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The Role of Job Characteristics in Enhancing Work Engagement and Reducing Burnout: An Empirical Study on Indonesian Migrant Workers in Taiwan

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Abstract

Burnout has become an increasingly prevalent issue among employees facing high work demands, often manifesting as emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and declining job performance. This study aims to explore the impact of job characteristics on burnout, emphasizing the mediating role of work engagement. The research examines explicitly Indonesian migrant workers in Taiwan, a group that frequently encounters unique occupational challenges and stressors. A quantitative method was adopted, utilizing a survey method with 139 respondents selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered through structured questionnaires and analyzed using path analysis to assess the interrelationships among key variables. The results reveal that positive job characteristics strengthen work engagement, including autonomy, task significance, job variety, and feedback. Moreover, work engagement is identified as a significant mediator, illustrating that employees who experience favorable job conditions tend to exhibit higher levels of engagement, which in turn mitigates burnout. The findings of this study underscore the importance of strategic job design in promoting employee well-being, particularly for migrant workers who are more vulnerable to excessive work pressures. By fostering supportive job characteristics, organizations can enhance engagement levels and create a work environment that minimizes burnout.

Keywords: Job Characteristics, Work Engagement, Burnout, Migrant Workers, Human Resources

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INTRODUCTION

Burnout is characterized by emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and decreased work performance, which has become an increasing concern in the modern workplace. This phenomenon not only affects individuals but also impacts organizations as a whole. Employees experiencing burnout tend to suffer from reduced productivity, a lack of motivation, and even a desire to leave their jobs (Gomes et al., 2022; Pramono and Purwaningrum, 2022). With rising job demands across various sectors, it is crucial to understand the factors contributing to burnout and the strategies to mitigate its effects. By addressing these factors, organizations can improve well-being, reduce turnover, foster a positive atmosphere, and enhance performance.

Burnout is characterized by emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and decreased work performance, which has become an increasing concern in the modern workplace. This phenomenon not only affects individuals but also impacts organizations as a whole. Employees experiencing burnout tend to suffer from reduced productivity, a lack of motivation, and even a desire to leave their jobs (Pramono and Purwaningrum, 2022). With rising job demands across various sectors, it is crucial to understand the factors contributing to burnout and the strategies to mitigate its effects. By addressing these factors, organizations can improve employee well-being, reduce turnover, foster a positive work environment, and enhance overall performance.

In globalized labour markets, migrant workers face more significant challenges in their work environments. Taiwan, as one of the leading destinations for Indonesian migrant workers, relies heavily on foreign labour in its manufacturing and caregiving industries (Chen et al., 2020). According to Taiwan's Ministry of Labor, the number of Indonesian migrant workers exceeds 80,000, with most employed in the manufacturing and elderly care sectors (Ministry of Labor Taiwan, 2023). Migrant workers often endure long working hours, high job pressures, and unsupportive work environments, all contributing to high burnout levels (Lee et al., 2024). Factors such as limited autonomy, lack of supervisor feedback, and high productivity expectations can further exacerbate their psychological well-being, leading to job dissatisfaction and disengagement. Therefore, understanding how job characteristics influence burnout in the context of migrant workers has become increasingly important.

Migrant workers in Taiwan frequently experience excessive workloads with limited rest periods. Studies indicate that working hours for migrant workers in the manufacturing sector can reach 10-12 hours per day, leaving little time for recreation or social interactions (Lin et al., 2024). Moreover, in some cases, migrant workers have restricted access to social support and workplace welfare, further increasing their risk of burnout (Lee et al., 2024). Previous research has identified work engagement as a factor that can mitigate burnout risks (Dai et al., 2021; Kassandrinou et al., 2023; Russell et al., 2020; Schaufeli et al., 2006). Work engagement represents a dynamic and positive psychological state where employees experience a deep sense of enthusiasm, commitment, and immersion in their job roles. Engaged employees are motivated and resilient in the face of challenges, demonstrating a sustained dedication that enhances both individual performance and overall organizational productivity.

Migrant workers in Taiwan with high levels of work engagement tend to be more resilient to work pressures, adopt a more positive attitude toward their jobs, and are less likely to experience burnout (Lee et al., 2024). Strong peer support, constructive supervisor feedback, and a greater sense of autonomy in decision-making can significantly boost work engagement while mitigating the adverse impacts of job-related stress. These elements create a more supportive work environment, fostering motivation, resilience, and overall job satisfaction, reducing the likelihood of burnout and enhancing employee well-being. However, a research gap remains regarding how work engagement mediates the relationship between job characteristics and burnout. Previous studies have shown that positive job characteristics can enhance engagement, reducing burnout (Rai et al., 2017; Tan and Yeap, 2022).

This study holds significant urgency given the widespread impact of burnout on organizational performance and employee well-being. Burnout can lead to negative consequences, including increased absenteeism, decreased job satisfaction, and high employee turnover rates (Kotze, 2018). In the context of migrant workers in Taiwan, burnout presents a more complex challenge due to cultural differences, labour regulations, and limited access to mental health services (Lee et al., 2024). By addressing these issues, organizations can enhance employee well-being and improve overall productivity. Therefore, this research is essential for identifying factors that can help reduce burnout among migrant workers and providing recommendations for organizations to improve foreign labour welfare.

This study addresses how job characteristics influence burnout and whether work engagement is a mediator in this relationship. By understanding these dynamics, organizations in Taiwan can design more effective strategies to enhance employee engagement and reduce burnout levels, ultimately creating a healthier and more productive work environment for migrant workers. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on Indonesian migrant workers in Taiwan, a group that has been underexplored in previous burnout studies. Additionally, this study contributes to the literature by examining the mediating role of work engagement in the relationship between job characteristics and burnout, providing a unique perspective on mitigating burnout in a high-pressure work environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Job characteristics refer to various aspects that shape employees' work experiences and impact their well-being and motivation at work. These characteristics encompass the structure, content, and work environment, which can influence employees' behaviour, job satisfaction, and performance (Robbins and Judge, 2015). Several key job characteristics identified in various studies include autonomy, job significance, task variety, and feedback (Chambel et al., 2017). These characteristics are essential in determining how employees engage with their tasks and how these factors ultimately contribute to their psychological well-being and job performance. Therefore, organizations that focus on optimizing these job characteristics are likely to see improved employee outcomes and organizational success.

Previous research has shown that positive job characteristics, such as high autonomy, clear task identity, significant job roles, balanced task variety, and effective feedback, directly contribute to increased work engagement and reduced burnout levels (Han et al., 2021). Conversely, negative job characteristics, such as high workload without control, lack of task variety, and insufficient feedback, make employees more susceptible to work-related stress, ultimately leading to burnout (Dai et al., 2021). These findings highlight the importance of job design in fostering a healthy and productive work environment.

In the context of migrant workers in Taiwan, studies have shown that inflexible working conditions, limited supervisor feedback, and low control over tasks are often associated with higher levels of burnout (Lee et al., 2024). Therefore, a deeper understanding of how job characteristics influence employee well-being is crucial, especially in industries that involve migrant workers and high work demands. Overall, job characteristics are not just technical aspects but also key factors in determining motivation, engagement, and employee well-being. Organizations must ensure that well-designed jobs enhance work engagement, reduce burnout risks, increase job satisfaction, and foster employee well-being, particularly for employees in physically and mentally demanding work environments.

Work engagement is a positive and fulfilling psychological state that manifests through high levels of energy and mental resilience while working (vigor), a strong sense of significance, enthusiasm, and pride in one's job (dedication), and deep concentration and immersion in work-related tasks to the extent that time seems to pass quickly (absorption) (Schaufeli et al., 2006). This state is closely linked to overall employee well-being and organizational success. Employees with strong work engagement typically exhibit greater motivation, increased job satisfaction, and enhanced job performance (Dai et al., 2021).

Previous research has consistently shown a direct relationship between job characteristics, such as autonomy and feedback, and employees' work engagement, including their vigor, dedication, and absorption. Several studies have found that employees with high autonomy and effective feedback tend to have higher work engagement levels (Grobelna, 2019; Rai et al., 2017). Additionally, work engagement can be shaped by various organizational factors, such as supportive relationships with supervisors and colleagues, motivating leadership styles, a positive and inclusive work culture, and environmental conditions that foster employee well-being, satisfaction, and productivity (Zhang et al., 2023).

Studies have shown that migrant workers in Taiwan who receive support from management and enjoy greater job flexibility tend to have higher work engagement levels (Lin et al., 2024). On the other hand, employees working in rigid and high-pressure environments are more likely to experience low work engagement, which, in turn, increases the risk of burnout. This underscores the significance of supportive leadership and flexible work conditions in promoting employee well-being. Organizations that prioritize these factors are more likely to foster a productive and committed workforce. Ultimately, improving job design and work conditions can lead to long-term organizational success and employee retention.

Burnout is a condition of chronic work stress characterized by emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced professional efficacy (Maslach and Leiter, 2017). It occurs when individuals experience prolonged work-related stress without adequate support. The main contributors to burnout are excessive job demands, insufficient job resources, and an imbalance between work and personal life (Kotze, 2018). Poor job characteristics, such as low autonomy, high workload, and lack of control, are primary causes of burnout (Zhang et al., 2023). Additionally, high time pressure and insufficient supervisor feedback can further exacerbate employee's stress. Workers experiencing burnout typically show decreased job satisfaction, reduced performance, and an increased risk of turnover (Russell et al., 2020). Organizations must design jobs that balance high productivity demands with employee well-being to prevent burnout. Effective support systems and feedback can reduce these negative effects.

Work engagement has been identified as a factor that can mitigate burnout risks. Employees with high work engagement tend to be more enthusiastic, dedicated, and positively immersed in their job experiences (Schaufeli et al., 2006). When job characteristics support engagement—such as autonomy, task variety, and effective feedback—employees are more likely to feel motivated and feel a sense of belonging. Conversely, monotonous work, lack of recognition, and unbalanced workloads can lower work engagement, ultimately increasing the risk of burnout. Therefore, fostering an environment that promotes work engagement is crucial for maintaining employee well-being and organizational performance.

Research in Taiwan has found that migrant workers in the manufacturing sector have higher burnout rates than local employees due to language barriers, cultural differences, and stricter labor policies (Lin et al., 2024). This situation is further exacerbated by limited access to support resources, such as job training programs and workplace social support. Additionally, rigid work systems and long working hours increase pressure on migrant workers, ultimately accelerating burnout. Therefore, understanding how to reduce burnout in the context of migrant workers is becoming increasingly important. Strategies that can be implemented include improving positive job characteristics, such as granting greater autonomy, reducing excessive workloads, and increasing support from supervisors and colleagues. Organizations must provide training and well-being programs to help migrant workers cope with challenges. With the right approach, burnout risks can be minimized, improving well-being and performance.

A vast body of research has examined the intricate interplay between job characteristics, work engagement, and burnout, with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model providing a foundational framework to explain how workplace factors can either drive motivation and engagement or contribute to stress and exhaustion (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). This model states that: (1) Positive job characteristics contribute to higher work engagement, (2) Poor job characteristics can increase the risk of burnout, and (3) High work engagement can serve as a protective factor against burnout, ultimately enhancing employee well-being. Additionally, the JD-R model highlights those adequate resources, such as social support and autonomy, can buffer the effects of job demands, fostering a healthier work environment.

Empirical studies support this theory. For example, research by Tan and Yeap (2022) found that work engagement mediates the relationship between job resources and burnout, where employees with sufficient job resources exhibit high work engagement and lower burnout levels. Another study by Castanheira et al. (2016) indicated that prosocial motivation in work can strengthen work engagement and reduce burnout, particularly in jobs requiring social interaction. In Taiwan, research by Chen et al. (2020) revealed that migrant workers with access to feedback and social support experience lower burnout levels than those working under harsher and more stressful conditions. Therefore, interventions that enhance work engagement can be an effective strategy to reduce burnout among migrant workers.

Previous studies have demonstrated that improving job characteristics, such as autonomy, feedback, and social support, can enhance employee work engagement and reduce burnout (Chen et al., 2020; Tan and Yeap, 2022). Furthermore, fostering an environment that supports employee well-being is crucial for mitigating burnout, as it enables workers to handle job demands more effectively (Castanheira et al., 2016). Based on theoretical foundations and previous research, this study proposes the following hypotheses.

H1. Job characteristics have a positive effect on work engagement.

H2. Job characteristics have a negative effect on burnout.

H3. Work engagement has a negative effect on burnout.

H4. Work engagement mediates the relationship between job characteristics and burnout.

The conceptual framework introduced in this study provides a comprehensive model for examining the dynamic interplay between job characteristics, work engagement, and burnout. This framework posits that job characteristics shape employees' experiences in the workplace, not only by exerting a direct influence on burnout levels but also by playing a crucial role in fostering or hindering work engagement. In turn, work engagement serves as an intermediary mechanism that can either buffer the adverse effects of unfavourable job conditions or amplify the positive impact of supportive work environments, ultimately affecting the extent to which employees experience burnout. Effective job design can be essential in managing these factors.

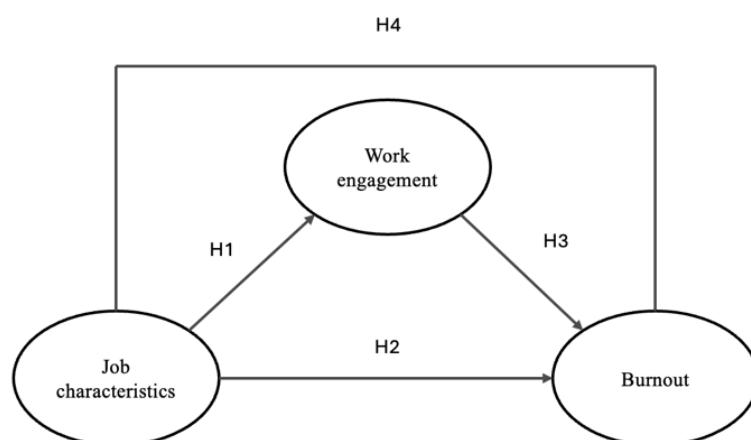


Figure 1. Research model

METHODS

This study is explanatory research (Buchanan et al., 2013) that investigates causal relationships between job characteristics, work engagement, and burnout. Using this approach, the research provides an understanding of how job-related factors, such as autonomy, workload, and social support, affect employees' engagement levels. Additionally, this study examines the role of work engagement as a mediator connecting job characteristics to the development of burnout symptoms. This study adopts a quantitative approach by utilizing multivariate data analysis techniques, as suggested by Hair et al. (2019), to examine the relationships among variables. Structural equation modelling is employed to test direct and indirect effects and assess the mediating role of work engagement between job characteristics and burnout.

The population in this study was all permanent Indonesian migrant workers in Taiwan, which, based on BP2MI data, totaled 83,216 people (BP2MI, 2024). The sample size was determined based on Ferdinand's (2014) recommendation, which suggests a minimum of five times the number of indicators. Given that this study has 21 indicators, the ideal sample size should be at least 105 respondents. The final sample collected consisted of 139 respondents, which provides robust data to analyze the relationship between job characteristics, work engagement, and burnout among Indonesian migrant workers in Taiwan. This sample size also enhances the generalizability of the findings within the study population.

This study identifies three main variables: job characteristics, burnout, and work engagement. Job characteristics are measured through five dimensions: autonomy, task identity, job significance, job variety, and feedback. Burnout is measured based on three main dimensions: emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced professional efficacy, each further broken down into multiple indicators. Meanwhile, work engagement is measured through three dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption, and it is also assessed through several indicators. These variables are adapted from previous studies (Kotze, 2018; Robbins and Judge, 2015; Schaufeli et al., 2006). The study aims to offer insights into these relationships.

The validity of the questionnaire was evaluated using the correlation coefficient (r) between responses and the actual research object data. A questionnaire was considered valid if the computed R -value exceeded the critical R -value from the statistical table. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, where a value above 0.70 indicated acceptable internal consistency (Mayers, 2013). These tests confirmed the questionnaire as a reliable and valid tool for data collection. The classical assumption test included several statistical evaluations to ensure the accuracy of the regression model. The normality test assessed whether the data followed a normal distribution, which is essential for parametric analysis. The multicollinearity test was used to detect strong correlations among independent variables that could distort regression estimates. Lastly, the heteroscedasticity test examined whether the variance of the dependent variable was consistent across observations, ensuring homoscedasticity in the model.

An individual significance test (t -statistics) was conducted to examine the proposed hypotheses to determine whether each independent variable in the regression model exerts a statistically significant influence on the dependent variable. This test carefully evaluates the

strength and reliability of the relationships by comparing the estimated coefficients against their standard errors. In interpreting the results, the evaluation criteria established by (Hair et al., 2019) were applied, ensuring that the analysis aligns with widely accepted statistical guidelines: (a) If the computed t-value exceeds the critical t-value from the statistical table, the effect is deemed significant; otherwise, it is not, and (b) If the significance level is below $\alpha = 0.05$, the effect is considered statistically significant; otherwise, it is not.

The model's fit was evaluated based on two key aspects: (1) Adjusted R^2 Coefficient, which measures how well the model explains variations in the dependent variable and (2) The F-test was utilized to assess whether the independent variables, when considered together, had a significant impact on the dependent variable within the regression model. According to the evaluation criteria, the model is deemed statistically significant if the significance value falls below $\alpha = 0.05$; otherwise, it is not. These tests provided insights into the effectiveness of the regression model in capturing and explaining the relationships among the studied variables.

RESULT

This study involved 139 respondents with various demographic characteristics, including age, work tenure, education level, and gender. In terms of age, most respondents were in the 31-40 age group, totalling 70 people (50.4%), followed by the 20-30 age group with 56 people (40.3%). Meanwhile, the 41-50 age group comprised only 13 people (9.4%), indicating that most workers in this study were still in their productive years. Regarding work tenure, most respondents had 0-2 years of experience, accounting for 59 people (42.4%), followed by 5-6 years with 36 people (25.9%) and 3-4 years with 32 people (23.0%). Only 12 people (8.6%) had more than 7 years of experience, suggesting that long-tenured workers were relatively fewer than those who had recently joined, which indicates higher turnover.

Regarding educational background, most respondents were high school graduates (SMA), totalling 122 people (88.4%), while only two people (1.4%) held a Diploma (D3), and 14 people (10.1%) had a Bachelor's degree (S1). This indicates that most of the workforce in this study came from a secondary education background, with only a tiny portion having higher education. Meanwhile, in terms of gender, there was a significant disparity in proportions, with 105 respondents (75.5%) being female and 34 respondents (24.5%) being male. This female dominance suggests that the sector being studied was predominantly occupied by women compared to men, reflecting broader gender dynamics in the workforce.

Overall, the respondents' description results show that most of the workforce in this study consisted of women aged 31–40 years, with relatively new work tenure (0–2 years) and a high school education level. These demographic characteristics provide essential insights into workforce dynamics within the studied organization, which may influence how job characteristics, work engagement, and burnout impact employee well-being and performance. Understanding these demographic profiles helps organizations tailor effective strategies to better support employees' specific needs and challenges.

The validity and reliability tests indicate that the research instrument used in this study has good quality. The high corrected item-total correlation values suggest that each item in the instrument significantly contributes to the total scale score, thereby supporting its validity. Moreover, cronbach's alpha values exceeding the 0.7 threshold for all scales demonstrate high reliability. This means the instrument consistently measures the same construct across different measurements, making the research findings reliable. Therefore, it can be concluded that the instrument used in this study meets the necessary criteria for measuring the studied variables. Additionally, the consistency of results across items reinforces the internal coherence of the measurement tool, highlighting its applicability for similar future studies.

Several diagnostic tests were conducted to assess key statistical assumptions to ensure the validity of the regression model. Using the kolmogorov-smirnov method, the normality test indicated that the p-values for both Path I and Path II exceeded the 0.05 significance level, confirming that the data followed a normal distribution. Furthermore, the multicollinearity test in Path II was evaluated through variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance values, with results showing VIF values below 10 and Tolerance values above 0.1. These findings suggest that no problematic correlations existed among the independent variables, affirming the absence of multicollinearity within the model. The heteroscedasticity test, applied through the glejser method for both pathways, also demonstrated that the regression coefficients were not statistically significant. This outcome supports the assumption of homoscedasticity and ensuring that variance across observations remains consistent.

Regression Analysis and Statistical Test t

Table 1. Test result of hypotheses

Path	t-statistics	p-values	Result	Result	Effect
H1. Job characteristics → Work engagement	0,672	10,631	0.000	Supported	Direct
H2. Job characteristics → Burnout	0,201	-2,566	0.011	Supported	Direct
H3. Work engagement → Burnout	0,586	-7,487	0.000	Supported	Direct
H4. Job characteristics → Work engagement → Burnout	0,007	-1,566	0.007	Supported	Indirect

Hypothesis analysis was conducted based on empirical data presented in Table 1. The regression analysis for Path I indicated that job characteristics had a positive and significant effect on work engagement, with a beta coefficient of 0.672 and a p-value < 0.001. This finding suggests that better-perceived job characteristics, such as autonomy, task significance, and feedback, lead to higher levels of employee work engagement. For Path II, job characteristics were found to hurt burnout, with a beta coefficient of -0.201 and a p-value of 0.011, confirming a significant relationship. This implies that positive job characteristics reduce the likelihood of employees experiencing burnout. Additionally, work engagement was shown to have a significant negative impact on burnout, with a beta coefficient of -0.586 and a p-value < 0.001, indicating that higher work engagement levels are strongly associated with lower burnout.

Feasibility Model Test

The regression analysis indicates that the developed model adequately explains the variance in the dependent variables. In Path I, job characteristics account for approximately 45.2% of the variance in work engagement ($R^2 = 0.452$), with a significant F-test result ($p < 0.001$). This suggests that improving job characteristics can have a substantial positive impact on work engagement. Meanwhile, in Path II, the combination of job characteristics and work engagement explains 54.3% of the variance in burnout ($R^2 = 0.543$), also with a highly significant F-test result ($p < 0.001$). These findings suggest that job characteristics and work engagement play an important role in predicting burnout.

Mediation Test

The Sobel test was utilized as a statistical method to examine whether the mediating variable, work engagement, significantly influences the relationship between job characteristics as the independent variable and burnout as the dependent variable. This test involved calculating the standard error and beta values for three regression paths: Path I (job characteristics → work engagement), Path II (job characteristics → burnout), and Path III (work engagement → burnout). The results demonstrated that the one-tailed Sobel test value was 0.007, below the significance threshold of $\alpha = 0.05$, indicating a statistically significant mediation effect. This finding suggests that work engagement is crucial in explaining how job characteristics impact burnout. In other words, employees who perceive positive job characteristics, such as autonomy, task significance, and feedback, tend to have higher work engagement, reducing their likelihood of experiencing burnout. These results provide support for hypothesis 4, reinforcing the perspective that work engagement is vital in mitigating burnout by channeling the effects of favorable job characteristics.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that job characteristics have a positive influence on work engagement. This aligns with previous studies that show aspects of a job, such as autonomy, task significance, feedback, and task variety, contribute to increased employee engagement (Han et al., 2021; Prameswari, 2019; Rai et al., 2017). Employees with high autonomy in their work tend to be more motivated and feel a greater responsibility for their tasks (Dai et al., 2021). Autonomy allows employees to determine how and when they complete their assignments, enhancing their engagement at work (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Additionally, task significance also plays a crucial role in increasing work engagement. Employees who perceive their work as meaningful and contributing to others tend to be more enthusiastic about completing their tasks (Grobelna, 2019). Similarly, clear and constructive feedback from supervisors or colleagues can enhance work engagement by better understanding performance expectations and achievements (Bauer, 2018; Tan and Yeap, 2022).

However, the findings also reveal that some employees still experience low work engagement despite having positive job characteristics. This may be due to other factors, such as an uncondusive work environment, social pressure, or a mismatch between employees' expectations and the reality of their jobs. Additionally, a lack of adequate support from supervisors or insufficient recognition for their contributions might also hinder work engagement. This study also finds that job characteristics have a negative relationship with burnout, meaning that better job characteristics lead to lower levels of burnout among employees. These findings support studies asserting poor job characteristics, such as high workload, lack of autonomy, and minimal feedback, contribute to increased burnout levels (Castanheira et al., 2016; Dai et al., 2021; Grobelna, 2019; Zhang et al., 2023).

Burnout often occurs when employees feel they have no control over their work or perceive that their efforts are not adequately recognized (Kotze, 2018). This study finds that employees with high workloads and inadequate organizational support experience higher levels of burnout, with a lack of positive feedback and recognition further accelerating burnout. However, not all employees with adverse job characteristics necessarily suffer from burnout, indicating that additional factors may influence psychological well-being. External elements, such as social support from coworkers, leadership style, organizational culture, and individual coping mechanisms, may serve as protective buffers that mitigate the adverse effects of poor job conditions. A supportive work environment where employees feel valued and appreciated can help reduce stress, prevent burnout, and enhance overall job satisfaction (Fatmawati, 2024).

In addition, personal resilience and adaptive strategies, such as effective time management or stress reduction techniques, may further contribute to an individual's ability to cope with challenging job characteristics. In the context of Indonesian migrant workers in Taiwan, cultural differences are also factors that can increase stress levels and the risk of burnout. Differences in social norms, language, and work values can cause workers to feel isolated, exacerbating the impact of unfavorable work conditions. Therefore, although job characteristics play an essential role in shaping work engagement and burnout, these findings highlight the importance of considering broader organizational, personal, and cultural adaptation factors in efforts to improve employee well-being (Koroglu and Ozmen, 2022).

The findings of this study indicate that work engagement significantly reduces burnout, as employees with higher engagement levels are less likely to experience emotional exhaustion and detachment. This aligns with existing research, which suggests that work engagement acts as a psychological buffer, helping individuals cope with workplace stress (Dai et al., 2021; Grobelna, 2019; Tan and Yeap, 2022; Zhang et al., 2023). Engaged employees are more motivated, enthusiastic, and resilient to work pressures, enabling them to manage heavy workloads (Schaufeli et al., 2006). However, excessive work engagement without a balance between work and personal life can lead to overcommitment, increasing burnout risks. Therefore, organizations must ensure that high work engagement does not result in excessive employee workload and foster work-life balance (Abdulaziz, et al, 2022; Wood et al., 2020).

This study also reveals that work engagement is a vital mediating mechanism in the relationship between job characteristics and burnout. Favorable job characteristics can enhance engagement, which in turn helps mitigate burnout among employees. In other words, positive job characteristics directly reduce burnout levels and indirectly protect employees from burnout by increasing their work engagement (Pramono and Purwaningrum, 2022). These findings have significant implications for organizations' human resource management. If organizations aim to reduce employee burnout, they should improve job characteristics such as autonomy, task variety, and feedback and ensure that these characteristics enhance work engagement.

However, this study also reveals that the mediating effect of work engagement is not always strong under all working conditions. In some cases, work engagement may not entirely reduce burnout, particularly if workloads remain high or the work environment is unsupportive. Therefore, organizations should also consider other strategies, such as providing social support, enhancing employee well-being, and implementing work-life balance policies to minimize burnout risks and promote sustainable productivity (Nguyen and Chang, 2018).

The findings of this study offer important implications for organizational practice, particularly in managing a diverse and demanding workforce such as migrant workers. First, organizations must design jobs that promote autonomy, task significance, and provide consistent feedback to enhance employee engagement and reduce burnout. Second, improving job characteristics alone is not sufficient; employers must also foster a supportive work environment that values employee well-being. Third, work engagement should be nurtured not just as a goal but as a strategic mechanism to mitigate burnout, especially in high-pressure roles. Furthermore, organizations should implement comprehensive interventions, including stress management programs, cultural sensitivity training, and work-life balance initiatives. These combined efforts can create a more resilient and productive workforce in the long term.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that job characteristics, such as autonomy, task significance, feedback, and task variety, positively influence work engagement and reduce burnout. Employees with high autonomy and meaningful tasks tend to be more engaged and feel responsible for their work, while clear feedback enhances their understanding of performance expectations. However, some employees still experience low engagement due to factors like an unconducive work environment, social pressure, or mismatched expectations, and burnout can occur when employees lack control or recognition. Work engagement also acts as a mediator between job characteristics and burnout, with higher engagement reducing burnout by increasing resilience to work pressures. However, excessive work engagement without work-life balance can lead to overcommitment and burnout, highlighting the need for organizations to balance engagement with manageable workloads and support systems.

LIMITATION

Despite the significant contributions of this study, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to infer causal relationships between job characteristics, work engagement, and burnout. Future research should use longitudinal designs to explore these relationships more comprehensively. Second, the sample was limited to Indonesian migrant workers in Taiwan, which may limit generalizability to other migrant worker groups. Broader, cross-country studies are needed to enhance external validity. Additionally, this study focused only on job characteristics and work engagement, excluding other factors like organizational culture or leadership styles. Finally, data were collected using self-reported questionnaires, which may introduce response bias. The study's reliance on self-reported data may lead to social desirability bias, as participants might respond in ways they perceive as more socially acceptable rather than reflecting their true feelings or experiences. Future studies could also incorporate a broader range of variables.

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