

## THE ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL IN PREDICTING AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT OF GENERATION Y

### *Peran Psychological Capital dalam Memprediksi Komitmen Afektif pada Generasi Y*

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#### ABSTRACT

*The present study investigated the role of psychological capital to affective commitment. Affective commitment is employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Psychological capital is positive psychological state of development and is characterized by self efficacy, optimism, hope, and resiliency. This is the first study to examine the role of psychological capital on affective commitment by using generation Y in Jakarta as participants. They were 176 male and female employees who were varied in age, job level, employment status, tenure, educational background, and work location. Data was gathered by using two measures: psychological capital and affective commitment scale. Interestingly, this study revealed that psychological capital significantly predict affective commitment in statistical point of view but not in practical implication. Regression analysis reported that psychological capital contribute only 2% to affective commitment among Indonesian generation Y.*

**Keywords:** *affective commitment, psychological capital, generation Y*

#### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui peran modal psikologis terhadap komitmen afektif. Komitmen afektif adalah kelekatan emosional, identifikasi, dan keterlibatan karyawan dalam organisasi. Modal psikologis adalah kondisi positif perkembangan psikologis yang ditandai dengan efikasi diri, optimisme, harapan, dan resiliensi. Penelitian ini menjadi studi pertama yang menguji modal psikologis sebagai prediktor dari komitmen afektif dengan menggunakan generasi Y di Jakarta sebagai partisipan. Mereka adalah 183 karyawan pria dan wanita yang bervariasi dalam hal usia, tingkat jabatan, status karyawan, masa kerja, latar belakang pendidikan, dan lokasi kerja. Data diambil dengan menggunakan dua alat ukur: skala modal psikologis dan skala komitmen afektif. Menariknya, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa modal psikologis dapat memprediksi komitmen afektif dalam sudut pandang statistik tetapi tidak dalam implikasi praktis. Analisis regresi menunjukkan bahwa modal psikologis hanya memberikan kontribusi sebesar 2% terhadap komitmen afektif pada generasi Y di Indonesia.

**Kata kunci:** komitmen afektif, modal psikologis, generasi Y

#### INTRODUCTION

It is understood that there are three different generations in today's workplace,

they are baby boomers (born in 1943-1960), generation X (1961-1979), and generation Y (1980-1994). Delcampo, Haggerty, Haney, & Knippel (2011) mentioned that the proportion of generation Y is getting bigger in the future.

Generation Y had the proportion of 36% in 2014, whereas in 2020 they are predicted to reach 46% of total workforce population. Generation Y is a generation

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whose expectations, attitudes, and work values are significantly different from their senior generations (Anitha and Aruna, 2016). These differences may be caused by the digital technology, growing globalization, employment, and foreign investment (Liyanage & Gamage, 2017).

Generation Y people are often popular as information savvy, have broad knowledge, and perform high multitasking skill (Tay, 2011). However, they are also known to be job hopper. When there is a lack of challenge in their work and once they feel bored, they tend to seek for other jobs in different companies (Ozcelik, 2015). Swiggard (2011) also mentioned that generation Y tend to move to other companies after working for one year. They reported higher level of turnover intention compared to generation X (Kowske et al, 2010). A survey of over 900 hospitality employees in Australia found that gen Y employees scored lower on commitment, while in contrary they display higher score on turnover intention (Solnet, Kralj, & Kandampully, 2012).

Since it has often been regarded as a potential antecedent to actual turnover, turnover intention has received considerable attention in the literature (Oluwafemi, 2013). Apart from the correlation with actual turnover, turnover intention has also been found to be related to several other work-related variables. For instance, turnover intention has been found to be negatively related to organizational commitment (Joo & Park, 2010; Aydogdu & Asikgil, 2010; Hussain & Asif, 2012; Tirelli & Goh, 2015).

Based on above explanation, researcher assumed that organization commitment among generation Y is probably low. This argumentation is relevant with Lub et al (2011) who mentioned that generation Y significantly show lower commitment than other generations. Researcher decided to work on organizational commitment because 40% of the variance in turnover intention was explained by it (Joo, 2010).

There are various antecedents of organizational commitment among working individuals. However, latest publications highlight the importance of psychological capital level in the employees' work-related attitudes and behavior.

Empirical studies support the impact of psychological capital on organization

commitment. There was a significant positive relationship between the teachers' positive psychological capital levels and organizational commitment (Yalcin, 2016). Moreover, a meta-analysis has showed that psychological capital is an important predictor of commitment and other desirable outcomes (Avey et al, 2011). Psychological capital either directly or through work ethic variable mediator have affected organizational commitments (Hormozi & Hajiloo, 2017). Psychological capital also significantly predicted affective organizational commitment among employees in oil industry in Iran (Ghaffaripour, 2015). Also in Iran, psychological capital is a significant predictor for organizational commitment among educational staff (Aminikhah, Khaneghah, & Naghdian, 2016). In Turkey, psychological capital also found to be a significant predictor of organizational commitment and job satisfaction among employees in ministries and connected institutions (Cetin, 2011).

Etebarian, Tavakoli, and Abzari (2012) conducted a research about the relationship between psychological capital and organizational commitment. Among the three dimensions of organizational commitment, which includes affective, continuous, and normative commitment, only the relationship between psychological capital and affective commitment was significant. This result lead researcher to only use affective commitment as dependant variable.

Meyer and Allen (1991) have termed the three components as affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment, but this study focused on affective organizational commitment. Affective commitment has showed powerful correlations with desirable outcomes and organizations have nurtured this affective commitment among their employees (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Meyer, et al, 2002). Jaros (1997) examined the effects of the three different types of commitment on turnover intention. He concluded that all three types of organizational commitment have a significant and negative relationship with turnover intentions, with affective commitment is the strongest predictor of all.

In addition, researcher found some studies that used affective commitment as a single measure of organizational commitment. Those researches were done by Lee and

Bruvold (2003), Joo (2010), Joarder, Sharif, & Ahmmed (2011), Ashar et al (2013), and Izzati, Suhariadi, & Hadi (2015).

Researcher treated psychological capital as one construct and not as four different facets because Luthans et al (2007b) mentioned that the composite factor may be a better predictor of performance and satisfaction than the four single facets. Some studies (Cetin, 2011; Lather & Kaur, 2015; Aminikhah, Khaneghah, & Naghdian, 2016) have proven that psychological capital as one ultimate variable was a better predictor than either of its components for organizational commitment.

Organizational commitment refers to an individual's feelings about the organization as a whole. It is the psychological bond that an employee possess with an organization and has been found to be related to goal and value congruence, behavioral investments in the organization, and tendency not to leave the organization (Mowday et al., 1982). Three characteristics of organizational commitment are strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, willingness to exert appropriate effort on behalf of the organization, and strong desire to stay in the organization.

Affective organizational commitment is specifically defined as "the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Employees who have strong affective commitment continue employment with the organization because they want to do so (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio (2007) explain psychological capital as psychological construct comprise of making positive attributions for now and future (optimism), trying to reach and seek for alternative ways to goals in order to succeed (hope), having belief of own competence to reach a certain set of goals (self-efficacy), and maintaining and bouncing back to reach goals even when facing problems and drawbacks (resilience).

Psychological capital as one of positive psychology variables focus positively on what is right with individuals, whereas classic psychological studies' point of view was more focusing at what is wrong with individuals (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Investing in and developing employees' psychological capital may be an important

concern for today's organizations because psychological capital can be developed (Luthans et al, 2006),

Population of this current study is focusing on generation Y in Jakarta as capital city of Indonesia as well as country's business center. Researcher decided to focus only to Jakarta because Priawan (2017) mentioned that generation Y shares 40% of total population in Jakarta even since 2015. This percentage is relatively bigger than the ones in another city in Indonesia.

Therefore, based on above arguments and explanations, this study was aimed to examine whether psychological capital could predict affective commitment among generation Y in Jakarta.

## METHOD

This research can be categorized into cross-sectional (based on number of contact with participant), retrospective (based on its time reference), and non-experimental (based on its nature) study. People participated in this study were 183 male and female employees from different companies in Jakarta. They could join the study as long as they were born in 1980 to 2000. Purposive sampling was chosen to select the participants. Only those who fulfill the criteria could fill in the questionnaire. Participants had to be those who stayed in his or her company for minimum one year. Online questionnaire was utilised to support this study. Researcher randomly contacted some participants or checked their LinkedIn profile (if any) in order to minimize sampling error related to the participants' criteria. Shopping vouchers were given to randomly selected participants as a token reward

This study used two self-report scales to collect data, they are Affective Commitment Scale and Psychological Capital Scale. Both scales were adapted to Bahasa Indonesia from their English origin. Participants were asked to response to the scales given. Affective Commitment Scale was adapted from the Organization Commitment Scale developed by Meyer & Allen (1990). As mentioned previously, researcher focused on affective commitment instead of normative and continuance commitment. Psychological Capital Scale was adapted from the Psychological Capital Questionnaire

developed by Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio (2007). It measures four constructs of psychological capital: self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience.

Pilot study was executed to test scales' validity and reliability by using Rasch model with the help of Winstep 3.73. Sumintono & Widhiarso (2014) mentioned validity criteria as follows:

**Table 1.** Validity criteria of Rasch Model

Criteria	Score
Outfit Mean Square (MNSQ)	.5 < MNSQ < 1.5
Outfit Z-Standard (ZSTD)	-2 < ZSTD < +2
Point Measure Correlation (Corr)	.32 < Corr < .85

If an item could fulfill at least two of three above criteria, then it would be categorized as valid and usable item.

There will be three reliability indexes as the outcome of Rasch model, they are person reliability, item reliability, and Alpha Cronbach. Person reliability is used to test the ability of a scale in differentiating subjects with high and low score. Item reliability is used to test the ability of a scale in differentiating easy and difficult items. Alpha Cronbach is used to test scale's consistency in a whole as interaction between person and item.

**Table 2.** Reliability criteria of Rasch Model

Person reliability	
Level of reliability	Score
Weak	.00 - .67
Moderate	.67 - .81
Good	.81 - .91
Very good	.91 - .94
Outstanding	.94 - 1.00
Item reliability	
Level of reliability	Score
Weak	.00 - .67
Moderate	.67 - .81
Good	.81 - .91
Very good	.91 - .94
Outstanding	.94 - 1.00
Alpha Cronbach	
Level of reliability	Score
Very bad	.00 - .50
Bad	.50 - .60
Moderate	.60 - .70
Good	.70 - .80
Very good	.80 - 1.00

Validity testing of Affective Commitment Scale resulted 7 valid items out of 8 items. Validity testing of Psychological Capital Scale resulted 23 valid items out of 24 items. Below is the detail.

**Table 3.** Validity testing result

Affective Commitment Scale				
Item No	MNSQ	ZSTD	Corr	Result
1	.64	-1.5	.87	fit
2	1.43	1.6	.31	fit
3	.78	-9	.58	fit
4	3.18	6.0	-.18	not fit
5	.78	-.7	.58	fit
6	.69	-1.3	.74	fit
7	.76	-1.0	.72	fit
8	.54	-2.3	.84	fit
Psychological Capital Scale				
Item No	MNSQ	ZSTD	Corr	Result
1	.57	-1.8	.73	fit
2	.73	-1.0	.75	fit
3	.58	-1.8	.74	fit
4	.67	-1.3	.75	fit
5	.89	-.3	.56	fit
6	.89	-.3	.56	fit
7	.39	-3.0	.81	fit
8	1.28	1.0	.48	fit
9	1.09	.4	.59	fit
10	.66	-1.4	.71	fit
11	.36	-3.2	.84	fit
12	1.10	.5	.62	fit
13	.99	.0	.65	fit
14	.48	-2.3	.78	fit
15	1.58	1.9	.49	fit
16	1.02	.2	.62	fit
17	1.32	1.2	.60	fit
18	1.13	.6	.54	fit
19	1.00	.1	.55	fit
20	3.79	6.9	.26	not fit
21	.79	-.7	.66	fit
22	1.03	.2	.61	fit
23	1.59	2.1	.48	fit
24	1.21	.8	.50	fit

Next, reliability testing result of both scales can be seen as follows. All scales show satisfying reliability on three indexes.

**Table 4.** Reliability testing result

Psychological Capital Scale	
Reliability	Score
Person reliability	.89
Item reliability	.75
Alpha Cronbach	.92
Affective Commitment Scale	
Reliability	Score
Person reliability	.74
Item reliability	.86
Alpha Cronbach	.82

SPSS version 23 was then used to analyze data by using simple regression analysis to examine the proportion of variance in affective commitment predicted from psychological capital.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Participants were 60% female and 40% male. Moreover, majority of respondents were staff (65%), permanent (72%), have worked for 1-3 years (47%), and hold Bachelor degree (76%).

**Table 5.** Demographic Data

Variable	Category	Percentage
Gender	Male	40
	Female	60
Job level	Staff	65
	Supervisor	30
	Manager	5
Employment Status	Permanent	72
	Contract	28
Tenure	< 1 year	30
	1-3 years	47
	3-5 years	18
	>5 years	5
Educational degree	Diploma	9
	Bachelor	76
	Master	15

Participants' score in psychological capital and affective commitment can be seen in table 6.

**Table 6.** Participants' scores

	Xmax	Xmin	Mean	SD
Affective commitment	34	12	21.33	3.702
Psychological capital	135	61	102.33	11.833

Next, table 7 presents the categorization used in affective commitment and psychological capital.

**Table 7.** Score categorization of affective commitment and psychological capital

Category	Norm	Score Aff Com	Total	%
High	$(\mu + 1.0 \sigma) \leq X$	$X \geq 25.032$	46	18
Moderate	$(\mu - 1.0 \sigma) \leq X < (\mu + 1.0 \sigma)$	$17.628 < X < 25.032$	166	66
Low	$X < (\mu - 1.0 \sigma)$	$X \leq 17.628$	39	16
Category	Norm	Score Psy Cap	Total	%
High	$(\mu + 1.0 \sigma) \leq X$	$X \geq 114.163$	55	15.9
Moderate	$(\mu - 1.0 \sigma) \leq X < (\mu + 1.0 \sigma)$	$90.497 < X < 114.163$	147	63.1
Low	$X < (\mu - 1.0 \sigma)$	$X \leq 90.497$	49	21.0

Hypothesis testing was executed after confirming that data is normal and linear. Simple regression analysis showed that psychological capital correlates positively to affective commitment. Hypothesis testing result shows correlation coefficient number of  $r_{xy} = .138$  with significance  $p = .000$  ( $p < .05$ ). Positive mark in correlation coefficient shows that the higher one's psychological capital level then his or her affective commitment could increase. Sig F Change score is .028 which means psychological capital is significant in predicting affective commitment. Therefore, hypothesis is accepted. However, determination coefficient score ( $R^2$ ) in this research is 0,020 so that effective contribution from psychological capital to affective commitment is 2%, while the rest 98% could be affected by other variables that are not measured in this research. This research did not control the effect of other variables statistically. Some variables may be age, job level, employment status, tenure, educational degree, and work location. The very small contribution may be less meaningful for practical implication.

It is hypothesized that psychological capital could predict affective commitment significantly. Result shows that the hypothesis is accepted but researcher would like to deliver more arguments regarding the very small determinant coefficient score. This condition is different than previous researches from another country as based on previous studies psychological capital was found to predict affective commitment and the determinant coefficient score was satisfying.

Looking at the result, researcher would like to highlight some points to be discussed. First, although the determination coefficient score is small, at least this research has proven that psychological capital still correlates positively to affective commitment. Second, looking at the weak correlation score as well as small contribution, there could be some possibilities. Researcher assumed that there may be an intervening variable between psychological capital and affective commitment that can enhance determinant coefficient score of affective commitment among the population of generation Y in Indonesia.

Third, most participants are in moderate level of affective commitment. This is contradictive with the researcher's previous assumption. Most of participants also have worked for one to three years, as opposed to less than a year. This matter may be caused by participants' subjective response to affective commitment scale.

As mentioned by Hormozi & Hajiloo (2017), psychological capital could affect organizational commitment either directly or through work ethic variable as mediator. They measure the whole three types of commitment (affective, continuance, and normative) as termed by Meyer and Allen (1991), whereas this research focused only on affective commitment.

Several limitations were encountered during the research process. First, the number of the sample used in this study is very small (n=233) in contrast to the total generation Y population in Indonesia. Participants' type of companies are also homogeneous, namely private companies, whereas there are still so many generation Y working in state owned companies or working as public servants. These may lead to lesser accuracy in result generalization. Second, self report measure in this research is still potential to bias due to its attitudinal nature.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that psychological capital statistically can predict affective commitment among generation Y, but in the context of Indonesian culture, another variable may be combined with psychological capital for better practical purpose.

As a practical suggestion, companies may conduct psychological capital training combined with other variables to enhance their employees' affective commitment especially generation Y. As for next research, there are some suggestions. First, it is proven that contribution of psychological capital to affective commitment is very small, so it is important to explore possible intervening (mediator) variables. This research gives opportunity for next researchers to test the underlying mechanism between psychological capital and affective commitment in the context of Indonesian culture. Second, bigger samples may also lead to better population representativeness. Third, deeper literature reviews are needed before conducting any research on psychological capital and affective commitment. Characteristics of participants have to be explored as well. Longitudinal attempt as well as multi rating method could be useful in collecting data. Last, another way to control for socially desirable responding is to include "filler" items (Morling, 2012). Some surveys mask the true purpose of a sensitive survey by including several unrelated filler items about racial attitudes, politics, or gender role.

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