EXPLORATORY STUDY OF WORKPLACE BULLYING TOWARDS EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE, JOB STRESS, AND EMPLOYEE LOYALTY AT PT. PLN (PERSERO) AREA MANADO

PENELITIAN EKSPLORATIF TENTANG PENINDASAN DI TEMPAT KERJA TERHADAP KINERJA KARYAWAN, STRESS KERJA, DAN KESETIAAN KARYAWAN DI PT. PLN (PERSERO) AREA MANADO

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Abstract: Workplace bullying is every negative behaviour/practice that is done intentionally or accidentally towards an individual or more in the working environment. This particular phenomenon poses as a major human resource problem that has great impact towards the employees. Receiving constant negative behaviours cannot be good for a person as it has the potential to harm their physical safety and mental well-being. This research uses the qualitative method in order to explore the workplace bullying by discovering the motives behind it. Furthermore, this research will help the readers to understand the consequences of workplace bullying toward the employees and the organisation itself. This research found that bullying does happen in the organisation, however Perceived Organisational Support (POS) plays a crucial part in retaining the employees. The research highlights the employees' lack of awareness about workplace bullying and how disadvantageous it is because they might have been the victim without knowing it. The organisation must consider establishing a training program about bullying practices in the workplace in order to introduce the concept and increase employees' awareness of it. Furthermore, creating a policy to ensure its legality might be the best precaution method against it.

Keywords: workplace bullying, job stress, employees' performance, employee loyalty

Abstrak: *Penindasan di tempat kerja adalah setiap perilaku negatif yang dibuat secara sengaja dan tidak sengaja terhadap seseorang atau lebih di dalam lingkungan kerja. Fenomena ini adalah salah satu masalah besar terhadap sumber daya manusia yang mempunyai dampak besar kepada para karyawan. Mendapat perlakuan-perlakuan negatif secara terus-menerus adalah hal yang tidak baik untuk seseorang karena hal itu berpotensial untuk membahayakan kesehatan fisik dan juga mentalnya. Penelitian ini bermaksud untuk membantu pembaca untuk memahami dampak-dampak dari penindasan di tempat kerja terhadap para karyawan dan perusahaan. Penelitian ini mempergunakan metode kualitatif untuk menyelidiki motif-motif dibalik penindasan di tempat kerja. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa penindasan telah terjadi di dalam perusahaan, tetapi tunjangan dari perusahaan yang dirasakan oleh karyawan mempunyai dampak yang penting untuk mempertahankan para karyawan. Penelitian ini menunjukan bahwa ketidak-pahaman para karyawan tentang penindasan di tempat kerja dan betapa merugikannya itu karena para karyawan bisa saja telah menjadi korban tanpa sepengetahuan mereka. Perusahaan sebaiknya segera merancang program latihan tentang perilaku penindasan di tempat kerja untuk memperkenalkan dan meningkatkan pengetahuan tentang penindasan. Selain itu, merancang peraturan untuk alasan legalitas adalah cara pencegahan terbaik terhadap masalah ini.*

Kata kunci: penindasan di tempat kerja, stress kerja, kinerja karyawan, kesetiaan karyawan

INTRODUCTION

Research Background

Every company has goals and to fulfil those goals, they must have excellent human resources and treat them as assets for the company. The work environment must be safe and conducive therefore the workers will be able to perform their jobs well. To accomplish said work environment, it is crucial to ensure that the work environment is free from any kind of discrimination, including bullying. Workplace bullying has been shown to create a toxic work environment, and this negative behaviour inflicts direct costs on both individuals and organisations (Lewis, Sheehan, and Davies, 2008; Roscigno, Lopez, and Hodson, 2009).Every form of bullying in the workplace is not beneficial for anybody. The consequences of workplace bullying are varied from decreased in employees' productivity to resignation. If the bullying keeps happening to the employees, it can lead to declining in the quality of the employee's performance and even caused them to have a mental breakdown.

In Asia, especially Indonesia, there is a tendency of the people to accept or even goes as far as ignoring the bullying that is happening to them or one of their colleagues. The culture of Asian countries to put their supervisors in a pedestal and any form of actions that they do is always right and never wrong is part of the problem. They tend to not realise that they are being bullied.

Every form of bullying in the workplace is not beneficial for anybody. The consequences of workplace bullying are varied from decreased in employees' productivity to resignation. If the bullying keeps happening to the employees, it can lead to declining in the quality of the employee's performance and even caused them to have a mental breakdown. Not often that the employees are not willing to come to the workplace because they feel threatened by their supervisors. If every employees feel similarly then the job will not be done and the company's productivity and profit will decreased. A study was conducted by the Workplace Bullying Institute (2012) show us that "71% of the 516 respondents have been treated by a doctor for work-related health symptoms whereas 63% also reported that they are seeing a mental health professional". The physical and psychological issues included high blood pressure, heart attack, and rapid breathing.

Research Objectives

The objectives that would be achieved through the research process are:
1. To determine the motives behind workplace bullying.
2. To understand the ramifications of workplace bullying.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Human Resource Management

In order to secure effective and efficient human labours, human resource management is needed. According to Armstrong (2006:27), Human Resource Management is "an approach that was designed strategically and logically to the management of an organisation's most valued assets which are the people working who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of its objectives". Human resource management contributes to create high performance work systems by linking various employees in different departments in the same organisation (Brewster, 2007).

Bullying

Organisations and their members face a range of ethical challenges; one of them is called bullying. Einarsen and Raknes (1997) stated that "workplace bullying is repeated unwanted actions and behaviours that are directed to one or more employees that may have been done deliberately or unintentionally but the action and/or behaviour evidently cause distress, offence, and humiliation to the victim". Workplace Bullying Institute (1997) defines bullying as "a consistent attack of interpersonal destruction that jeopardizes the victim's health, career, and job. It is a non-physical, non-homicidal form of violence and, because of the nature of bullying that is violent and abusive, emotional harm often becomes the result".

The stress of bullying in the workplace can cause major consequences to the mental health or to the physical health of the victim as well. Common to virtually all definitions of workplace bullying is that they include three key elements:
1. Repetitive negative actions;
2. Those actions occur on a frequent basis;
3. And occur in a place of work, where there is imbalance of power between the parties.

Pate and Beaumont (2010) stated that bullying at work is "a phenomenon that is prevalent in today's place of work as it has been estimated that one-fifth of all employees have experienced bullying". Bullying in the workplace does not only pose negative effects to the employees, but also to the organisation as well. If the bullying keeps happening to the employees, it will decrease their productivity and creativity. The employees will not be motivated to perform their skills and are less likely to produce new ideas.

Employee Performance

Employee's performance is the execution of work activities expected from an employee. Aguinis (2009) explained that the definition of performance is "about behaviour or what the employees do, it is not about what the employees produce or the outcomes of their work". According to McCloy, Campbell, and Cudeck (1994), the factors that determine how well the employee performed are "declarative knowledge", "procedural knowledge", and "motivation". All the factors above increased the possibility of certain employees to perform their jobs better than their co-workers.

Job Stress

Gill, Flaschner and Shachar (2006) explained that job stress is "the extent to which employees feels a tension of anxiety caused by their jobs". Job stress can also made worse by work. According to Rajalakshmi and Gomathi (2015), theemployees' stress level, whether the work stress or individual stress, has been affected by bullying in the workplace.

Employee Loyalty

Singhal, Raiput, and Tiwari (2015) defined employee loyalty as "a psychological attachment or commitment to the organisation and develops as a result of increased job satisfaction". A study by Preko and Adjetey (2013) revealed that there was significant correlation between employee loyalty and his/her performance. This finding supported the result of Kahn (1990) which revealed that there is a psychological condition that shape employees' conditions to be loyal or not to an organisation. Such conditions are listed: meaningfulness, safety, and availability.

Theoretical Framework
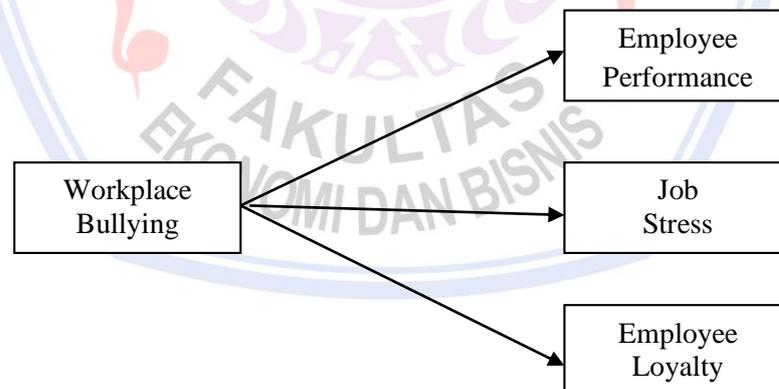
Figure 1. Theoretical Framework
Source: Data Processed, 2017

Previous Research

Rajalakshmi and Gomathi (2015).A Study on the Factors Influencing Workplace Bullying and Its Impact on Employee Stresshas found that, due to workplace bullying, the stress level of employees both the work stress and individual stress has been affected. Employee stress level will be reduced due to control of workplace bullying activities taken place in the organisation.

Yeh and Wang (2014).The Influence of Workplace Bullying to Job Stress in Taiwan found that workplace bullying and job stress have close relationship, workplace bullying influences job stress obviously. It means the higher extent of workplace bullying will conduct higher extent of job stress.

Yahaya, Tan, Lee, Yahaya, Boon, Hashim, and Taat (2012).The Impact of Workplace Bullying on Work Performance has shown that organisational cultures make the problem became worse when the leaders either do not understand workplace bullying or discharge it as hard management.

RESEARCH METHOD

Type of Research
This research uses the qualitative method to explore the topic of workplace bullying in PT. Perusahaan Listrik Negara (Persero) Area Manado.

Place and Time of Research
This research was conducted at PT. Perusahaan Listrik Negara (Persero) Area Manado on May until September, 2017.

Social Situation and Sample
The social situation of the research isall elements that can be informant about workplace bullying in PT. Perusahaan Listrik Negara (Persero) Area Manado. The size of sample in this research is in line with the number of informants are 8 (eight) informants. The eight informants are representatives of each department at PT. Perusahaan Listrik Negara (Persero) Area Manado.

Data Collection Method
The data were collected through 2 types which are primary data and secondary data. Primary data is the information that the researcher gathered in first-hand. The needed data for this research will be collected through interview on the social situation in the workplace. The secondary data in this research is extracted from the previous research of the related topics, case studies, library records, online articles, and the company's website.

Operational Definition of Research Variables
1. **Workplace bullying** is repeated exposure, over a period of time, to negative acts such as abuse, teasing, ridicule, and social exclusion.
2. **Employee Performance** is the successful completion of tasks by a selected individual or individuals, as set and measured by a supervisor or organization, to pre-defined acceptable standards while efficiently and effectively utilizing available resource within a changing environment.
3. **Job Stress** is stress caused or made worse by work. It may be caused by perceived/real pressures/deadlines/threats/anxieties within the working environment.
4. **Employee loyalty** can be defined as a psychological attachment or commitment to the organisation and develops as a result of increase satisfaction.

Data Analysis Method
Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes, and other materials that were accumulated in order to increase the understanding of them and to enable the researcher to present the result to others (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982).

Data Reliability and Validity
To ensure the reliability and validity of qualitative research, it is helpful to use triangulation. In this research, data triangulation is applied. There are a total of 4 departments in PT. Perusahaan Listrik Negara (Persero) Area Manado and the researcher collected the data by conducting interview with 2 representatives of each department.

RESULTS and DISCUSSIONS

Results
The researcher has interviewed 8 informants of PT. PLN (PERSERO) Area Manado, consisted of 2 representatives of each department that have been chosen as the informants for this research.

Informant 1

Informant 1 is the head of Network department at PT. PLN (PERSERO) Area Manado. According to Informant 1, there are times where his proposal to the company was declined and even his opinions and roles were not taken in to consideration. He stated that he is satisfied with his current salary as it is quite comparable to his workload. The company implemented a reward policy where a certain percentage of the company's profit will be awarded to employees with high performance scores, the higher the score then the more reward the employees will receive. Moreover, the company has a biannual training programme in order to increase and develop the employees' knowledge and skills. He believes that those factors are able to help him reach his full potential in the company.

Informant 2

Informant 2 is the Supervisor of Network department of PT. PLN (PERSERO) Area Manado. Though having plenty of responsibilities, more often than not he also has to do various unfinished works from his subordinates, especially if the deadline is near. Nevertheless, he viewed that his salary is truly worth the troubles. Informant 2 stated that PT. PLN (PERSERO) has a great reward policy and periodic monitoring from the Human Resource Department. It certainly serves as a great motivation for him in order to maintain his good performance. He revealed that he felt respected and rarely received impolite or crude behaviours from his co-workers and/or superior, but it happened a few times before.

Informant 3

Informant 3 is the Supervisor of Electrical Energy Transaction department of PT. PLN (PERSERO) Area Manado. He is confident that he is able to reach his full potential and maximise his capabilities as the company has excellence training programme in order to develop the employees' knowledge and skill. He divulged that his manager often gives him feedback about his work and he finds it helpful as he will be able to recognise which aspect is good and which one needs improvement.

High rewards and great co-workers are major reasons on why he enjoyed working in the company. According to Informant 3, he had never been disrespected and/or treated badly, either by his superior or co-workers. Nevertheless there is one thing that he is not pleased with the company which is the excessive working hours. Often times, he has to work overtime and it exhausted him. He was rarely given work that is beyond his obligation.

Informant 4

Informant 4 is an On-Job Training (OJT) staff of Electrical Energy Transaction department of PT. PLN (PERSERO) Area Manado. He is confident that he will be able to fulfil his potential in the company as it has regular training programme, especially for new employees to introduce them to the organisational culture and develop knowledge and skill of the employees. Informant 4 said that the company pays a great amount of attention to the welfare of its employees through suitable salary, rewards, and guidance and/or monitoring from the manager. He revealed that he has great relationship with his superiors and co-workers and never experienced bad behaviours from them.

Informant 5

Informant 5 is the Supervisor of the Customer Service department of PT. PLN (PERSERO) Area Manado. He stated that the working environment is extremely motivating and described the relationship between him and his superior and co-workers to be harmonious. His close relationship with his co-workers is indeed one of the major factors that make him content to work in the company. He believes that he is able to achieve his full potential by working in the company as the company has periodic training programme in order to increase his knowledge and skills, and constant monitoring from the manager. He is satisfied with his salary and deemed it suitable with his workload.

However, there are a few aspects that he is not particularly happy about. The first one is working beyond the office hours and for it not considered as overtime. The second is conflict between fellow employees. He said that misunderstanding does occur in the workplace, although it never goes out of hand. According to Informant 5, he had never been disrespected or treated unfairly in the workplace before.

Informant 6

Informant 6 is a staff member of the Customer Service department of PT. PLN (PERSERO) Area Manado. She believes that she is able to thrive in the company because the company gives training program for the employees in favour of developing their knowledge and skills and she has great eagerness to learn. She said that as a new employee, her manager and seniors provided great motivation and guidance for her. She viewed that her salary is in accordance with her workload.

She divulged that there are a few aspects that she disliked. The first aspect is when she was a sudden assignment which needs to be submitted as soon as possible and/or asked to participate in a training program outside of the city on short notice. The second is the work that she received is numerous and at short intervals. As stated by Informant 6, the company continues to write new regulations in order improve the welfare of its employees. Therefore, she felt motivated to perform her job well. Informant 6 said that she never received offensive or crude behaviours from her superior and co-workers nor given assignment that is beyond her responsibilities.

Informant 7

Informant 7 is a staff member of the Planning department of PT. PLN (PERSERO) Area Manado. She is certain that she is able to reach her full potential in the company through various manners such as periodic training, innovation competitions, and constant motivation and/or feedback given by the manager. In her opinion, her salary is suitable with her workload. As stated by Informant 7, she has never been disrespected or treated unjustly, either by her superior and/or co-workers. She has never been asked to complete a certain assignment that is not part of her responsibilities.

Informant 8

Informant 8 is a staff member of the Planning department of PT. PLN (PERSERO) Area Manado. Informant 8 said that he has achieved his full potential working in the company as PT. PLN (PERSERO) Area Manado, during his 34 years of working, has provided periodic training beneficial to increase the knowledge and skill of its employees and also motivation and guidance to improve his performance. He stated that his salary is more than enough compared to his workload and he is grateful for it. Informant 8 divulged that the company has paid great attention towards its employees' welfare and it certainly encourages him to perform his job well.

As stated by Informant 8, he has received disrespectful and unfair behaviours in the workplace from his superior and co-workers. According to Informant 8, both his presence and role have been dismissed by his superior when he got sick. Informant 8 stated that the projects he has been working on were given to someone else without notifying him first and he felt extremely disappointed.

Discussion
Job Stress

Yeh and Wang (2014) stated job stress as a "psychological state perceived by individuals and will cause physical, psychological, and behavioural deviations for organisational participants". The workplace bullying and job stress have a close relationship as it influences the employees' stress level. The greater bullying behaviours experienced by an employee, the higher said employee's stress level will increase. Jamal (2004) stated that "an excessive workload may make people feel job stress". This is what often happens to Informant 3, Informant 5, Informant 6, and Informant 8. Excessive workload and given assignment that is not part of their already heavy workload caused a great deal of stress to them. It caused them a great deal of pressure and more often than not, they felt overwhelmed and too stressed to complete the task. The effect of hindering the employees' abilities to finish the task by giving them more work than they could handle is certainly against the intention of any organisation as it would prevent them to further reaching and/or maintain the main objective of the organisation.

Informant 3, Informant 5, Informant 6, and Informant 8 stated that the additional work that they were tasked with are usually unfinished works, either by their superiors and/or co-workers. Overworking the employees may allow a higher degree of stress that can impact the output of the task and caused physical and mental illness. An overworked employee will not always be in focused or give total attention to his/her responsibilities which can lead to mistakes in completing a task and/or decision-making.

Einarsen (2000) stated that conflict-related bullying occurs as a result of highly escalated levels of conflict. Informant 5 divulged that conflicts among the co-workers often happened in the workplace. Poor communication and the difference between personalities of the employees which caused a misunderstanding amidst the co-workers thus become the triggers of workplace conflict. Failing to communicate in the workplace

can lead to the employees to make incorrect assumptions and believe and/or spread gossips circulating in the office. Clashing personalities of fellow employees is almost impossible to avoid. Every person comes from different background that shaped their characters. However, failure in understanding or accepting the diversity in each other's personalities may create animosity in the workplace and toxic working environment should be avoided at all cost.

Employee Loyalty

Informant 1, Informant 2, and Informant 8 have reported that they have experienced a feeling of being undermined, frustrated, and stressed in the workplace. Previous studies by Ayoko, Callan, and Härtel (2003) and McCarthy, Sheehan, and Kearans (1995) supported these findings by specifying those feeling are the typical reactions of bullying victims. An employee experiencing those feelings is certainly a bad omen for an organisation. It would disrupt their desire to perform their job to the best of their ability hence decrease the productivity of the organisation.

Informant 1 elaborated by saying that his ideas and plans have been dismissed by his superior and he felt a great disappointment afterwards. Disappointment and frustration toward the management of the organisation would evoke lessened loyalty to the organisation. Employees' loyalty is arguably one of the most essential aspects of an organisation to keep and maintain. An organisation must pay higher attention towards the employee's satisfaction in order to retain them for its long-term growth. Surrounding the organisation with its best and most talented employees will be able to guarantee a success in the long run. Indifference by the organisation towards the employee's well-being, both psychologically and physically, was proved to be costly.

However, Informant 1, Informant 2, Informant 3, Informant 4, and Informant 8 have divulged that PT. PLN (PERSERO) has an excellent rewards system and all of the informants stated that their salary is in accordance with their workload. Informant 1, Informant 3, Informant 4, Informant 5, Informant 6, Informant 7, and Informant 8 have stated that the organisation has a periodic training program in order to increase the skills and knowledge of the employees. These findings supported the theories of Perceived Organisational Support (POS) by Fox and Stallworth (2005) and Eisenberger et al. (1986) in which it was stated that the beliefs of the employees that the organisation values the employee's contributions and cares about their welfare through organisational policies, procedures, and programs. Employees who felt they were supported by the organisation will feel less inclined to leave the company and improved their job satisfaction even though they are the targets of workplace bullying (Quine, 2001).

Employee Performance

Immoderate working hours has also become a problem in the company. Informant 3, Informant 5, and Informant 8 stated that they are tasked to work overtime, occasionally until past midnight, in order to attend a meeting or to finish a certain job. However, they are still expected to come to the office early in the morning. It means that they will have less time to rest and sleep deprivation has been proven to have a major effect on human functioning. Lack of sleep affected the cognitive and motor performance considerably worse than people who are not sleep deprived (Pilcher and Huffcutt, 1996). The absence of sleep has a great effect on an employee's performance, especially in his/her ability to make a decision (Harrison and Horne, 2000).

An interesting finding is that all the informants have no knowledge of bullying and what practices/behaviours can be categorised as one, therefore they might not be aware if they have been a victim or not. This certainly means that, despite of their periodic training by the company, they did not receive any training on how to respond to these behaviours in the workplace and there is no policy in the company that may prevent this unethical practice as a precaution method. Receiving this particular training may pose a big difference towards the outcome of bullying in the workplace. The victim of bullying that is aware of the situation may be able to respond correctly to the bully or, depending on the severity of the behaviour, report them to the HR department in order to prevent this situation from escalation and thus impact the victim's performance negatively.

CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Based on the results and discussion in the previous chapter, there are several conclusions that can be drawn regarding the workplace bullying phenomenon in PT. PLN (PERSERO) Area Manado, such as:

1. Excessive workload, conflict between co-workers, immoderate working hours, and being undermined, frustrated, and stressed, either by the superior and/or co-workers have been the most notable bullying behaviours that have happened in the organisation.
2. Perceived Organisational Support (POS) by the employees might have been a key factor to retain the employees and increase their job satisfaction.
3. Lack of knowledge of bullying is not beneficial as the employees do not have any understanding whatsoever about the concept and what behaviours/practices can be categorised as one. Therefore, they might have been a target without even realising it.

Recommendations

In reference to the results and the discussion, the researcher would like to propose several recommendations for PT. PLN (PERSERO) Area Manado, the government, the university, and also for future research, which are:

1. For PT. PLN (PERSERO) Area Manado, it is paramount to understand workplace bullying and acknowledge the danger it will posed to the organisation itself and the employees. The organisation must consider establishing a training program about bullying practices in the workplace in order to introduce the concept and increase employees' awareness of it. Furthermore, creating a policy to ensure its legality might be the best precaution method against it.
2. For the government, bullying has no place in an organisation, private or otherwise. The government must have realised the ramifications of it and understood that it is time for them to create new regulations in order to prevent the phenomenon from escalating as well as punishing those who committed it.
3. For the university, this research is helpfully able to assist the students, lecturers, and other parties with knowledge and additional information of workplace bullying and to add to the existing theories about workplace bullying and what it might entails.
4. For future research, this research may help them with its findings regarding the topic and aid them in selecting the proper method to implement with this theme.

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