagement. This correlation is expected to be positive and significant. The third step is to measure the interraction variable

between job demand and job resources. And the last step is put the interaction variable to the regression model, together with job demand and job resources as independent variables, then work engagement as dependent variable. The regression between interaction variable and work engagement is expected to be significant.

The data analysis showed: 1) Job demands has significant negative correlation with work engagement ( $r = -0.073$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), 2) Job resources has significant positive correlation with work engagement ( $r = 0.407$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), 3) Job resource has significant role as moderating variables between job demands and work engagement ( $R = 0.533$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Based on these result, the hypothesis are accepted.

Table 1  
*Hypothesis Testing Result*

VARIABLES	R	p
Work Engagement * Job Demands	-0.073	0.000**
Work Engagement * Job Resources	0.407	0.000**
Work Engagement * Job Demands * Job Resources	0.533	0.000**

*\*\*The result are significance at 0,01 level.*

## DISCUSSION

Job resources are having the buffer effect to job demands. This is also according with the previous research by Bakker, Demerouti and Euwema (2005) and Xanthopolou (2007). Specifically, several studies have shown that autonomy has the effect of resisting the effects of work demands (especially work overload and time pressures). The presence of instrumental support from colleagues can help the tasks be completed on time and can ease the workload. In the meantime, respect for employee performance will maintain their motivation and signal them to keep working well (Van der Doef & Maes, 1999 in Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, 2005).

Many studies have shown work resources have a correlation with high work attachments, including research conducted by Schaufelli, Bakker & Van Rhenen (2009), Xanthopolou et al (2009), Hakkanen, Schaufelli & Ahola (2008), and Bakker, Demerouti & Euwema (2005). Work resources not only serve as a buffer effect on job demands, but induce workers to achieve their goals. On the other hand, workers become more committed and tied to their work, because they get the fulfillment of their work (Hackman & Oldham, in Xanthopolou et al, 2009).

The motivational process is also in accordance with Job Characteristic Theory. Hackman & Oldham (in Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010) argue that work can be designed in such a way as to motivate employees internally or intrinsically. Intrinsic motivation occurs when individuals are "turned on" into their work because of positive feelings that cause individuals to work well to work effectively, not because they are dependent on external factors. According to Hackman & Oldham, internal work motivation is influenced by three psychological states in which the three states will be affected by the five core dimensions of work. Therefore, to create a high internal motivation, the work must be designed to have those five dimensions (Kreitner & Kinciki, 2010). Research shows that work resources such as autonomy, social support, monitoring capabilities, feedback on performance, and opportunities for professional development have a positive correlation with work attachment (Xanthopolou et al, 2009). Workers also become more committed and tied to their work, because they get fulfillment from their work (Bakker & Demerouti, 2006).

Other studies have shown the interrelation between work resource variables, work demands, burnout and job attachment in the Job Demands-Resources Model, burnout turns out to be a variable mediating the relationship between work demands and work attachments, as demonstrated by Rohmann & Joubert (2007). The study shows the relationship between job demands, work resources, burnout and work attachment, work resources have a negative correlation with burnout, work demands have a positive correlation with burnout and burnout has a negative correlation with work attachment. This is also in accordance with research findings from Schaufeli, Bakker & van Rhenen (2009).

## CONCLUSIONS

The results indicates that work engagement in lecturers is influenced by the job demands and moderated by job resources. Job demands have negative correlation to work engagement. Meanwhile, job resources have positive correlation toward work engagement.

## SUGGESTIONS

According with the results, there are some strategies needed to optimize lecturer's work engagement. The first is, organization needs to manage the job demands among lecturers. For example, the organization may distribute a fair amount of the workload among lecturers. Since workload may causing some stress, organization can manage an employee assistance program (EAP) for the lecturers. An EAP is a benefit program that assists employees with personal problems and/or work-related problems that may impact their job performance and well-being. EAPs may include assessments, short-term counseling, referrals, and follow-up services for employees. EAP counselors also work in a consultative role with managers and supervisors to address employee and organizational challenges and needs.

Organizations also need to increase the job resources through appropriate policies. Some strategies, for example, increase autonomy at work, enhance personal and development opportunities, also strengthen existing social support within the organization. EAP also can be a certain job resources for employee.

For future research, it is suggested to use more number of participants to achieve research confidence. Other researchers may use the other dimensions of job demands or job resources.

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