



Workplace fun and work engagement in tourism and hospitality: The role of psychological capital

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ABSTRACT

Although previous literature has examined the relationship between workplace fun and work engagement, the construct of psychological capital is introduced in the context of tourism and hospitality to investigate the mediating and moderating roles in this relationship. This research aimed to discuss the effect of workplace fun on psychological capital and further examine psychological capital's mediating and moderating effects between workplace fun and work engagement. The survey data were taken from 331 front-line employees in customer service-oriented tourism and hospitality enterprises in Taiwan. The results showed that workplace fun has a significant positive effect on psychological capital. In addition, psychological capital plays a partial mediating role between workplace fun and work engagement. Moreover, psychological capital has a significant moderating effect between workplace fun and work engagement, namely, psychological capital can help to strengthen the relationship between workplace fun and work engagement. The implications and suggestions are discussed for tourism and hospitality operators.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, competition in the tourism and hospitality industry is fierce. In order to gain a competitive advantage, the issue of how to attract and retain high-quality employees has become a major issue faced by various tourism and hospitality organizations. An interesting working environment will have a positive atmosphere that can attract and retain employees for organizations (Chan, 2010). The issue of workplace fun has attracted the attention of industry and academic fields in recent years. Lamm and Meek (2009) argued that workplace fun as interesting, sociable, interpersonal, and recreational tasks and these activities that create an interesting working environment. Moreover, a work environment with fun is one of the factors that distinguish superior performers from others (Chan et al., 2000; Joyce, 2003).

Workplace fun has a deep effect on organizations and employees (Owler et al., 2010). From the perspective of organizations, workplace fun is conducive to improving several organizational benefits, including elasticity, competitive advantage and increasing work passion (Fleming, 2005; Karl et al., 2005), good customer service (Karl and Peluchette, 2006), innovation (Bolman and Deal, 2000), empowerment (Baughman, 2001; Bolman and Deal, 2000), creativity (Bolman and

Deal, 2000; Deal and Kennedy, 1999), and productivity (Costea et al., 2005; Karl et al., 2005). Moreover, from the employee perspective, an interesting working environment is the main reason to enhance employee's motive and productivity (Deal and Kennedy, 1982). Workplace fun is conducive to improving job satisfaction (Karl and Peluchette, 2006), organizational commitment (McDowell, 2004), energy (Tews et al., 2012), organizational citizenship behavior (McDowell, 2004), job performance (Zani et al., 2017), and employee well-being (Owler et al., 2010; Tews et al., 2017), and it can also relieve employees' anger (Tews et al., 2012), emotional exhaustion (Karl et al., 2007), work pressure (Karl et al., 2005), and turnover intention (Tews et al., 2014).

Deal and Kennedy (1982) argued that the culture of "work hard/play hard", and this concept has been used in the workplace (Costea et al., 2005). Past studies indicated that enterprises with lower operational risk, high workload, teamwork spirit and customer-oriented work environment tend to successfully implement the culture of "work hard/play hard", such as IBM, Google, McDonald's, Pike Fish Market, Pixar, Southwest Airlines, and Xerox (Collinson, 2002; Karl et al., 2005; Yerkes, 2007). This research aimed to discuss workplace fun in the tourism and hospitality industry in regard to the above-mentioned culture of "work hard/playing hard". Therefore, it was important to try

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to understand the current status of workplace fun in the tourism and hospitality industry.

Work engagement is a motivational construct (Karatepe and Karadas, 2015), and involves a kind of positive, self-fulfilling, and work-related psychological state (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Christian et al. (2011) indicated that work engagement is an important personal factor to predict employees' job performance, thus, it is quite important for organizations to motivate employees' high work engagement. Especially in the tourism and hospitality industry, as employees' performance will further affect customer satisfaction, purchase intention, and loyalty (Borucki and Burke, 1999). Therefore, how to encourage employees to develop high work engagement is a key factor that affects organizational performance. Plester and Hutchison (2016) believed that, at an intuitive level, workplace fun and enjoying oneself in the job can increase or create better work engagement. Past studies revealed that workplace fun has a positive effect on work engagement (Fluegge-Woolf, 2008, 2014).

Bakker and Schaufeli (2008) pointed out that work engagement as a positive and active working state-like, which has long-term development potential, thus, a new research focus is the study of Positive Organizational Behavior. Psychological capital is a personality construct in the theory of Positive Organizational Behavior and refers to "an individual's positive psychological state of development. It has been described as having four features: (1) having confidence to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks (self-efficacy); (2) making positive attribution about succeeding now and in the future (optimism); (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, re-directing paths to goals in order to succeed (hope); and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back, and even beyond to attain success (resilience)" (Luthans et al., 2007, p. 3). Luthans et al. (2004) applied the concept of psychological capital to the organizational management field, and found that psychological capital can promote employees to produce positive organizational behavior. Psychological capital is related to all job attitudes and job performance (Luthans et al., 2007); for instance, employees will have higher job satisfaction, work happiness, organizational citizenship behavior (Avey et al., 2008; Youssef and Luthans, 2007), and work engagement (Gupta et al., 2017; Karatepe and Avci, 2017; Paek et al., 2015) when they have higher psychological capital.

To the extent of our knowledge, past studies failed to discuss the effect of workplace fun on psychological capital. Fluegge-Woolf (2014) considered that workplace fun has a social and interactive essence, which can be used as a kind of positive work resources. Xanthopoulou et al. (2007) indicated that work resources are related to self-efficacy and optimism in psychological capital. Furthermore, Saks and Gruman (2011) proposed that organizational socialization resources can promote development of the four constituents of psychological capital. Socialization is considered to be a process to reduce uncertainty (Bauer et al., 2007), and is helpful to produce positive emotions to further establish psychological capital (Fredrickson, 2001). Therefore, the first issue in this research was whether workplace fun has a positive effect on employees' psychological capital.

From the perspective that psychological capital is used as a mediating role, Paek et al. (2015) indicated that psychological capital is regarded by many empirical researches as an important mediator of many work-related achievements. Lamm and Meek (2009) indicated that workplace fun refers to interesting, sociable, interpersonal, or recreational tasks and activities in an organization that provide individuals with recreation, happiness or joy, and that it is a construct with environmental traits. Luthans et al. (2008) found that environmental factors will affect employee performance through psychological capital, signifying that psychological capital is a mediating mechanism. In addition, Nigah et al. (2012) argued that socialization mechanisms are applied by an organization to support new employees in developing higher psychological capital to further predict their work engagement. Thus, the second issue in this research was whether psychological

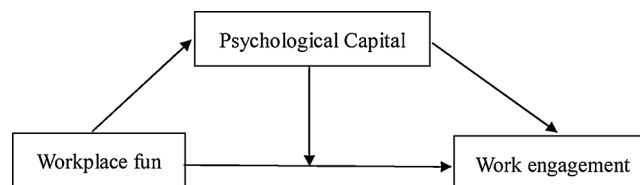


Fig. 1. The conceptual model.

capital plays a mediating role in the relationship between workplace fun and employees' work engagement.

From the perspective that psychological capital is used in a moderating role, Choi et al. (2013) stated that workplace fun will possibly stimulate employees' motivation and similarly meet employees' emotional demands. Paek et al. (2015) revealed that employees with high psychological capital will have positive emotions (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004); when employees are in an interesting working environment, it will increase their job satisfaction (Luthans et al., 2007) and organizational commitment (Luthans et al., 2008) to further produce a better work engagement attitude (Avey et al., 2008). As a result, the third issue in this research was whether psychological capital can moderate the positive effect of workplace fun on employees' work engagement.

This research proposed a conceptual model (Fig. 1). When workplace fun exists, work engagement can be produced through employees' positive psychological capital. Meanwhile, psychological capital can have a moderating effect on the relationship between workplace fun and employees' work engagement.

2. Literature review and hypotheses

2.1. The job demand-resources model as theoretical framework

Bakker and Demerouti (2007, 2008) constructed the job demand-resources model (JD-R model), which advocates that the characteristics of all work environments can be divided into two categories: job demands and job resources. Jobs demands mean work requirements in terms of physical, psychological, social, and organizational aspects, and requires that individual's physical and psychological (including cognition and emotion) are applied, thus, it is also related to the necessary physiological and psychological costs. Job resources can be regarded as the various resources required for the physiological, psychological, social, organizational, and other aspects of work, and its effectiveness includes effectively helping to achieve work goals, reducing the physical and psychological costs of work requirements, and stimulating personal growth and development (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007, 2008; Bakker et al., 2004). This research used the JD-R model to explain the conceptual framework proposed by the research. Workplace fun can be considered as a positive work resource. Workplace fun can be considered as a positive work resource. Bakker et al. (2007) pointed out that work resources can help to improve work engagement. Moreover, positive work resources can stimulate individual growth, learning, and development, and help to enhance personal resources (psychological capital). According to the conceptual model proposed by Sweetman and Luthans (2010), psychological capital connects engagement through positive emotions, which is also part of the JD-R model. Paek et al. (2015) believed psychological capital is considered a very important driving factor that directly affects work-related consequences.

2.2. Workplace fun and work engagement

Fluegge-Woolf (2008, p. 15) defined workplace fun as "any social, interpersonal, or task activities at work of playful or humorous nature which provide an individual with amusement, enjoyment or pleasure". Tews et al. (2014) argued that workplace fun contains three sub-

dimensions of fun activities, coworker socializing and manager support for fun. Fun activities refer to various socializing and team activities held by organizations to promote the enjoyment between employees (Ford et al., 2003; Karl et al., 2005). Coworker socializing is characterized by kindness, amity and friendly relations (Chiaburu and Harrison, 2008), while manager support for fun refers to the degree that management allows and encourages employees to have fun at work (Tews et al., 2014).

Chan (2010) established four workplace fun factors for the hospitality industry according to the grounded theory: (1) Staff-oriented workplace fun, (2) Supervisor-oriented workplace fun, (3) Social-oriented workplace fun, and (4) Strategy-oriented workplace fun. In addition, several recent related literatures have explored positive work-related outcomes arising from workplace fun in the hospitality industry, including: improving performance (Choi et al., 2013; Tews et al., 2013), job satisfaction (Chan and Mak, 2016; Choi et al., 2013), engagement (Becker and Tews, 2016), constituent attachment (Becker and Tews, 2016), embeddedness (Tews et al., 2015), trust-in-management (Chan and Mak, 2016), team performance (Han et al., 2016), and reducing turn over (Tews et al., 2013, 2014).

Kahn (1990) pointed out that work engagement is based on a motivational construct, which reflects that an employee is fully committed to his/her work. Schaufeli et al. (2002) defined work engagement as a positive working psychological state, and further divided it into three sub-dimensions of vigor, dedication and absorption. Vigor is described as employees having higher stamina and mental elasticity during work, and the willingness to put effort into the work. Dedication involves individuals being firmly engaged in their work and having a sense of significance, zeal, encouragement, pride, and challenge. Absorption is described as being fully absorbed in the work, through which the time can go faster and individuals will have difficulty in getting away from their work (Schaufeli et al., 2006, 2002).

Work engagement is a construct that has been widely discussed in the academic field. Past studies on the hospitality industry pointed out that, when work engagement plays the role of an independent variable (IV), it can positively improve job performance (Karatepe, 2014; Karatepe and Ngeche, 2012), job satisfaction (Yeh, 2013), and reduce turnover intention (Karatepe and Ngeche, 2012). When work engagement plays the role of a dependent variable (DV), it is affected by other variables, such as extrinsic and intrinsic motivations (Putra et al., 2017), core self-evaluations (Karatepe and Demir, 2014; Lee and Ok, 2015), psychological climate (Lee and Ok, 2015), psychological capital (Paek et al., 2015), and tourism involvement (Yeh, 2013). Moreover, work engagement is often seen as an intermediary role. Lyu et al. (2016) pointed out that work engagement can mediate the relationship between abusive supervision and employees' customer oriented organizational citizenship behavior. Karatepe and Demir (2014) believed that work engagement can mediate the impact of core self-evaluations on work-family facilitation and family-work facilitation. Karatepe et al. (2014) showed that work engagement has full intermediary effect between challenge stressors with affective organizational commitment and job performance. Karatepe (2013) also believed that work engagement has full intermediary effect between high-performance work practices and job performance and extra-role customer service.

Based on the literal meaning of fun and engagement, Plester and Hutchison (2016) indicated that engagement is related to a positive psychological state and emotions such as enjoyment, joy and zeal. Similarly, fun refers to a positive perception and it is related to enjoyment, joy, casualness, entertainment and smiles. Their research showed that both fun and engagement are connected with enjoyment. While it is considered that enjoyment has the same meaning as fun, people feel enjoyment through different kinds of fun. Demerouti et al. (2001) argued that workplace fun can be viewed as a positive work resource that is consistent with the JD-R model. The JD-R model proposes that work resources involve physical, socialization, psychological or organizational aspects, reduce job requirement and psychological and physical

costs, stimulate individuals' growth and learning, further complete work goals, and promote dedication. Past studies revealed that work resources can help to improve work engagement (Bakker et al., 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001). Moreover, Becker and Tews (2016) indicated that fun is a kind of resource that has social and interpersonal essence, which can help individuals to promote social relationships, provide social support to cope with the pressure of service-oriented work, and cause individuals to become immersed in their work (Fluegge-Woolf, 2008, 2014). Sonnentag (2003) believed that, through individual recovery mechanisms, fun can allow employees to take a break during work and replenish themselves, which can help employees become more dedicated in their work. Therefore, according to the above-mentioned description, this research proposed the following hypothesis:

H1. Workplace fun has a positive effect on work engagement.

2.3. Workplace fun and psychological capital

Luthans (2002, p. 59) defined psychological capital as "the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace". Psychological capital is composed of four psychological resources: hope, optimism, resilience and self-efficacy (Luthans et al., 2004). Hope is defined as "a positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful (1) agency (goal-directed energy) and (2) pathways (planning to meet goals)" (Snyder et al., 1991, p.287). Carver and Scheier (2002, p.231) defined optimism as "optimists are people who expect good things to happen to them; pessimists are people who expect bad things to happen to them". Luthans (2002, p.702) defined resilience as "positive psychological capacity to rebound, to 'bounce back' from adversity, uncertainty, conflict, failure, or even positive change, progress and increased responsibility". Self-efficacy is defined as "the employee's conviction or confidence about his or her abilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, or courses of action needed to successfully execute a specific task within a given context" (Stajkovic and Luthans, 1998, p. 66).

In recent studies of the hospitality industry, psychological capital is often regarded as an antecedent variable. Psychological capital can positively improve employee's job satisfaction (Jung and Yoon, 2015; Karatepe and Karadas, 2015), work engagement (Paek et al., 2015), organizational citizenship behavior (Jung and Yoon, 2015), employee morale (Paek et al., 2015), quality of work life (Kim et al., 2017), career satisfaction (Paek et al., 2015), life satisfaction (Paek et al., 2015), service quality and unit revenues (Mathe et al., 2017), and service recovery performance (Kim et al., 2017), while reducing the intention to leave (Karatepe and Karadas, 2014), work-family conflict, and family-work conflict (Karatepe and Karadas, 2014). In addition, Bouzari and Karatepe (2017) believed that servant leadership can positively affect the psychological capital of employees, and the psychological capital of employees can improve employees' willingness to stay, sales ambidexterity and service-oriented organizational citizenship behaviors, and lower the lateness attitude. Moreover, psychological capital has full intermediary effect between servant leadership with employees' intention to stay, sales ambidexterity, service-oriented organizational citizenship behaviors, and lowering the lateness attitude.

There is a lack of research discussing the relationship between workplace fun and psychological capital. Based on the connotations of workplace fun and psychological capital, this research attempted to seek the correlation between the two constructs. Deal and Kennedy (1982) argued that an interesting environment is the key to improving employees' working enthusiasm and productivity, as well as satisfying employees' emotional demands (Karl and Peluchette, 2006). Employees who are supported emotionally have a positive psychological state in their inner mind to simulate their motivation (hope), thus, they can recognize the resources and have the ability to take the necessary

measures to complete a specific action in a given environment (self-efficacy). Even if they are in an adverse situation, they can still face problems optimistically (optimism) and have the mental ability to recover rapidly (resilience) (Luthans et al., 2007). Therefore, this research believed that an interesting environment will have a positive effect on employees' psychological capital. In addition, Saks and Gruman (2011) proposed the theory of socialization resources and stated that organizations can develop new employees' psychological capital through social programs (including new employee training, job characteristics, social support, and leadership). Workplace fun as a positive working resource contains the connotation of social support, and it is related to the connotation of social support contained in the theory of socialization resources (Saks and Gruman, 2011). Therefore, according to the above-mentioned description, this research proposed the following hypothesis:

H2. Workplace fun has a positive effect on psychological capital.

2.4. Psychological capital and work engagement

Bakker et al. (2011) pointed out that in order to complete work more efficiently, various enterprises not only need to recruit highly-gifted employees but also should enlighten employees to enable them to give full play to their abilities. Past studies revealed that employees' psychological capital plays an important role in the successful completion of their work (Luthans and Youssef, 2004; Wright et al., 2007). Luthans et al. (2004) argued that psychological capital is composed of the four psychological resources of hope, optimism, resilience and self-efficacy. Xanthopoulou et al. (2009) found that optimistic employees with self-efficacy may create a resourceful working environment, so that they can be better engaged in their work. Avey et al. (2008) pointed out that employees with higher psychological capital are apt to have positive emotions to further create a higher work engagement attitude. Karatepe and Karadas (2015) also indicated that employees with higher psychological capital are often vigorous and dedicated, and they are happy to be immersed in their work (Gupta et al., 2017; Karatepe and Avci, 2017). Therefore, according to the above-mentioned description, this research proposed the following hypothesis:

H3. Psychological capital has a positive effect on work engagement

2.5. The mediating effect of psychological capital

Becker and Tews (2016) stated that workplace fun is a kind of resource that has a social and interpersonal essence. The social and interpersonal activities presented by workplace fun will make employees feel recreational, happy or joyful (Lamm and Meek, 2009). Therefore, workplace fun can be regarded as a construct with environmental characteristics. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) indicated that environmental events will shape the job evaluation regarding sensory effect, ability, significance and choice, and will influence subsequent behavior. Previous research found that environmental factors will affect employee performance through psychological capital, which indicates that psychological capital is a mediating mechanism (Luthans et al., 2008). Xanthopoulou et al. (2007) also showed that the personal resource of psychological capital plays a partial mediating role between work resources and work engagement. Saks and Gruman (2011) argued that organizational socialization resources can promote the development of the four constituents of psychological capital. Nigah et al., (2012) further indicated that social mechanisms are used by organizations to support new employees in producing positive emotions, which will help employees establish higher psychological capital and further predict their work engagement (Fredrickson, 2001). This research assumed that psychological capital is a mediating mechanism that connects the relationship between workplace fun and work engagement. Therefore, according to the above-mentioned inference, this research proposed the

following hypothesis:

H4. Psychological capital has a mediating effect on the relationship between workplace fun and work engagement.

2.6. The moderating effect of psychological capital

Luthans et al., (2005) indicated that psychological capital emphasizes employees' positive essence and strength, and that its role lies in stimulating employees' growth and performance. Previous studies showed that psychological resource ability has a positive effect on work results, such as work engagement (Paek et al., 2015) and organizational commitment (Youssef and Luthans, 2007). Avey et al., (2006) believed that employees with higher psychological capital are apt to have positive emotions and can rapidly recover from setbacks on their own; they have high job satisfaction and organizational identification to produce a higher work engagement attitude (Avey et al., 2008; Larson and Luthans, 2006). Moreover, Karatepe and Karadas (2015) also argued that employees with higher psychological capital are often vigorous and dedicated, and they are happy to be immersed in their work. These positive spiritual elements contained in psychological capital are conducive to the close relationship between employees and their work role (Sweetman and Luthans, 2010). Therefore, this research assumed that when employees have higher positive psychological capital, the positive emotions produced in the mind will help to reinforce the positive effect of workplace fun on work engagement. On the contrary, if employees have lower positive psychological capital, it will weaken the positive effect of workplace fun on work engagement. In other words, the degree of employees' psychological capital will either strengthen or weaken the relationship between the two variables of workplace fun and work engagement. For these reasons, this study proposed the following hypothesis:

H5. Psychological capital has a moderating effect on the relationship between workplace fun and work engagement.

3. Method

3.1. Sample and procedures

This research chose employees from customer service-based tourism and hospitality enterprises in Taiwan as respondents to test the hypotheses. These enterprises include international tourist hotels, travel agencies, airlines, theme amusement parks and conference and exhibition agencies. This method was used to generalize the research results from the broader population. According to the 2016 statistics of Taiwan's Tourist Bureau, there were 75 international tourist hotels, 106 travel agencies, 23 theme amusement parks, 18 international airlines and 442 conference and exhibition agencies in Taiwan (Taiwan Tourism Bureau, 2016). This research took full-time front-line employees who had worked in the company for more than six months as respondents.

To produce a sample for this study, this study found 45 front-line employees working in international tourist hotels, travel agencies, airlines, theme amusement parks and conference and exhibition agencies to assist with the pre-test of the questionnaire. After the pre-test analysis results were used to revise the formal questionnaire. In terms of the formal questionnaire, the study obtained agreement from the heads of human resources departments of 15 international tourist hotels, 18 travel agencies, 5 theme parks, and 5 international airlines, and 20 exhibition companies to participate in this research survey. We mailed the questionnaire packets to each company's human resources manager. Each packet contained 5 self-administered questionnaires and 5 instructions for answering the online questionnaire. We asked each human resources manager to distribute the 10 questionnaires to the respondents, and be careful not to repeat the questionnaire to the same

respondent.

In order to protect the opinions provided by the respondents from the prying eyes of directors or peers, the researchers implemented two measures to protect privacy. First, a self-addressed envelope was attached to each self-administered questionnaire, so that the respondents could immediately send back the sealed questionnaire after completion. Second, the other specified the website address of the online version of the same questionnaire. If the respondents could not fill in the self-administered questionnaire under a suitable environment, they could access the online questionnaire with a login password and complete the questionnaire online. The questionnaire results could only be seen by the researchers.

This study distributed 315 self-administered questionnaires, and 159 valid ones were returned, with a valid questionnaire return rate of 51%. In terms of the online questionnaire, 172 valid questionnaires were returned, with a valid questionnaire return rate of 55%. A total of 331 valid questionnaires were therefore retrieved through the two questionnaire distribution channels, for an overall return rate of 53%. This research conducted an independent sample t-test among the self-administered questionnaires and online questionnaires. The test results indicated that there was no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in the questionnaire items of the two channels. Therefore, other analysis could be further conducted. In the sample distribution of valid questionnaires, 58% respondents were female employees, 51.4% were 21–30 years old, more than half of them were single (52.3%), and most of them had a college or university degree (64.7%). The respondents mainly worked in hotels (22.7%), travel agencies (25.1%), airlines (27.2%), theme amusement parks (14.5%), and conference and exhibition agencies (10.5%). Furthermore, 48.3% of the respondents' salaries were between NT\$ 30,001-40,000 (US\$1 = NT\$31.152 as of December 1, 2017), and the tenure of 33.8% of the respondents was more than 3 years and less than 4 years.

3.2. Measures

The instrument of this study contained four scales, including workplace fun, work engagement, psychological capital, and job satisfaction. According to the suggestions of Brislin (1986), the correctness and equivalence of the concepts in the Chinese and English versions were confirmed. Each item was translated into Chinese by bilingual experts and then translated back into English. Afterwards, scholars, tourism managers, managers of five-star international tourist hotels, and front-line employees confirmed that the translated Chinese items were consistent with the English items. This questionnaire adopted a Likert 5-point scale to measure each scale, in which a score of one to five respectively represented strongly disagree to strongly agree.

3.2.1. Workplace fun

14 items were adapted from the research of Tews et al., (2014), and three sub-dimensions were used to measure workplace fun, including fun activities (5 items), coworker socialization (4 items), and manager support for fun (5 items). Moreover, this study added one sub-dimension, customer interaction (3 items), through in-depth interviews. A sample item was: "Public celebrations of work achievements". The Cronbach's α of the scale was 0.88. A higher score showed that the front-line employees perceived a higher degree of workplace fun.

3.2.2. Work engagement

The scale of work engagement was adapted from the research of Schaufeli et al. (2006) and included three sub-dimensions of vigor (3 items), dedication (3 items), and absorption (3 items), for a total of nine items. A sample item was: "At my job, I feel strong and vigorous". The Cronbach's α of the scale was 0.90. A higher score revealed that the front-line employees were engaged in a higher degree of work engagement.

3.2.3. Psychological capital

The 12 items were adapted from Luthans et al.'s (2007) study, where psychological capital included hope (2 items), optimism (4 items), resilience (3 items), and self-efficacy (3 items). A sample item was: "I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events". The Cronbach's α of the scale was 0.89. A higher score indicated that the front-line employees experienced a higher degree of psychological capital.

3.2.4. Control variables

Past studies revealed that the background variables have important effects on work engagement (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003; Sonnentag, 2003). Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) suggested that men have higher work engagement than women. Past research showed that seniors have a higher level of work engagement (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Education and tenure are also related to work engagement. Past studies showed that individuals with higher education levels have higher work engagement (Lawrence, 2011; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003). The attitudes and behaviors of employees with longer tenure are more stable than those with shorter tenure (Matthijs Bal et al., 2013), and employees with longer tenure have higher work engagement than those with shorter tenure (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003).

In addition, Saks (2006) suggested that job satisfaction is related to work engagement. Employees who are satisfied with their job are more likely to rely on a fairly positive or directed mentality to invest personal resources to achieve the company's goals (i.e. high-level engagement) to pay back to the organization (Huang et al., 2016). The scale of job satisfaction was adapted from the study of Ackfeldt and Wong (2006) and had a total of six items. A sample item was: "I feel satisfied with my present job". The Cronbach's α of the scale was 0.87. A higher score indicated that the front-line employees perceived a higher degree of job satisfaction.

Thus, this research controlled the respondents' gender (1 = male and 2 = female), age, education, tenure, and job satisfaction, as these variables might confound the results.

4. Result

4.1. Descriptive analysis and confirmatory factor analysis

The mean, standard deviation and correlation matrix of all the variables are shown in Table 1. The control variable of job satisfaction was significantly positively related to workplace fun ($r = 0.44$, $p < 0.01$), psychological capital ($r = 0.60$, $p < 0.01$), and work engagement ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.01$). Moreover, the results revealed that workplace fun was significantly positively related to psychological capital ($r = 0.23$, $p < 0.01$) and work engagement ($r = 0.51$, $p < 0.01$). Moreover, psychological capital was also significantly positively related to work engagement ($r = 0.49$, $p < 0.01$).

Before testing the hypothesized model, this research firstly conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The results showed that the measurement model fit was acceptable: $\chi^2 / df = 2.95$, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.91, goodness-of-fit index (GFI) = 0.92, adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) = 0.89, Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) = 0.87, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.05. Therefore, the

Table 1
Mean, standard deviation, and intercorrelations of variables.

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Job satisfaction	3.76	0.63				
2. Workplace fun	3.79	0.49	0.44**			
3. Psychological capital	3.85	0.51	0.60**	0.23**		
4. Work engagement	3.89	0.61	0.65**	0.51**	0.49**	

Note.
** $p < 0.01$.

Table 2
Results of confirmatory factor analysis.

Constructs	Mean	SD	Factor loadings	Error variances	CR	AVE		
Workplace Fun								
<i>Fun activities</i>								
Public celebrations of work achievements.	3.74	0.96	0.72	0.04	0.85	0.54		
Team building activities.	3.73	0.94	0.81	0.03				
Recognition of personal milestones.	3.58	0.91	0.80	0.03				
Social events.	3.61	0.95	0.75	0.04				
Competitions.	3.55	0.86	0.55	0.04				
<i>Coworker socializing</i>								
My coworkers and I share stories with each other.	3.87	0.73	0.67	0.03	0.80	0.50		
My coworkers and I joke around with each other.	3.99	0.65	0.60	0.02				
My coworkers and I socialize at work.	4.06	0.66	0.77	0.02				
My coworkers and I socialize outside of work.	3.87	0.77	0.76	0.03				
<i>Manager support for fun</i>								
My managers encourage employees to have fun on the job	3.76	0.93	0.86	0.02	0.92	0.70		
My managers emphasize employee fun in the workplace	3.65	0.93	0.93	0.02				
My managers try to make my work fun	3.52	0.94	0.89	0.02				
My managers care about employees having fun on the job	3.47	0.87	0.80	0.03				
My managers allow employees to play around on the job	3.40	0.90	0.69	0.04				
<i>Customer Interaction</i>								
I always enjoy fun for serving the customers.	3.90	0.78	0.69	0.03	0.80	0.57		
I enjoyably communicate and interact with customers	4.04	0.73	0.82	0.02				
I can have fun from my interaction with customers.	4.08	0.72	0.75	0.02				
Work Engagement								
<i>Vigor</i>								
At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.	3.90	0.77	0.92	0.02	0.92	0.79		
At my work, I feel bursting with energy.	3.81	0.79	0.95	0.02				
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.	3.59	0.89	0.78	0.02				
<i>Dedication</i>								
I am enthusiastic about my job.	3.80	0.86	0.88	0.02	0.88	0.71		
My job inspires me.	3.86	0.83	0.87	0.02				
<hr/>								
Constructs	Mean	SD	Factor loadings	Error variances	CR	AVE		
I am proud of the work that I do.	3.90	0.83	0.78	0.02	0.89	0.74		
<i>Absorption</i>								
I feel happy when I am working intensely.	4.01	0.82	0.80	0.02				
I am immersed in my work.	3.85	0.84	0.92	0.02				
I get carried away when I am working.	3.75	0.90	0.85	0.03	0.85	0.58		
Psychological capital								
<i>Hope</i>								
If I find myself in a jam at work, I could think of many ways to get out of it.	3.62	0.84	0.66	0.03				
Right now, I see myself as being pretty successful at work.	3.88	0.74	0.79	0.02				
I can think of many ways to reach my current work goals.	3.94	0.69	0.83	0.02				
At this time, I am meeting the work goals that I have set for myself.	3.60	0.85	0.69	0.03				
<i>Optimism</i>								
I always look on the bright side of things regarding my job.	3.61	0.85	0.63	0.15	0.81	0.59		
I'm optimistic about what will happen to me in the future as it pertains to work.	3.88	0.70	0.85	0.05				
<i>Resilience</i>								
I can be "on my own" so to speak at work if I have to.	3.94	0.77	0.79	0.03	0.90	0.75		
I usually take stressful things at work in stride.	3.77	0.77	0.83	0.03				
I can get past difficult times at work because I've experienced difficulty before.	3.88	0.74	0.74	0.03				
<i>Self-efficacy</i>								
I feel confident in representing my work area in meetings with management.	3.91	0.72	0.89	0.02	0.93	0.70		
I feel confident contributing to discussions about the company's strategy.	3.95	0.70	0.87	0.02				
I feel confident presenting information to a group of colleagues.	3.87	0.74	0.78	0.02				
Job satisfaction								
I feel satisfied with my present job.	3.66	0.81	0.80	0.02	0.93	0.70		
I definitely like my work.	3.69	0.82	0.88	0.01				
I am happy that I took this job.	3.76	0.79	0.81	0.02				
My job is very pleasant.	3.74	0.80	0.80	0.02				
My job is very worthwhile.	3.78	0.83	0.84	0.02				
I am very content with my job.	3.70	0.85	0.89	0.02				

model in this research was acceptable. Table 2 lists the standardized coefficient loadings and error variances of the CFA, the composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). The normalized factor loading values of all variables are between 0.52 and 0.93, which are consistent with Jöreskog and Sörbom (1989)'s recommendation of above 0.45. The standard errors of all variables are between 0.05–0.15. The convergent validity and discriminant validity were also evaluated. In this research, all the values of CRs were greater than 0.7, and all the factor loadings were significant and greater than 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010).

The results of this research showed that the model had convergent validity. Moreover, as suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981) and Bagozzi and Yi (1988) believed that the values of AVE of each dimension should be greater than the square of the correlation coefficient. This research result supported that all the measures in this research had discriminant validity.

In order to consider the problem of potential common method variation (CMV) in this research model, this research used Harman's factor testing to detect possible CMV (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986), put

Table 3
Results of hierarchical multiple regression analysis.

Variables	Psychological Capital	Work engagement			
		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Control variables					
Gender	−0.05	0.01	−0.02	−0.01	−0.01
Age	0.05	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.03
Education	0.10 [†]	−0.04	0.01	−0.02	−0.01
Tenure	−0.01	−0.03	−0.04	−0.04	−0.04
Job satisfaction	0.59 ^{***}	0.65 ^{***}	0.48 ^{***}	0.42 ^{***}	0.40 ^{***}
Predictor variables					
Workplace Fun	0.12 ^{**}		0.34 ^{***}	0.28 ^{***}	0.24 ^{**}
Psychological Capital				0.17 ^{**}	0.13 [†]
Two-way interactions					
Workplace Fun [†] Psychological Capital					0.16 ^{**}
R ²	0.37	0.42	0.49	0.51	0.58
Adjusted R ²	0.36	0.41	0.48	0.50	0.59
ΔR ²			0.07 ^{***}	0.02	0.09 ^{***}
F	31.76 ^{***}	47.59 ^{***}	51.20 ^{***}	53.16 ^{***}	62.78 ^{***}
ΔF			3.61 ^{***}	1.96	9.62 ^{***}

Note.

* $p < 0.05$.

** $p < 0.01$.

*** $p < 0.001$.

all items into exploratory factor analysis, and used the unrotated axis matrix energy of principal component analysis to reflect the CMV results. The results show that the principal component of the first unrotated axis matrix could explain the variation of 39.06% and not more than 50%. Therefore, CMV is not a major problem in this study

4.2. Hypotheses analysis

In order to verify the hypotheses, this research used hierarchical regression analysis to confirm the relationship between variables, and the results are shown in Table 3. Initially, the control variables (gender, age, education, tenure, and job satisfaction) were put in the Model 1, workplace fun was placed in Model 2, and then workplace fun and psychological capital were placed in Model 3. Lastly, two-way interaction term (i.e., workplace fun \times psychological capital) was placed in Model 4. Similar to past studies, all the continuous variables adopted the mean-centering method to solve the collinearity problem (Aiken and West, 1991).

First, in terms of the influence of the control variables on work engagement, the analysis results of Model 1 show that gender, age, education level, and seniority have no significant impact on work engagement, while job satisfaction has a positive effect on work engagement ($\beta = 0.65$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.42$). In Model 2, workplace fun had a positive effect on work engagement ($\beta = 0.34$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.49$), therefore H1 was supported. In Hypothesis 2, workplace fun had a positive effect on psychological capital ($\beta = 0.12$, $p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.37$), therefore H2 was supported. In Hypothesis 3, psychological capital had a positive effect on work engagement ($\beta = 0.17$, $p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.51$), therefore H3 was supported. In Hypothesis 4, this research verified the mediating role of psychological capital according to the study of Baron and Kenny (1986). Workplace fun had a significant positive effect on psychological capital and work engagement. Model 3 showed that the direct effect of workplace fun on work engagement was lower when psychological capital was added to the model ($\beta = 0.28$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.51$), whereas psychological capital had a significant positive effect on work engagement ($\beta = 0.17$, $p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.51$). This result showed that workplace fun had a direct effect, in addition to an indirect effect through psychological capital on work engagement. It could be known that according to the result of the hierarchical regression analysis, psychological capital played a partial mediating effect between workplace fun and work engagement, therefore H4 was

supported.

Finally, the interaction between workplace fun and psychological capital had a significant positive effect on work engagement ($\beta = 0.16$, $p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.58$) in Model 4. Furthermore, according to the simple slope analysis proposed by Aiken and West (1991), this study further analyzed the moderating effects of psychological capital on workplace fun and work engagement. Firstly, this study divided psychological capital into two groups: high psychological capital (one SD above mean) and low psychological capital (one SD under mean). The results showed that under high psychological capital ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < 0.05$), workplace fun had a significantly positive effect on work engagement. However, under low psychological capital ($\beta = 0.15$, $p > 0.05$), the effect of workplace fun on work engagement was not significant. This study used the Fisher's Z-test to investigate whether there was a significant difference in the β value (the effect of high and low psychological capital on the relationship between workplace fun and work engagement). The results showed that $Z = 2.02$ ($p < 0.05$), suggesting that psychological capital could moderate the relationship between workplace fun and work engagement. Therefore, H5 was supported.

Moreover, in order to understand the essence of the interaction between workplace fun and psychological capital, this research plotted the values of one standard deviation according to the suggestions of Cohen and Cohen's (1983) study. Fig. 2 shows that with higher workplace fun and higher psychological capital, front-line employees would present higher work engagement. On the contrary, with lower workplace fun and lower psychological capital, front-line employees would present lower work engagement. Therefore, the analysis result supported that psychological capital plays a significant positive moderating role between workplace fun and front-line employees' work engagement, and that psychological capital strengthens the positive effect of workplace fun on front-line employees' work engagement. Front-line employees' work engagement in groups with higher psychological capital was found to be always higher than that of groups with lower psychological capital, whether the workplace fun was higher or lower.

5. Discussion

5.1. Conclusions

This research aimed to discuss the effect of workplace fun on psychological capital and further examine psychological capital's

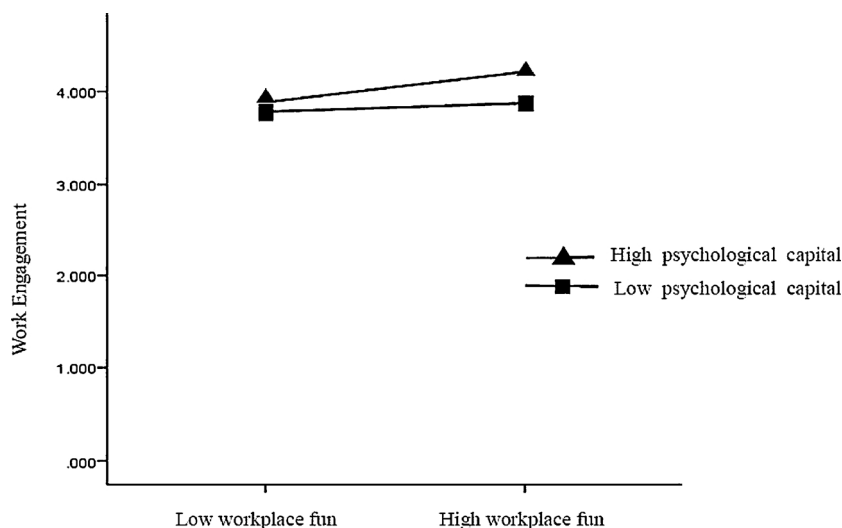


Fig. 2. The interaction between workplace fun and psychological capital on work engagement.

mediating and moderating effects between workplace fun and work engagement. First, this study verified that job satisfaction has positive impact on engagement. The results of this study are consistent with past research (Huang et al., 2016; Sak, 2006); when employees are satisfied with their job, their attitudes and behaviors will be more positive, and they will invest more professionalism to pay back to the organization. In addition, this research confirmed that workplace fun has a significant positive effect on work engagement. This result is consistent with that of past studies regarding workplace fun (Fluegge-Woolf, 2008, 2014). When front-line employees in tourism and hospitality industry are on duty, they usually need to face negative working conditions, such as antisocial working hours, longer working hours, work rotations, heavy workload, relatively low wages and time pressures (Karatepe et al., 2009; Kuruüzüm et al., 2008). Workplace fun is a kind of working resource and has a social and interpersonal essence. If the organizations can create and develop workplace fun, it will help employees to improve their social relationships and provide social support to cope with the pressure source of service work, thus allowing employees to become more dedicated to their work.

To the best of our knowledge, this study was the first empirical research to confirm that workplace fun has a significant positive effect on psychological capital. Past studies indicated that an interesting working environment will improve employees' enthusiasm (Deal and Kennedy, 1982) and meet employees' emotional needs (Karl and Peluchette, 2006). If employees have a positive psychological state, it will stimulate their motivation, help them recognize resources, and enhance the ability to take the necessary actions to complete specific actions in the given environment. Even if they are in an adverse situation, they can still face problems optimistically and have the mental ability to recover rapidly. Therefore, workplace fun is conducive to improving employees' psychological capital.

Psychological capital has a significant positive effect on work engagement, which is consistent with that of past studies regarding psychological capital (Gupta et al., 2017; Karatepe and Avci, 2017; Paek et al., 2015). When employees have higher psychological capital, they will have a higher work engagement attitude. Employees with higher psychological capital cognition have more positive emotions in their inner mind, which will help to improve their vigor and absorption in the work, and further produce a higher work engagement attitude.

In addition, this research further examined psychological capital's mediating and moderating effects between workplace fun and work engagement and confirmed that psychological capital significantly plays a partial mediating role between workplace fun and work engagement. The result showed that the work resource of workplace fun

could help employees produce positive emotions, and that positive emotions would improve employees' psychological capital (personal resource) to further positively affect their work engagement. As for the moderating role of psychological capital, this research found that psychological capital has a significant moderating role between workplace fun and work engagement. The result revealed that when employees with higher psychological capital are located in a work field full of workplace fun, the positive emotions produced by individuals triggered by psychological capital will stimulate employees to produce higher work engagement (Avey et al., 2008; Larson and Luthans, 2006).

5.2. Theoretical and practical implications

5.2.1. Theoretical implications

The results of this research have several contributions to the current literature. First, no previous empirical research has discussed the effect of workplace fun on psychological capital. This study was the first empirical research to confirm that workplace fun has a significant positive effect on psychological capital, which is a significant contribution to the literature of tourism and hospitality. According to the research results, organizations should be willing to develop and support workplace fun (work resource), as it will have a positive effect on employees' psychological capital (personal resource). Furthermore, this research further examined the mediating and moderating role of psychological capital between workplace fun and work engagement. In terms of the mediating role of psychological capital, this research found that psychological capital plays a partial mediating effect between workplace fun and employees' work engagement, signifying that workplace fun could further positively affect employees' work engagement through psychological capital. Moreover, in terms of examining psychological capital's moderating role, the result showed that psychological capital has a significant moderating effect between workplace fun and employees' work engagement. When employees have higher positive psychological capital, the positive emotions produced in the mind will help to strengthen the positive effect of workplace fun on work engagement.

5.2.2. Practical implications

The practical implications in this research provided several suggestions to the operators of tourism and hospitality industry, so as to improve employees' work engagement attitude. The tourism and hospitality industries are people-oriented. The front-line employees have frequent interactions with customers, as well as with coworkers, showing that the tourism and hospitality industries have social

characteristics. Managers in the tourism and hospitality industry should organize fun activities (i.e., employee birthday parties, training, employee recognition meetings and competition events) to support workplace fun, in order to increase employees' social relationships in the workplace, as well as produce positive emotions to further promote the positive development between employees' psychological capital and work engagement. In addition, psychological capital positively affects work engagement. Psychological capital is a very important resource for frontline employees in the tourism and hospitality industry. Once employees start working, managers should continue to maintain or improve the psychological capital of front-line employees in their work in a supportive manner, and then, encourage employees to show a higher level of work engagement.

For enterprises, the development of employees' psychological capital will give enterprises competitive advantages. According to these findings, as for psychological capital as a mediating mechanism, due to the tourism and hospitality industry belonging to an industry with higher workplace fun, this research suggested that operators in the tourism and hospitality industry should arrange applicants to fill in the psychological capital questionnaire scale during recruitment, so as to recruit employees with higher psychological capital. Increasing the number of employees with higher psychological capital will have a multiplying effect on organizations with higher workplace fun. Thus, the employees could produce an engagement attitude. Moreover, if the management of all tourism and hospitality organizations supported fun activities, it would encourage employees to socialize, thus, enhancing and enriching employees' psychological capital. When employees' psychological requirements are met, it will help to enhance employees' work engagement.

As for psychological capital as a moderating mechanism, the operators of tourism and hospitality industry could arrange for the human resource department to organize relevant employee training courses within the organizations. Through employees' practice in training activities, employees could improve their self-efficacy at work. After employees' self-efficacy is improved through practice, role modeling, and other activities, it could promote employees to complete their work successfully and increase their hope and optimism. In the end, the employees who complete training could have a stronger resiliency in the mind to cope with challenges at work. After employees' psychological capital increases, it will help to reinforce their work engagement attitude when they are faced with a working environment with higher workplace fun.

5.3. Limitations and future research

This research took front-line employees of the tourism and hospitality industry as research respondents to discuss the effect of workplace fun on psychological capital and further examine the role played by psychological capital between workplace fun and work engagement. This research had the following limitation. This research took front-line employees of the tourism and hospitality industry as research respondents, and the results cannot be generalized to the manufacturing industry, technology industry, or other industries. In regard to the suggestions for future research, the tourism and hospitality industry is a people-oriented industry, so this industry could be used as a field of investigation in the future to more deeply understand the effect of workplace fun in various industries on employees' work engagement. It is also important to continuously seek variables to strengthen the relationship between workplace fun and work engagement. In the end, workplace fun has been valued by scholars in recent years, and variables related to organizations should be added in the future to discuss the relationship between workplace fun and various variables.

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