The Influence of Employee Voice and Employee Resilience to Turnover Intention through Emotional Exhaustion as Mediator on Industrial Garment Workers in Indonesia

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Abstract—This study aims to examine the roles of employee voice and resilience to turnover intention through emotional exhaustion as mediator. This study is a part of a research project between Universitas Indonesia (UI), Tufts University (TU), and Real-Time Analytics (RTA) Vietnam. Data were collected with questionnaires to a sample of 2,867 garment workers on five provinces in Indonesia and supported by few focus group discussions. After reliability and validity of the measurements confirmed, structural equation modelling conducted to examine the hypothesised relationships. The main findings were: emotional exhaustion complementary mediate the relationship between employee voice and turnover intention, and competitively mediate the relationship between employee resilience and turnover intention.

Index Terms—Emotional exhaustion, Employee voice, Resilience, and Turnover intention

1 INTRODUCTION

Indonesia holds an essential part in the garment industry. Based on the export's value of international garment industry, Indonesia holds the 8th place with its clothing value worth 7 Billion USD and its share to the tune of 1.7% [1]. The soaring value of clothing exports in Indonesia is accompanied by the production growth of its garment industry. In the second quarter of 2018, Indonesia’s garment industry went through a 14.63% production growth and was predicted to always grow ever since [2], [3].

The growth of the garment industry is accompanied with the increase of labour demand. In Indonesia, the garment industry takes in around 13% of the total manufacturing industry labourers [4], [5]. However, the soaring value of labour retention in the manufacturing industry is accompanied with the appearance of turnover labourers. According to Manufacturer's Alliance’s survey in 2017, the average manufacturing industry labourers’ turnover rate in 2017 was 17.2%, where 11.5% of them is a voluntary turnover [6]. Furthermore, the garment industry in Indonesia keeps on stating their demand on labour supply periodically. The lack of labour supply in the garment industry will only get worse if the turnover rate in this industry is not controlled [7], [8], [9].

The soaring rate of turnover labourers remains as the main topic for researchers to not only find the reason of why people quit from their jobs, but also formulate a strategy to counter the soaring rate of turnover labourers [10]. Turnover intention is a variable useful for predicting actual turnover rate. Although not all turnover intention results to actual turnover, observation towards turnover intention are helpful to identify labourers who hold an intention to quit along with its reasons, so that the organisation can formulate a strategy to prevent turnover [11], [12].

The intention for someone to quit their job might be influenced by various factors [12], [13]. Emotional Exhaustion is one of the closely related emotional condition to turnover intention. Emotional exhaustion is a feeling where an individual feels the lack of energy caused by their emotionally demanding work [10]. Emotional exhaustion is the primary element of burnout and a long-term effect of stress on work that is capable of affecting labour’s work performance and even capable of causing fear of working on labours [12], [14], [15].

Each individual has different level on expressing themselves on stressful events. Therefore, each labour has their way of showing and handling stress on their work and its effect to emotional exhaustion that might arise. One’s ability to manage his emotion is a characteristic of resilient. Resilience is a psychological process that facilitates someone in handling difficulty and turning it into an experience that results in stronger personality also the ability to develop skills even in highly demanding psychological situation [16].

Aside from personal factors, emotional exhaustion is often identified as a response of organisational factor [16]. The mechanism of employee voice is one of the organisational factors that affect emotional exhaustion. The negative effects of employee voice towards emotional exhaustion appear in frustrating and sorrowful events after voicing an ignored opinion and vice versa [14]. Employee voice has two primary meanings, labour’s proactive behaviour in voicing suggestion, and the process that pushes labour’s contribution to influencing managerial decision [17].

Studies related to turnover intention, emotional exhaustion, resilience, and employee voice are mainly done separately, whereas the four variables are complementary. Therefore, a study that analyses the four variables simultaneously, especially in Indonesia’s garment industry, is needed. Hence, this study aims to examine the roles of employee voice and resilience to turnover intention through emotional exhaustion as the mediator to garment industry workers in Indonesia as well as providing relevant recommendation and managerial implication of turnover intention problems. The respondent of this...
study is industrial garment workers in DKI Jakarta, Banten, Jawa Barat, Jawa Tengah, and Yogyakarta.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Employee voice

Formerly, Hirschman (1970) conceptualised employee voice as a form of responding from job dissatisfaction [18]. Then, in the late 1970s, employee voice was defined as an organisational process that allows individuals to influence a decision by providing information related to that decision [19]. Later, in the 1990s, employee voice was proposed as a concept of two elements, which is a process of voicing complaints and opportunities to participate in organisational decision making [20].

Kahn's theory (1980) and Hirschman's theory (1970), shows that both workers' responses to dissatisfaction can emerge simultaneously. By convincing workers that their voices can influence the organisation, gradually the intention of workers to stay with the organisation will grow. Several previous research has proved the negative relationship between employee voice and turnover intention [21], [22], [23], but none of them was conducted on industrial garment workers in Indonesia.

Hypothesis 1. Employee voice experiences negatively influence turnover intention on industrial garment workers in Indonesia

2.2 Resilience

Resilience concept is categorized into three approaches, resilience as a trait, resilience as a behavioural outcome, and resilience as a process. As a trait, resilience is defined as a personal trait that helps an individual to cope up with stress. As a behavioural outcome, resilience is a function that can conquer individuals to recover from stressful events. The process approach views resilience as a dynamic process in which individuals actively adapt and recover rapidly from major stressful events. Many researchers said that resilience is one of the psychological capital that is related to feeling recovered and rising again after experiencing difficulties, and be better prepared for future challenges [16], [24].

Previous research has proved the negative relationship between employee resilience and turnover intention. However, all of them were conducted on human service industry [16]. In this study, we seek thus relationship on industrial garment workers in Indonesia.

Hypothesis 2. Employee resilience negatively influences turnover intention on industrial garment workers in Indonesia

2.3 Emotional Exhaustion

Emotional exhaustion refers to the emotional feeling that is too burdening and draining due to work. Emotional exhaustion is the main aspect of burnout [25], [26]. It can be identified as a response to organisational factors and personal factors [16]. One of the organisational factors that influences the condition of emotional exhaustion is the mechanism of employee voice. Previous research proved that the mechanism of employee voice influences employee emotional exhaustion. The existence of employee voice mechanisms as job resources can reduce emotional exhaustion perceived by workers [14]. Moreover, the lack of job resources in fulfilling job demands can trigger burnout [27], [28].

Hypothesis 3. Employee voice experiences negatively influence emotional exhaustion on industrial garment workers in Indonesia

Meanwhile, one of the personal factors that affect emotional exhaustion is resilience from workers. Individuals with a low level of resilience indicate a disruption to their emotional stability when dealing with problems [29]. In organisations, previous research has shown that unstable emotions and less resilient are signs of emotional exhaustion. Study conducted by Bande et al. (2015) has proven the existence of a negative relationship between resilience and emotional exhaustion.

Hypothesis 4. Employee resilience negatively influences emotional exhaustion on industrial garment workers in Indonesia

2.4 Turnover Intention

Most of the turnover concept views turnover intention or intention to quit as the last cognitive variable, and it also has a direct causal impact before the occurrence of actual turnover behaviour [30]. Hence, the turnover intention is often defined as a conscious and intentional desire to leave the organisation [31]. Various factors can influence the intention of someone to leave their work, but one of the emotional conditions that are closely related to turnover intention is emotional exhaustion which is the response of employee voice (organisational factors) and resilience (personal factors) [12], [13], [16].

Previous research proves that emotional exhaustion is a significant determinant of turnover intention. When workers feel emotionally tired of their work, they tend to have a higher intention to leave the organisation [12]. Emotional exhaustion is a critical and significant determinant of turnover intention, and emotional exhaustion has been claimed as the root of turnover intention in frontline hotel workers [32], [33].

Hypothesis 5. Emotional exhaustion positively influences turnover intention on industrial garment workers in Indonesia

Hypothesis 6. Emotional exhaustion mediates the effect of employee voice experiences on turnover intention on industrial garment workers in Indonesia

Hypothesis 7. Emotional exhaustion mediates the effect of employee resilience on turnover intention on industrial garment workers in Indonesia

3 RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Sample Procedure

This study refers to the questionnaire and focus group discussion (FGD) data that is collected by the research team from Universitas Indonesia (UI), Tufts University (TU), and Real-Time Analytics (RTA) Vietnam. The data were collected from December 2017 until January 2018 in industrial garment workers on DKI Jakarta, Banten, Jawa Barat, Jawa Tengah, and DI Yogyakarta. Jawa Barat contributes more or less 55% of the demographic distribution for garment and textile industry in Indonesia. Moreover, garment and textile factories continue to
proliferate in new industrial areas on Jawa Barat and Jawa Tengah [34]. The participants included in this study are working at 86 factories in 15 cities. 3.540 data were collected, but 2.781 were considered adequate.

3.2 Measurement

Employee voice. Conway et al. (2015) defined employee voice as worker involvement mechanism that encourages workers to to identify and work towards organisational goals voluntarily. Employee voice is assessed using scales developed by Conway et al. (2015) which includes three items (i.e. Management listens to my ideas and complaints) [14].

Resilience. Smith et al. (2008) defined resilience as individuals’ ability to bounce back or recover from stress. Resilience is measured using three items from the Brief Resilience Scale developed by Smith et al. (2008) (i.e. I have a hard time making it through stressful events [R]) [35].

Emotional Exhaustion. Maslach & Jackson (1981) defined emotional exhaustion as emotional feelings that are too burdening and draining due to work. Emotional exhaustion is assessed using two items from MBI-GS (i.e. I feel exhausted when I get up in the morning and have to face another day at work) [25].

Turnover intention. Tett & Meyer (1993) defined turnover intention as a conscious and intentional desire to leave the organisation. Turnover intention is assessed with two items from Michigan Organizational Assessment (MOA) constructed by Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, (1979) (i.e. I often think about quitting) [31], [36].

4 Results

The participants included in this paper are composed of 2.781 garment industrial workers. The majority of the respondents are women (83,1%), with an age range of 24-38 years old or Gen Y (58,3%), married (67,8%), junior high school graduates as educational background (37,2%), working less than three years at current company (32,4%), working as a tailor (74,0%), and workers with permanent employment status (65,4%).

4.1 Validity and Reliability

A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) with all the items in the model was performed in order to assess measurement quality. Validity and reliability were assessed using standardized factor loading (SFL), construct reliability (CR), and variance extracted (VE) from Lisrel 8.7. Items with SFL less than 0.4 were excluded [37]. As for CR and VE, variables less than 0.6 were excluded for CR, and 0.5 were excluded from VE [38].

Based on table 1, we can conclude that item K17 is invalid and excluded from this research. Subsequently, we reperformed the validity assessment and all items valid. As for reliability, all variables are reliable according to their CR and VE values. After all of the indicators are declared to be valid and reliable, we assessed model goodness of fit using multiple parameters. The measurement model shows good fit with GFI 0.99; SRMR 0.029; RMSEA 0.048; AGFI 0.97; NFI 0.97; NNFI 0.96; RFI 0.96; IFI 0.98; and CFI 0.98.

4.2 Hypothesis Testing

Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to test the hypothetical relationships. SEM is useful as it enables several hypothetical relationships to be tested simultaneously and provides an indication of the match between the hypothetical model and the actual data. The maximum likelihood structural estimates of the hypothetical model are presented in Figure 1.

All direct effect between variables is significant with t-values more than 1.645 as shown in Figure 1. As predicted, employee voice was negatively related to emotional exhaustion and turnover intention. Thus, H1 and H3 were supported. We also predicted the direct impact of resilience to emotional exhaustion and turnover intention. As predicted, resilience was negatively related to emotional exhaustion, thereby supporting H4. Nevertheless, the relationship between resilience and emotional exhaustion is not in accordance with the hypothesis that both should have a negative correlation. Therefore, H2 proposed in this study was rejected. Finally, as hypothesised, emotional exhaustion was positively related to turnover intention, thus supporting H5.

Hypothesis H6 and H7 in this study were proposed to observe the mediating effect of emotional exhaustion on industrial garment workers. According to Baron & Kenny (1986), three conditions that must hold to establish mediation: (1) the independent variable must affect the mediator; (2) the independent variable must be shown to affect the dependent variable; and (3) the mediator must affect the dependent variable. The direct effect, indirect effect, and total effect between variables were also required to compute the magnitude of the mediation effect [39], [40].

As shown in table 2, emotional exhaustion mediates the relationship between employee voice and turnover intention. However, the direct effect of employee voice and turnover intention is stronger than the indirect effect. Yet, H6 was still supported as complementary mediation regarding Zhao, Lynch, & Chen (2010). As for H7, emotional exhaustion also mediates the relationship between resilience and turnover intention. Nonetheless, the mediation occurs in H7 is competitive mediation [41].
5 DISCUSSIONS

The soaring rate of voluntary turnover from manufacturing industrial labours and the lack of manpower supply in the garment industry in Indonesia has become the main reason to maintain garment labours turnover intention in Indonesia. Emotional Exhaustion holds an important part in affecting turnover intention. The higher emotional exhaustion perceived by labours, the higher their intention to leave the organisation. Therefore, intervention is needed to reduce labours emotional exhaustion. Intervention may be disposed in organizational factor (employee voice) or individual factor (resilience). Based on the rendition above, this study observes the direct relation between the four variables (employee voice, labors resilience, emotional exhaustion, and turnover intention) as well as observing the mediation role of emotional exhaustion in organisational factor (employee voice) and individual factor (resilience) to turnover intention with emotional exhaustion as mediator on garment industry labors in Indonesia.

The turnover intention that often happens in the garment industry is profoundly affected by years of service each has. The longer the tenure, the lower the turnover intention. On the contrary, labours that have lower years of service tends to have higher turnover intention. This condition is supported by the statement made by one of Yogya Plaosan FGD, Respondent A that says “Usually the new labours. Because they are not mentally ready, to work and handle all the problems. And they also don’t have a lot of experiences, the new ones usually that had only worked for a few days.” The previous statement is also supported by a statement made by Bogor BWI FGD, Respondent E that says “uhm. The longer... then we feel more comfortable, and we don’t want to quit.”

Just as predicted before, intervention in the form of employee voice mechanism can lower labours turnover intention both directly and indirectly, with the mediation of emotional exhaustion. The most influencing factor of work experience towards employee voice is that the labours feel that the management listens to their complaints and ideas. This statement is supported by the conversation of Respondent L from Yoga Plaosan FGD (2017), who shared his reason to quit his job from one of the garment factories, and that is because of poor experience of employee voice. Respondent L shared his statement in the quotation below “Well, because I wanted to share my aspiration too. Back then it was communicated, but I feel like it’s not fair. Because the company seems like they don’t respond to its labours. Because the response from our company is not satisfying enough, at first, I keep on trying, but in the end, I decided to quit.”.

Negative employee voice experiences are making workers reluctant to voice their ideas or make a complaint to their supervisors. As a result, industrial garment workers in Indonesia will only interact with their superiors if they need a solution to a deadlocked problem. This statement supported by Respondent statement in FGD Bogor BWI (2017) “I will ask the supervisor only if I have a problem, to consult or ask what the solution is. Sometimes I feel reluctant to ask my supervisor. If I feel stuck, then I ask the supervisor”.

The reluctance of workers to interact and convey their ideas to supervisors causes disadvantages to the organisation. Workers actually have suggestions that can improve organisational effectiveness and efficiency. However, the feeling of reluctance and fear of their supervisors obstructs them to voicing their ideas. Therefore, managerial role in listening to their subordinates plays an essential factor to give positive employee voice experiences. Workers who perceived that their voices are heard tend to have lower emotional exhaustion and lower turnover intentions.

Aside from employee voice, individual’s ability to overlap and revive after going through a difficult time can also affect labours’ intention to leave the organisation. However, the result of this study shows that the more the labours feel like they are able to revive after a hard time, the more intention they have to leave the organisation. The labours’ intention to leave their organisation will settle down only if their ability to revive from difficult time is accompanied with the decrease of emotional exhaustion.

One of the signs of emotional exhaustion is the feeling of exhaust when waking up in the morning to start another day.
of work. Labours that often feel that kind of exhaustion will frequently think about quitting their job. This matter is supported by a statement made by Respondent Na on BWI Bogor FGD (2017) “Well… this is what we call work. Sometimes there are an unwanted situation, and sometimes we just think about quitting, especially when we’re upset and sad”. Hence, emotional exhaustion holds an essential part to the organisation that wants to maintain its labours turnover intention.

6 CONCLUSION

Based on this study’s result, it can be concluded that labours employee voice experiences, resilience level, and emotional exhaustion holds such a significant effect on turnover intention. Labours turnover intention from an organisation can be intervened by giving positive employee voice experience. This intervention may come in direct form or labours mediation of emotional exhaustion. Meanwhile, labours resilience can lower the turnover intention only if the emotional exhaustion perceived is also settling down. Therefore, garment industry companies can maintain their labours turnover intention by reducing labours emotional exhaustion, giving positive employee voice experience, and improve labours resilience.

7 LIMITATIONS

This study is a sub-study of complex research conducted by Universitas Indonesia, Tufts University, and Real-Time Analytics Vietnam. Therefore, the item used to quantify each variable is greatly limited. Moreover, this study is completed based on data in the form of questionnaire and the final result of focus group discussion that the researcher received from Universitas Indonesia’s research team, so a few variables that have not been discussed in the focus group discussion can not be deeply analyzed in this study. Also, this study is specifically done to the garment industry in Indonesia, which results in outcome differences if the place, time, and respondents are different.

REFERENCES


