

THE ROLE OF WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY IN REDUCING THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CYNICISM ON JOB PERFORMANCE

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Abstract: Organizational cynicism is now an important topic in the academic and business community, but the research relating to organizational cynicism is relatively neglected. Several studies that have examined the impact of organizational cynicism on job performance directly still show different results. This study strives to overcome this research gap by examining the impact of organizational cynicism on job performance by using variables of workplace spirituality as a moderating variable. The research data was taken from the supervisor and nurse from 7 private hospitals in the Pekalongan. The samples of this study were 176 respondents. The sampling technique was using convenience sampling. This research used a survey method with a quantitative approach and using the Partial Least Square (PLS) analysis tool with the help of WarpPLS 3.0. The results showed that organizational cynicism directly affects job performance. The results also show that spirituality in the workplace has a positive effect on job performance. Tests related to the effects of moderation suggest that workplace spirituality moderates the relationship of organizational cynicism on job performance. This study opens new avenues for research on organizational cynicism and carries implications for theory and practice.



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Nowadays the business environment has changed along with globalization, technological advances, and workforce diversity. This phenomenon has become one of the biggest challenges for leaders in

organizations and companies in getting the best people because at present the organization is facing the problem of cynicism (Khan, 2014). Organizational cynicism is now an important topic, both in business and academic communities (Gkorezis et al., 2014). Organizational cynicism occurs when a person believes that the organization has many dif-

ferent problems and the efforts he or she is doing are not useful to solve the problem (McClough et al., 1998). The people who have cynics on their organization believe that the organization has lacked integrity. These people are also likely to think that employers will exploit their contributions if there is a chance (Dean et al., 1998).

Andersson (1996), argued that organizational cynicism arises because of implied contract violation between employees and organizations so that cynical employees often experience frustration, despair, and disappointment with the organizations they work for (Andersson, 1996). Organizational cynicism can also develop because employees experience stress and high workload, personal and organizational expectations that do not meet, social support and promotion of inadequate positions, inefficiencies in decision making, miscommunication, and sudden dismissal (Andersson, 1996). Thus, organizational cynicism is a negative attitude of employees directed towards the organization where they work.

Organizational cynicism seen as a negative attitude makes it a sensitive topic for managers and organizations, thus research relating to organizational cynicism is relatively neglected (Andersson, 1996; Chiaburu et al., 2013). This leads to a lack of understanding of organizational cynicism comprehensively. This condition, of course, is very ironic, given the organizational cynicism can threaten the effectiveness of the organization and should be a concern for the organization in knowing the causes and solutions in overcoming this negative attitude. Organizational cynicism has a negative impact on the organization because cynical employees are discouraged, less committed to their work, their job satisfaction declines, and finally decides to leave the organization (Nair and Kamalanabhan, 2010). Based on the phenomenon, then research related to organizational cynicism should be developed especially related to job performance. According to social exchange theory, a negative attitude in this case of organizational cynicism is the result of an unequal social exchange relationship between employees and organizations that can degrade job performance (Neves, 2012).

Job performance itself is a set of behaviors relevant to the goals of the organization or organizational unit in which employees work (Murphy, 1989). Research related to job performance is often the attention of researchers especially in the field of organizational behavior. Generally, job performance improvements are often the main objectives of researchers (Viswesvaran and Ones, 2000). The appeal of the job's performance construct to researchers and managers lies in the importance of such behavior for the organization. Job performance has been shown to play a role in improving the company's profit and effectiveness as well as helping companies survive in an ever-changing business environment (Johnson and O'Leary-Kelly, 2003).

Research that examines the influence of organizational cynicism on job performance has been done, but there is still a research gap. First, there are differences in the results of research that examines the influence of organizational cynicism on job performance. Research conducted by Wanous et al. (1994), Johnson and O'Leary-Kelly (2003), Kim et al. (2009), and Chiaburu et al. (2013), stated that organizational cynicism influences the decline in job performance. However, the results of research conducted by Brandes and Das (2006), precisely stated that the performance of employees can increase when there is an organizational cynicism, especially when there is a need to reject and change the procedures that are not effective in the organization where they work. Second, the examination of the influence of organizational cynicism on job performance is largely undertaken directly without considering the mediating and moderating variables (Brandes and Das, 2006; Chiaburu et al., 2013; Johnson and O'Leary-Kelly, 2003; Kim et al., 2009; Wanous et al., 1994). This study attempted to overcome the gap of the study by including moderating variables that may have a role in the influence of organizational cynicism on job performance, in line with the suggestions of Johnson and O'Leary-Kelly (2003) and Wilkerson et al. (2008), suggesting that organizational cynicism may have an indirect effect on work-related behaviors such as job performance.

The construct used as a moderator in this research is workplace spirituality. The basis for this

construct selection consideration is that many theories that prove the influence of spirituality and its influence on the lives of employee organizations include influencing employees in reacting to the negative attitudes it receives in the workplace (Kolodinsky et al., 2003). Workplace Spirituality itself is defined in terms of expressing the desire to seek meaning and purpose in life and is a process of living the set of personal values one holds (Neck and Milliman, 1994). Previous research proved that workplace spirituality benefits companies. When employees integrate spirituality in the workplace, it makes employees be able to feel meaning and sense of purpose in their lives that will benefit the company in terms of profit, employee morale, and lower employee absenteeism (Litzsey, 2003). Understanding of workplace spirituality makes a person feel equal and enables them to live in a fear-free environment, sharper in intuition and creativity, and a sense of ownership of the organization (Yogatama and Widyarini, 2015). Workplace Spirituality has also been shown to reduce organizational cynicism to employees (Cartwright and Holmes, 2006).

Thought Self-Leadership (TSL) theory which is known to help employees feel a greater level of spirituality is also an indicator in improving job performance (Neck and Milliman, 1994). Spirituality creates an atmosphere that makes employees feel happier and performs better (Garcia-Zamor, 2003). Previous research has also proved that workplace spirituality can improve job satisfaction and employee performance, and reduce work stress experienced by employees (Altaf and Awan, 2011; Rego et al., 2012; Sony and Mekoth, 2019). Therefore, this study aimed to examine the influence of organizational cynicism on performance by incorporating work spirituality variables as a moderating variable. This study uses affective cynicism as a proxy of organizational cynicism based on affective event theory.

This present study is conducted on the employees of private hospitals i.e. nurses in Pekalongan (RSIA Anugerah Pekalongan, Budi Rahayu Hospital, RS Siti Khadijah, RS Karomah Holistic, RSU H.A. Djunaid, RSI PKU Muhammadiyah Pekajangan, and RS Bedah Aro). The selection of hospital nurses as the subject in this research was

based on the consideration that the nursing profession has a high work burden but a low salary (Sudarma, 2008). Employee perceptions of low salaries and high workload according to Andersson (1996) and Reichers et al. (1997), triggered organizational cynicism. In terms of workplace spirituality, previous research conducted by Duchon and Plowman (2005) on hospital staff in the United States stated that spirituality has a positive influence on the performance of nurses.

Based on effective event theory, the internal influence of employees (such as emotion) and reaction towards the particular event that occurs during their time working, influences job satisfaction, employee commitment as well as job performance (Thompson and Phua, 2012; Weiss and Cropanzano, 1996). So, according to affective event theory, we can propose that affective cynicism can affect job performance. Affective cynicism is negative emotion towards an organization, it can decrease job performance.

Besides, based on the perspective of social exchange theory, when employees engage in organizational cynicism where employees believe that their organization lacks integrity and decisions made by the organization driven by self-interest (Andersson, 1996), an imbalance in social exchanges arises (Neves, 2012). As a result, social exchanges in the workplace are affected and employees' desire for revenues decreased as employees respond by reducing their efforts toward fulfilling organizational goals (Neves, 2012). Thus, the influence of organizational cynicism on job performance is expected to be negative

The negative influence of organizational cynicism on job performance is also supported by previous studies. A previous study conducted by Wanous et al. (1994) and Kim et al. (2009) stated that employees with high organizational cynicism will degrade their job performance. Chiaburu et al. (2013), stated that organizational cynicism is a more important variable in predicting performance than trust. They concluded that cynicism toward the organization is enough to motivate individuals to withdraw (effort) from their work resulting in low levels of job performance given the lack of linkage to high

perceived performance amongst cynical employees (Chiaburu et al., 2013). Based on the theoretical basis, the framework of thought and research results that have been described, it can be formulated hypothesis as follows

H₁: Organizational cynicism negatively influences job performance

Johnson and O’Leary-Kelly (2003) and Wilkerson et al. (2008), also suspected that organizational cynicism may have an indirect influence on work-related behaviors such as job performance. Thought Self-Leadership theory (TSL), known to help employees experience a greater level of spirituality, is also an indicator of job performance improvement (Neck and Milliman, 1994). Spirituality creates an atmosphere that makes employees feel happier and performs better Garcia-Zamor (2003). Previous research has also proved that workplace spirituality can improve job satisfaction and job per-

formance, as well as reduce work stress experienced by employees (Altaf and Awan, 2011; Rego et al., 2012; Sony and Mekoth, 2019). Petchsawang and Duchon (2012), have also proven that workplace spirituality can improve job performance. Therefore, the researcher formulated an allegation that when employees have an organizational cynicism attitude, the level of spirituality will be a buffer resulting in a negative influence on organizational cynicism on job performance. When the level of spirituality of employees is high, the negative influence of organizational cynicism on job performance is expected to decrease.

H₂: Workplace spirituality positively influences job performance

H₃: Workplace spirituality moderates the relationship of organizational cynicism on job performance

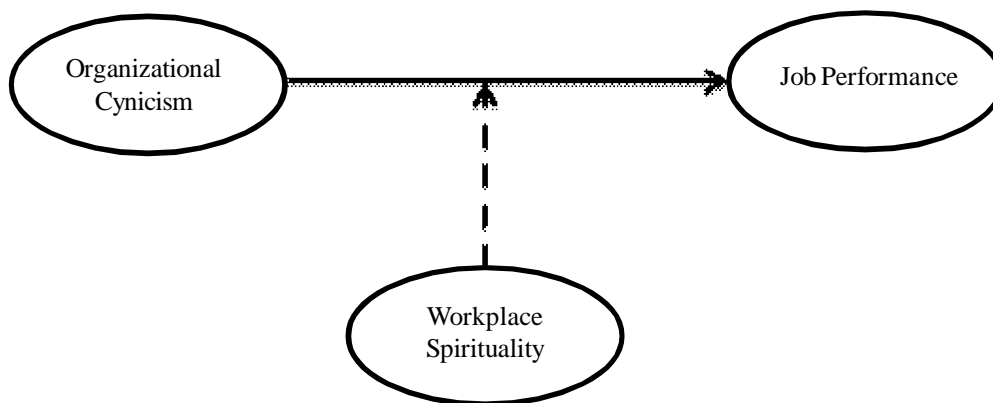


Figure 1 Research Model

METHOD

Population and Sample

This type of research is a survey study. A survey is the primary data collection method by asking questions to individual respondents (Cooper and Schindler, 2008). Information was collected from respondents by using questionnaires. The population in this study were all nurses who worked in RSIA Anugerah Pekalongan, RS Budi Rahayu, RS Siti Khadijah, RS Karomah Holistic, RSU HA

Djunaid, RSI PKU Muhammadiyah Pekajangan, and RS Bedah Aro which amounts to approximately 689 people. By using the slovin’s formula obtained the number of samples as many as 253.

The sampling technique used a simple random sampling method. Data collection took place over 4 months, from early June to September 2017. We choose the survey participants randomly to fill the research questionnaire and then ask for the participant’s supervisor to help in assessing the participant’s job performance to prevent self-report

bias. Of the 253 questionnaires distributed, the questionnaire returned completely and ready to be analyzed were as many as 176 questionnaires. Therefore the number of response rates was 69.57 percent. Data analysis used to test the hypothesis in this research was using Partial Least Square (PLS) technique through WarpPLS 3.0 software.

The respondents who were willing to participate were primarily female (32.37 % male, 67.63 % female). Concerning the educational level of the participants, results were as follows: 3.60 % high school; 89.21 % diploma; 7.19 bachelor. The age of respondents was as follows: 75.54 % under 30 years; 22.30 % between 30 to 45 years; 2.16 % above 45 years. Moreover, concerning the job tenure of the participants, 77.22 % of them had been working in the organization for less than five years, 22.30 % of them were between 5 to 15 years, and 6.47 % of them were above 15 years.

Measurement

In this research, effective cynicism which is a proxy of organizational cynicism was measured using four items of the Affective Organizational Cyni-

cism Scale developed by (Dean et al., 1998). One example of the items is “When I think about top management, I feel irritation”. Task performance which reflects job performance measured using seven items developed by Williams and Anderson (1991). This job performance questionnaire was measured by the supervisors of each respondent. One example of the statement item was “fulfills responsibilities specified in the job description”. Workplace spirituality was measured using ten items developed by Dierendonck (2004), adapted from the Howden Spirituality Assessment Scale. One example of the statement is “I can turn to a spiritual dimension within myself for guidance”. Each item of this statement is scored by using a 5 (five) Likert scale, from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”.

RESULTS

Testing which was using Partial Least Square (PLS) should first evaluate the measurement model, then evaluate the structural model. Here are the results of this evaluation:

Descriptive statistics

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Organizational Cynicism (CYN)	176	1.00	5.00	3.0227	.69245
Workplace Spirituality (WS)	176	3.00	5.00	4.2727	.51774
Performance (JP)	176	3.00	5.00	4.1250	.44881
Valid N (listwise)	176				

Source: processed data

As shown in Table 1, the respondents’ cynicism values ranged from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high), with an average score of 3.0227 which means there is potential for organizational cynicism. The value of spirituality in the workplace ranges from 3 (neutral) to 5 (very high), with an average of 4.2727 which means high workplace spirituality. Job performance values range from 3 (neutral) to 5 (very high), with an average of 4.1250 which means high performance. The standard deviation values for all variables are all smaller than average (mean). This

shows a small data variable or no large gap of all the variables studied.

Result of Evaluation of Measurement Model (Outer Model)

In evaluating the measurement model, it was done by evaluating the validity and reliability of each construct or latent variable. The validity test consisted of convergence validity test and discriminant validity. Rule of thumb evaluation of validity and reliability are as follows:

- Reliability: composite reliability and Cronbach alpha is greater than 0.70
 - Convergent validity: loading indicator greater than 0.70. However loading between 0.40-0.70 should still be considered to be maintained (Hair et al., 2013)
 - Discriminant validity: Average Variance Extracted (AVE) square root over 0.50
- After the first stage of testing, it turned out there were some indicators that did not pass convergent

validity where the loading value of the indicator below 0.70 is WS_1 and JP_6. Because it did not meet the criteria of convergent validity then both indicators were removed from the model. All indicators used in this study passed the test of convergent validity and discriminant validity after removing two indicators of WS_1 and JP_6 (see appendix). For reliability testing, here are the results of reliability testing output:

Table 2 Latent Variable Coefficients

	CYN	WS	JP	WS*CYN
Composite reability	0.933	0.933	0.880	0.974
Cronbach's Alpha	0.903	0.919	0.833	0.972
Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	0.779	0.608	0.554	0.509
Full collin. VIF	1.094	1.068	1.183	1.090
Q-squared			0.146	

Source: Output WarpPLS 3.0

From Table 1 we can see that the value of composite reliability and Cronbach alpha for all variables is above 0.7. Thus, all of the variables used in this study are reliable. The criteria for testing full colinearity is that the value should be lower than 3.3 (Kock, 2013). The value of *full colinearity VIF* of each variable is over than 3.3 thus the model was free from problems of vertical, lateral, and curiosity of *common method bias*.

Result of Evaluation of Structural Model (Inner Model)

The structural model was used to test the proposed hypothesis, especially for direct testing and moderation effect testing. First, the researcher performed a direct test both to test H1 and H2. Both investigators conducted a moderate effect model testing to test H3. Here are the results of the analysis using Partial Least Square (PLS):

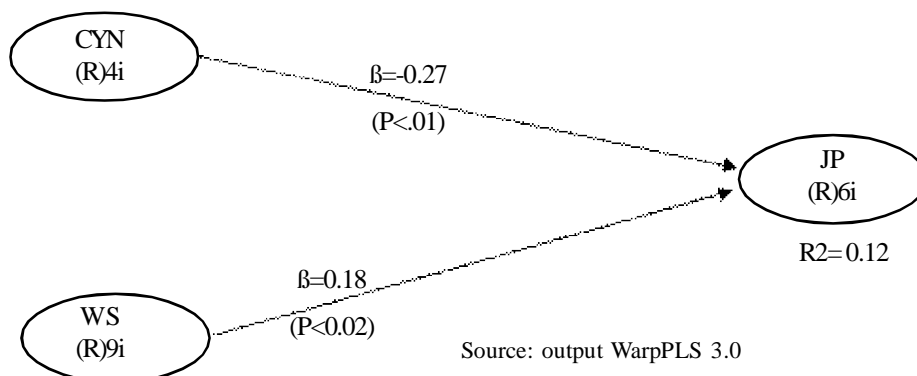
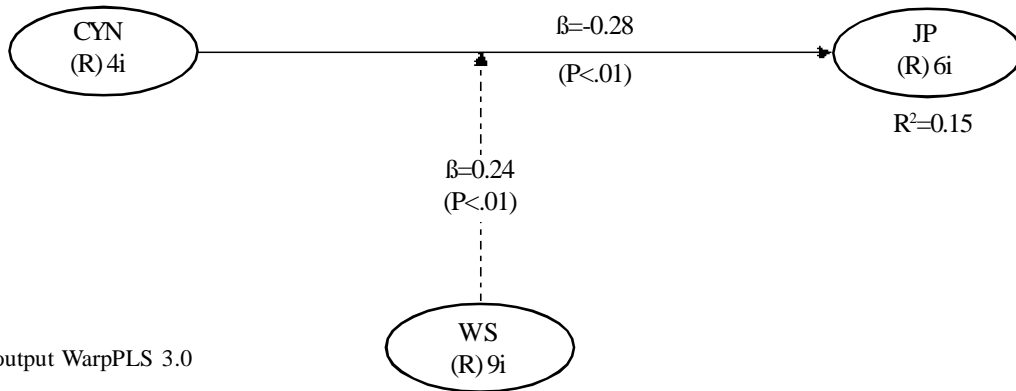


Figure 2 Results of The Direct Effect of Organizational Cynicism and Workplace Spirituality Influence On Job Performance



Source: output WarpPLS 3.0

Figure 3 Results of The Moderated Hierarchical Regression Analysis

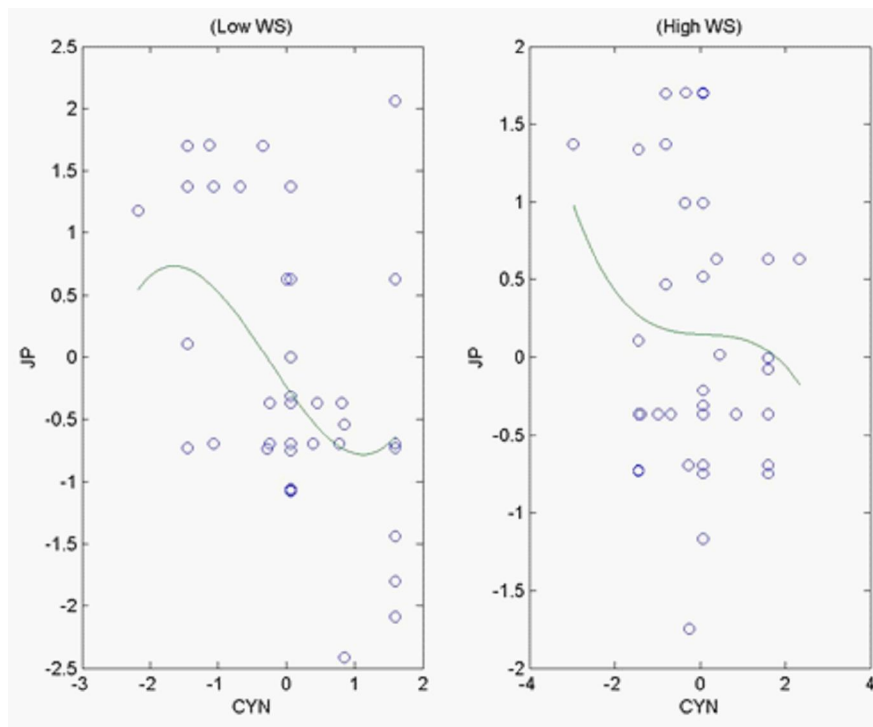
Table 3 Results of The Moderated Hierarchical Regression Analysis

Variables	Job Performance (JP)			
	Model 1		Model 2 (MRA)	
	β	p-values	β	p-values
Main effect variables				
Organizational Cynicism (CYN)	-0.266	<0.001	-0.277	<0.001
Workplace spirituality (WS)	0,179	0.02		
Interaction variables				
WS*CYN			0.242	<0.001
R ²	0.118	0.145		
ΔR ²	0.118	0.027		

Source: output WarpPLS 3.0

Test results were carried out using Partial Least Square (PLS) in Figure 2 and Table 3 shows that organizational cynicism has a negative and significant effect on job performance ($\beta=-0.266$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=0.118$). Thus, H_1 which states that organizational cynicism negatively influences job performance is **accepted**. Figure 2 and Table 3 Shows spirituality in the workplace has a positive and significant influence on job performance ($\beta: 0.179$; $p=0.02$; $R^2 = 0.118$). Therefore, H_2 stating that spirituality in the workplace has a positive influence on job performance is **accepted**. Moderated hierarchical regression analysis was used to investigate the moderating effects of workplace spirituality (WS) on the relationships of organizational cynicism with job performance. According to Baron and Kenny (1986)

and James and Brett (1984), test for moderation should include a term for a direct effect of the predictor (of organizational cynicism), a term for the direct effect of the moderator (workplace spirituality), and the interaction term (or product) of the two. The moderating effect is supported if the interaction term is significant. The moderation effect test in Figures 3 and Table 3 show that the interaction influence of organizational cynicism and workplace spirituality (WS * CYN) is positive and significant to job performance ($\beta=0.242$; $p<0.001$; $R^2 = 0.118$; $\Delta R^2=0.027$). Therefore, H_3 stating that Spirituality in the workplace moderates the influence of organizational cynicism on job performance, is **accepted**.



Source: output WarpPLS 3.0

Figure 4 Moderating Effect of Workplace Spirituality (WS) On Organizational Cynicism and Job Performance Relation

DISCUSSION

Relationship of Organizational Cynicism with Performance

This study fills the previous gap in the literature by testing the effect of organizational cynicism on job performance and also investigating the role of workplace spirituality as a buffer in reducing the negative effect of organizational cynicism on job performance among nurses of a private hospital in Pekalongan. As expected, this research finds a significant negative influence of organizational cynicism on job performance and also prove that workplace spirituality moderates the relationship between both variables. Direct testing shows that organizational cynicism can degrade employee performance. Thus the first hypothesis (H_1) which states that organizational cynicism negatively influences job performance, is accepted. This means that the higher the cynicism of the organization then the perfor-

mance of employees will decline. The results of this study are supported by the results of previous research conducted by Wanous et al. (1994) and Kim et al. (2009) stated that employees with high organizational cynicism will degrade their job performance. Chiaburu et al. (2013), stated that organizational cynicism is a more important variable in predicting job performance than trust. A cynical attitude toward the organization is enough to motivate the individual to withdraw the effort of the work that produces low levels of job performance. This can happen because cynical employees experiencing frustration and disillusionment with the organization feel the loss of a connection between performance and reward or a lower level of instrumentality. According to previous research, this low perceived instrumentality caused a decline in an effort that supports the achievement of organizational goals (Chiaburu et al., 2013).

The results of this study are also supported by affective event theory. Based on effective event theory, the internal influence of employees (such as emotion) and reaction towards the particular event that occurs during their time working, influences job satisfaction, employee commitment as well as job performance (Thompson and Phua, 2012; Weiss and Cropanzano, 1996). Organizational cynicism is a reaction of negative events in an organization such as poor decision, the high gap of salary between executive and employee, a disconnection between expectations of the employees and reality, job overload, low level of organizational and management integrity (Andersson, 1996; Arslan and Roudaki, 2019). This kind of reaction leads to frustration and disillusionment toward the organization so that cynical employees react negatively by reducing their effort and motivation to contribute as expected which causes a low level of job satisfaction, employee commitment as well as job performance.

The social exchange theory also supports the finding of this study. Based on the perspective of this theory, when employees have high organizational cynicism, then the imbalance in social exchange also emerged (Neves, 2012). As a result, social exchanges at the workplace are influenced and the employee's desire for retaliation can be seen from employee responses by reducing their efforts toward fulfilling organizational goals (Neves, 2012). Thus, the social exchange theory supports the assertion that organizational cynicism can degrade job performance.

Relationship of Organizational Cynicism With Performance to The Spirituality of Work as a Moderating Variable

Based on the results of data analysis, the second hypothesis (H_2) which states that workplace spirituality positively influences job performance, is accepted. This means that high workplace spirituality in employees can improve their job performance. The results of this study confirm Thought Self-Leadershiptheory (TSL). TSL is known to help employees to feel a greater level of spirituality is also an indicator in improving job performance (Neck and Milliman, 1994). Previous research has

also proved that the spirituality of work can improve job satisfaction and job performance, as well as reduce work stress experienced by employees (Altaf and Awan, 2011; Rego et al., 2007; Sony and Mekoth, 2019). Petchsawang and Duchon (2012), have also proven that the spirituality of work can improve job performance.

The results also show that spirituality in the workplace moderates the influence of organizational cynicism in the workplace (H_3 is accepted). When threatened by organizational cynicism, employees with high workplace spirituality engage in problem-focused coping or cognitive consistency behaviors by reporting higher job performance than low workplace spirituality employees. This is because the spirituality of work contributes vitally to a better understanding (deeper and more meaningful) to the individual's work and the company's reality (Gotsis and Kortezi, 2008). When employees integrate spirituality in the workplace it makes sense of the meaning and feelings of purpose in life (Litzsey, 2003) and brings a positive value to the organization (Benefiel, 2003; Brown, 2003; Gibbons, 2000; Neal and Biberman, 2003). The understanding of spirituality at work is important in helping organizations understand employee behavior and attitudes (Robbins dan Judge, 2013). A previous study also proved that the workplace spirituality of employees can reduce the cynicism of the organization (Cartwright and Holmes, 2006). Reflections from organizational cynicism such as anxiety, depression, annoyance, even disturbance when thinking about top management potentially degrade performance. But the cynicism will dampen when the spirituality of employees in the workplace is high so as not to disturb the performance of employees just when the high level of spirituality will have an impact on improving employee performance.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The results showed that organizational cynicism, especially effective cynicism can directly reduce job performance, especially the nurses. The results also showed that workplace spirituality moderates the

relationship of organizational cynicism on job performance. Employees with low levels of organizational cynicism have higher job performance levels compared to employees with high levels of organizational cynicism. However, employees with high workplace spirituality show higher performance levels in high organizational cynicism conditions.

The present results have some fruitful implications for organizations. Organizational cynicism should be reduced or even avoided by the organization because it can reduce employee contributions by decreasing their performance. The existence of a positive influence of spirituality in the workplace on job performance and its role in reducing the cynicism of the organization and its impact on performance make the organization need to consider factors that can improve spirituality in the workplace. The organization also needs to redesign the recruitment and selection system to attract prospective employees with a high level of spirituality.

The results show that the cynicism of the organization among the nurses tends to be high. Thus, in addition to considering workplace spirituality managers or superiors should also continue to make efforts to reduce the cynicism of the organization. These efforts include preventing psychological contract breach between the organization and employees, improving the credibility of top management, improving the company's performance so that employees feel proud to be part of the organization. Besides, organizations need to establish policies in which the pay range between top management and employees is not too high and redesign the work so that work-related issues decrease. This is because the pay range between top management and employees is too high and workload problems are often the main trigger of organizational cynicism (Andersson, 1996).

Recommendations

As in most studies, our results have limitations that need to be considered. The results of data processing in this study indicate that some invalid indicators cause the indicator should be removed. The existence of such invalid indicators may be caused

by measurement tools that still need to be fixed for example in terms of language to be better understood by respondents so that they can answer precisely in accordance with the circumstances. Future research should use a more precise indicator in a language that is more easily understood by the respondent.

This study opens interesting avenues for future research, beyond those already discussed in the previous section. Theoretically, it presents an explanation for the disparity found in previous research concerning the relationship between cynicism and job performance. There are several suggestions for further research to make the research model related to the relationship between cynicism and job performance. First, further research is expected to include other variables as moderating variables such as locus of control. Second, subsequent research can use cognitive or behavioral cynicism as a proxy of organizational cynicism. Third, further research is expected to enlarge the number of research samples and use samples of employees working in educational institutions.

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