

**The Impact of Job Stress on Employee Creative
Performance in the Hospitality Industry: The
Moderating Effect of Psychological Capital
A Study of Frontline Hotel Employees in North Cyprus**

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ABSTRACT

Creative performance is a significant part of frontline service jobs, since they can improve the whole process of service delivery through creativity and by bringing new ideas to the table. In the contemporary hospitality industry where competition among firms is severe, customers' expectations for service have increased resulting in higher employee work expectations. Consequently, it is inevitable that these employees experience work-related stress in their work environment. Therefore, employers as well as employees need to rely on the new generation and untapped resources which are mostly referred to personal resources. Psychological capital as a second-order personality construct is considered as personal resource and capacity which they can draw on to help them combat against work-related stress and its consequent dysfunctions. Very little is known about psychological capital in the hospitality management literature. This study aims to fill in this void by linking psychological capital, work-related stress and creative performance as three important aspects of frontline hospitality jobs in a conceptual model. Optimism, Self-efficacy, resilience and hope were treated as the indicators of psychological capital.

This study is conducted in 4 and 5 star hotels all located in north Cyprus. 300 questionnaires were distributed among frontline employees of these hotels and the rate of response was 62%, so final analysis was performed with 187 cases. The result of this study evidenced the significant negative effect of stress on creative performance. Furthermore, results revealed the significance of psychological capital as an important personal resource among frontline staff in hotels. All four indicators of psychological capital were negatively related to stress. Optimism and self-efficacy

as two important components of psychological capital evidenced a moderating role between stress and creative performance.

Keywords: psychological capital, creative performance, stress, hospitality industry, frontline employees

ÖZ

Yaratıcı performans, ön büro çalışanları için çok önemlidir. Çünkü çalışanlar yaratıcı fikirleri sayesinde yeni fikirler sunarak hizmet sunumunun kalitesini artırabilir ve hizmet sürecini hızlandırabilirler. Gelişen modern konaklama sektöründeki rekabet müşterilerin hizmet beklentilerini artırırken, çalışanların iş yüklerini artırmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, ön büro çalışanlarının yaşamış oldukları stres'e iş ortamlarının etkisi kaçınılmazdır. Bu nedenle, işverenler çalışanlarını seçerken çoğunlukla yeni nesil ve keşfedilmemiş kabiliyette olanları tercih etmektedirler. İkinci dereceden kişilik bir yapı olarak psikolojik sermaye, kişisel kaynak ve onlara işe bağlı stres ve bunun sonucunda bozukluklarına karşı mücadele yardımcı olmak için çizebilirsiniz kapasitesi olarak kabul edilir. Konaklama sektörü yönetimi literatüründe psikolojik sermaye hakkında çok fazla bilinmemektedir dolayısıyla, bu alanda çok fazla çalışma bulunmamaktadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, psikolojik sermayenin, iş ilişkili stress ve yaratıcı performans gibi üç önemli unsuru kavramsal bir model çerçevesinde bağlayarak bu boşluğu doldurmayı hedeflemektedir. Psikolojik sermaye göstergeleri olarak; İyimserlik, Öz-yeterlilik, esneklik ve umut olarak ele alınmıştır.

Bu çalışma, Kuzey Kıbrıs'ta bulunan 4 ve 5 yıldızlı otellerde çalışan ön büro çalışanlarına yapılmıştır. Çalışma için 300 adet anket dağıtılmış olup, % 62 sine yanıt verilmiştir. Sonuç olarak 187 adet geçerli anket sonucu ile yapılmıştır.. Bu çalışmanın sonucu stresin ön büro çalışanlarının yaratıcı performansları üzerindeki olumsuz etkisini ortaya koymaktadır. Ayrıca, sonuçlar otellerdeki ön büro personelinin psikolojik sermayenin önemli bir kişisel kaynak olarak önemini ortaya koymaktadır. Psikolojik sermayenin 4(Dört) önemli göstergeleri ile stress arasında

olumsuz etkisi olduđu ortaya ıkarılmıřtır. İyimserlik ve z yeterlilik Psikolojik sermayenin iki nemli bileřenleri olup stress ve yaratıcı performans arasında moderator grevi yapmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Psikolojik sermaye, Yaratıcı performans, Stress, Konaklama sektr, nbro alıřanları.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

FEs	Frontline Employees
CP	Creative Performance
PsyCap	Psychological Capital
OP	Optimism
EF	Self-Efficacy
RE	Resilience
HO	Hope
JD-R	Job Demands-Resources Theory
COR	Conservation of Resource Theory

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter starts with a summary of the thesis purpose and philosophy, then it is followed by an explanation of the the way the present study contributes to the literature and previous studies, and finally an outline of the succeeding chapters is provided.

1.1 Purpose of Study

This study proposes a model to investigate and analyze the effects of work stress on creative performance (CP), the effect of psychological capital (PsyCap) on CP and also to examine the moderating role of PsyCap on the relationship between stress and CP among frontline hotel employees.

Conservation Of Resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989) and Job Demands-Resources theory (Demerouti et al., 2001) are applied as theoretical frameworks in variables' relations and developing hypotheses proposed in this thesis. All hypotheses are examined by analyzing the data collected from frontline employees (FEs) who were working in 4 and 5star hotels in northern Cyprus.

1.2 Significance and Contribution

Absence of creativity in organizations is a common subject of complaints by managers. Today's organizations in seeking to adapt to changing trends in the competing world and market require innovation and effective creativity; this can explain why creativity famine is recognized as one of the top threats among

organizations. Shipton (2006) suggested effective human resource management as a probable solution.

In a highly competitive environment, the hospitality industry needs to hire and retain employees whose knowledge, ability, passion and personality are apt to service jobs and respective demands (Karatepe & Demir, 2014); particularly FEs who are recognized as the key factor to service delivery (Yavas et al., 2010). On the other hand, creative performance in the hospitality industry has significant influence on effective service delivery and in dealing with hotel customers (Hon et al., 2013). Creative employees play a critical role in the success of all businesses with providing a sustainable and inimitable competitive advantage, likewise all hotel managers are looking for frontline employees who deliver service in effective and creative ways.

Work-related stress is an epidemic worldwide problem in today's competitive work environment which according to Riga (2006), 20% of typical American organizations' payrolls outlay for dealing with work-related stress and consequent problems. Working in the frontline of hotels is accompanied with pressure and demanding prompt response (Dann, 1990), hence the FEs are the most involved in real time and face to face aspects of service delivery. Frontline employees suffer from conflicting and contradictory requests plus they are expected to satisfy multiple services and demands (Hales and Nightingale, 1986). Consequently on the organizational level they display non-demanding outcomes including low performance, employee turnover and absenteeism (Sampson and Akyeampong, 2014); furthermore, their exposure to volatility and stress leads to health problems.

Despite the significant negative effect of stress on employees' performance, it does not garner much attention in the service industries' literature.

Related literature shows that very little researches have been done investigating the relationship between personality variables and creative performance in service industries. However, a clearance on personal and psychological characteristics which are antecedents of creative performance may be very informative for practitioners who seek to promote organizational creative behaviors (Amabile et al., 2004).

In spite of the crucial role of human resource positivity in developing and improving HRM (Avey et al., 2009; Selegman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), studies of positive psychology and organizational behavior (OB) have been generally neglected (Luthans et al., 2009). Psychological capital as a personal construct is considered a psychological capacity and positive strength of human resource (Luthans, 2002), which can be effective in improving employees' performance. In general positive psychology according to Luthans et al.(2010) affects organizational attitudes. Karatepe & Karadas(2015) claimed that employees with higher level of psychological capital enjoy from a higher level of job and life satisfactions.

This study contributes to literature based on theoretical frameworks including COR theory and JD-R theory in investigating the negative effects of work related stress on CP, the effect of PsyCap on CP and also the moderating effect of PsyCap on the relationship between stress and CP.

Accordingly this study makes some important contributions as follow:

First, although many studies examined the effect of stress on job outcomes(e.g. Boswell et al, 2004; Fox&Spector, 2006), however little studies examined the negative impact of work stress on creative performance (Çekmecelioglu& Günsel, 2011) in hospitality industry, therefore this study contributes to the related literature by testing the negative impact of stress on CP based on JD-R theory among FEs in the hospitality industry.

Second; inasmuch as psychological capital as a second-order personality construct, it is not widely studied (Mills, 2013). In this study we examine proposed model in the context of the hospitality industry wherein employees are undeniably confronted with pressured and stressful work environment. The majority of related works focus on a single variable and outcome rather than second-order personality variables such as psychological capital (Mäkikangas et al., 2013). This study based on Luthans et al. (2002) model examines the effects of Psychological Capital's indicators including self-efficacy, optimism, hope and resilience on creative performance.

Third, our study adds to related literature by testing the moderating effect of PsyCap components (self-efficacy, optimism, hope, resilience) on the relationship between stress and CP. In other words we want to ascertain based on COR theory if PsyCap components as personal resources can reduce the negative effect of work related stress on CP.

Fourth, there are a few studies regarding stress, psychological capital and creativity issues examined in the European and American settings but a very limited number of studies have been undertaken in the rest of the world including north Cyprus.

1.3 Content of Thesis

This thesis is composed of seven chapters. The first chapter as introduction gives information on philosophy and the aim of the thesis as well as its contribution to this field of study.

The second chapter titled Northern Cyprus context provides some information about the geography and history of North Cyprus as well as tourism trends and development in this region.

The third chapter is dedicated to literature review. In this chapter the framework theory will be investigated and then all study variables will be defined and interpreted from various viewpoints in literature.

In chapter four the study model and related hypothesis will be described.

Chapter five explains the methodology of study and provides some information including procedure, questionnaires, variable measurements and finally analysis of data. Sixth chapter explains the results.

In the last chapter which is seventh chapter, discussion, conclusion and also implications and limitations are provided.

Chapter 2

THE NORTHERN CYPRUS CONTEXT

2.1 The Land of Cyprus

Cyprus is one of the largest islands in the Mediterranean Sea and after Sardinia and Sicily it is the third largest covering an area of about 3500 square miles. The culture of its people has been influenced by different cultures including Greeks, Turks, Romans, Venetians, as well as the British who have played an influential role in the history of the island. Geographically speaking, it can be said that Cyprus is closer to the Muslim World. It is 69 km from Turkey, 95 km from Syria, and the distance to Athens is 800 km (Thomas Cook Publishing, 2011, p. 6; Sunflower Books, 2013, p. 5).

2.2 Back to History

One of the most meaningful periods in the history of Cyprus that is highlighted for its significant impact is between 1878-1960, which is the British period. This period has left a substantial impression on the Island's history and culture. British rule and standards were imposed when Cyprus was declared a Crown Colony in 1925 leaving its own unique footprint. However, In 1960 Cyprus was granted independence and became a Democratic Republic. (Karatepe & Uludag, 2008).

The date of partition of the island 1974 is another important date according to Okumus et al. (2005), after which Turkish Cypriots have been living in the northern part and the Greek Cypriots have been living in southern part. In November of 1983,

the Turkish Cypriots declared their independence and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus was founded however this is recognized only by Turkey.

The existing “green line” which has divided Cyprus into Turkish part and Greek part goes back to this time and it was established through the center of the old city of Lefkoşa.

Today it is different; Cypriots can pass through it to Turkish or Greek sides easily and freely. They can cross the border to visit their friends and families that might live on the other side, they even do their shopping from the other side (Thomas Cook Publishing, 2011, p. 10-15).

2.3 Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)

The territory of TRNC is estimated at around 3255 sq. km. Its neighboring countries are Turkey, in the north, Syria and Israel are located to the east, Greece is on the west and Egypt is to the South. The population of TRNC has reached to nearly 294,000 inhabitants, which is mainly composed of Turkish Cypriots or Turkish settlers coming from Turkey with a very small percentage of Greek Cypriots.

The capital city of TRNC is Lefkoşa, which is in fact the northern side of the old capital of Cyprus currently divided Nicosia. In TRNC, the official language is Turkish which Turkish Cypriots speak with a peculiar Cypriot accent. Roughly 99% of the population is Sunni Muslim.

All the foreign trades of TRNC can only be operated through Turkey. Its foreign trade via Turkey, includes most of the Middle East countries and also Britain. The currency is the same as currency in Turkey, which is the Turkish Lira.

The economy of TRNC is largely dominated by the service sector which is approximately estimated at 69% of GDP. The service sector includes tourism, trade, business and public services as well as transportation and communication.

Northern Cyprus is a self-declared state recognized only by Turkey. The international community views TRNC as a Turkish occupied territory of the Republic of Cyprus. Industry which includes light manufacturing, contributes approximately to 22% and agriculture near to 9% of the national GDP. One of the well developed sectors in TRNC especially after separation from the Cyprus Republic, is education. For example in 2011, the income received from education sector was USD 400 million. In TRNC there are over a dozen international universities with more than 47,000 students, which come from more than 50 different countries.

2.4 Tourism in TRNC

Because of the natural beauty and historical attractions of Cyprus and also due to its geographical location and climate, it has always been a great destination for tourists to spend their holiday. This was until the division in 1974, after which the Turkish Cypriots were not very active in the tourism sector. However in more recent years they have rediscovered the great potential of this sector for the economy of northern Cyprus. As mentioned before, in this way the plans and related targets were

established and through the related regulations and laws were implemented (İnançoğlu, 1995).

Undoubtedly they had figured out the importance of tourism in gaining national income especially due to the unique location of TRNC and also because of political obstacles and the absence of natural resources. The improvement in the tourism sector also results in more employment opportunities and higher profits in exchange rate. The statistics also prove a two-fold increase of income between 1998 to 2007 which is brought from this sector (Report1, 2008).

Currently tourism plays a very important role in economic development in northern Cyprus. According to a report of 2013, the tourism contribution was estimated at a figure of 6.4% of GDP and rate of occupancy in April 2013 was reported at around 47%. The majority of tourists, more than 60%, are from Turkey with the rest of them coming from other countries with Britain composing the biggest part of tourists. This is followed by Russia and Germany. However tourism of North Cyprus during these years has suffered from the problem of non-recognition of TRNC as a sovereign state. Political reasons have for many years affected the international transportation sector; its two airports, are not internationally recognized and all the flights they make travel via Turkey. During the 1980's a new target and plan for improving the tourism sector was started and finally in 1996 the master plan for the development of tourism sector has established through the related government ministry.

In the proposed plan, the tourism sector was redesigned to gain by attracting more international tourists from foreign countries and extending the general average stay days. In this master plan there was also an emphasis on preventing instabilities, which is principally rooted in the seasonality of the tourism industry. Other plans include revenue increase through tourism and more attention to internal tourism, and applying more effective marketing strategies. One of highlighted sections in this target plan is improving education programs and eliminating the problem of the lack of skilled workers. Increasing bed capacity and at the same time increasing the occupancy rate is also on the list of titles.

Official Statistics of North Cyprus in the year 2005 shows that contribution of tourism industry in total GDP reaches to 3.3% or 145.6 million\$ with around 8000 jobs created during these years. Again, according to Statistical Yearbook of Tourism (2005), 589,549 tourists arrived in this year while the bed capacity was around 12,200, so the estimated occupancy was around 40.7% in this year and 395.4 million\$ was the value added measured from tourism in this year.

In general, the tourism industry globally has experienced an increase during and after the 20th century and as a result has become a significant resource in economic value added and national income. According to Goh & Law(2002), the tourism sector when compared to other sectors in the economy is growing faster and so applying the measures for tourism planning and development will lead to economic development. The small economy of TRNC with its very limited internal market makes it more vulnerable and sensitive to external economic and politic changes (Katircioğlu , Arasli & Ekiz, 2007). Political and also economic isolation has brought some

challenges to TRNC, including limitation of international flights and communication services which automatically lead to deficiencies in international marketing and trades and furthermore to tourism industry.

2.5 Tourism Development in North Cyprus

As mentioned before TRNC is a very small state in the Mediterranean sea with lack of recognition and imposed internationally embargos. Political and also economic isolation has brought some damages to TRNC, including limitation of international flights and communication services, which naturally lead to deficiencies in international marketing and trades and furthermore to the tourism industry.

According to statistics, the total GDP reaches to around 982 million\$ with about 4,600\$ per capita income. Turkish Cypriots have struggled to have their own independent government in economic and political terms. To Northern Cyprus with its limited natural resources and various types of isolation, insufficient competent employees and skilled workers in different sectors is another extra burden on this small island economy. Before 1974 it was even more difficult because of lack of economic control in Northern Cyprus.

As abovementioned tourism in North Cyprus can be considered as the first priority sector in income generating and planning for economic development. Net tourism revenue is categorized as the first biggest contributors in invisible account.

The main problem in the tourism sector is lack of attracting foreign tourists in foreign direct investments. The citizens are constituting the major part of investors which is not sufficient for international tourism attraction and developing foreign marketing in tourism industry.

The majority of tourists are coming from Turkey (nearly 80%), this is because tourists from other countries are deterred from coming due to the country's non-recognition and absence of direct flights to North Cyprus with all transportation being done through Turkey. (SPO, 2002b).

According to Safakli & Ozdeser(2002) another problem is the lack of physical plan for geographical distribution and establishing accommodation in residential areas, which leads to unsatisfied residents and consequently their unwelcoming behaviors towards tourists.

Although agriculture, tourism, industry and higher education are the economy sectors of Northern Cyprus, because of the imposed embargoes they are faced with obstacles and difficulties and in consequence the sector of higher education has become the first sector in economy. Universities in North Cyprus through attendance in international conferences and receiving international students have helped to draw recognition for Northern Cyprus. From the 1980s to date, TRNC put the service sectors including higher education, tourism and banking as the first priorities in economic development ((Katircioğlu , Arasli & Ekiz, 2007).

2.6 The Key Tourist Areas in TRNC

The northern part of beautiful Cyprus which covers almost 1/3 of whole island, includes 5 districts with the local names of Girne, Gazimagusa, Iskele(Trikomo), Lefkoşa and Guzelyurt (Ghaedi, 2014). There are fifteen 5star and four 4star hotels located in Northern Cyprus. Kyrenia is surrounded by the highest density of hotels in comparison to the other zones. Ten 5star and four 4star hotels belong to this area.

The remaining 5star hotels are distributed fairly with two hotels in Lefkoşa , two in Iskele and one in Gazimagusa.

2.6.1 Lefkoşa

This is the capital city of North Cyprus. Lefkoşa is the center of business and commerce in Northern Cyprus complete with historical monuments and an archeological museum. In Lefkoşa, particularly in the ancient part of it, which is called the old city, the avenues and buildings preserve the traditional and historical texture. The most famous touristic monuments are located in this region of the city including Selimiye Mosque, Arab Ahmet Mosque, The Grand Inn, Kyrenia gate, Mevlevi Tekke and Bedesten (Covered bazaar).

2.6.2 Girne (Kyrenia)

Kyrenia or Girne is a port city of which its old part was established by the British in the 10th BC. One of the most popular and significant features of Kyrenia is its harbor with many restaurants, bars and cafes along it. Tourists are mostly attracted to this area because of different types of touristic and also historical attractions. On most days of the year Kyrenia is frequented by a great amount of travellers and tourists with different nationalities from all over the world. Some of its attractions are Saint Hilarion Castle, Bellapais Monestry, folk arts museum and museum of Peace and Freedom.

2.6.3 Gazimağusa

This district is located in the southeast of North Cyprus along the coastline. It is attractive for its wide range and beautiful beaches. Famagusta, its older English name, is the main city of the region; this city is considered mainly a student city because of the Eastern Mediterranean University which is very popular in Cyprus and across the Middle East. Thousands of international students live and study in

Famagusta, which has transformed the town into a student city. Its touristic attractions include the Salamis Ruins, the mosque of Lala Mustafa Pasha, Barnabas Museum and Othello Castle.

2.6.4 Güzelyurt (Morphou)

Morphou, its old Greek name, is the center of agriculture and citrus, located in the northwest of North Cyprus. It was established by Spartans, and Aphrodite worship culture was brought through them. It was a small market town located in the northwest corner of Cyprus. It is also famous for its festivals occurring every year in this city. Examples are the Orange Festival in June and festival of Arts in May. Some tourist attractions include the Soli Ruins, Pigades Temple, and Güzelyurt Museum located in this region.

2.6.5 İskele(Trikomo)

This region is located between Famagusta and Karpaz, one of its famous attraction is the beautiful coastlines with many cafes, restaurants, hotels, villas mostly located in seashore sites. The Kantara castle, Bafra beach and Apostolos Andreas Monastery are the other tourist attractions located in this region.

Chapter 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Creative Performance (CP)

The elements of creativity and innovation on both the personal and organizational level are widely accepted as key to success and power (Drach et al., 2004). Innovation plays an important role in the survival and success of organizations (Im et al., 2004). Creativity is considered as the most important embedded necessity part and construct in innovation. Creativity within work context is defined as new ideas that are generated by individuals and have potential to be utilized in work processes, products or services (Amabile & Khaire, 2008; Shalley, 2004). According to Netemeyer(2004), creative performance (CP) is defined as the extent to which employees are generating new ideas and exhibit innovative behaviors in their task execution.

During the past decades noticeable progress on employees' creative performance has been charted by the effective use of creativity models (Amabile, 1988; 2008). A large quantity of prior studies, according to Amabile & Mueller(2008) assessed and testified to the precedent factors of employee creativity while there is a trend in more recent studies to examine the relationship between creativity and other organizational outcomes and performances (Gong et al., 2009).

Creativity in three different approaches is conceptualized. The first approach is "person-centered" focuses on personal differences and potentials in relation to specific characteristics and cognitive skills, which characterize creativity among individuals (Gough, 1979); people who are capable to "think out of the box".

The second approach is "process-centered" which focuses on the stages and procedures that individuals generate to create outcome through them (Madjar & Shalley, 2008). According to Amabile(1988), these processes may include problem recognizing, resource providing, generating ideas and then evaluating these ideas that finally lead to creative ideas. Shalley et al. (2004) believe that a proper evaluation and perception of individual personalities and contextual elements may facilitate the leading stages to novelty and creative outcome.

The third approach recognized as "outcome-centered" evaluates creativity as an outcome in various forms including tangible and intangible (e.g. products and services) (Amabile, 1988). In this approach it is believed that individuals and contextual elements have impacts on originality and novelty of generated outcomes (Amabile et al., 2008; Woodman et al., 1993).

Sternberg (2006) believes that creativity is embedded in multidimensional contexts including disciplines, subfields, methodology, mental activities and etc.

Unsworth (2001) suggested a model of creativity which conceptualizes it based on the problem and motive type contributing to creative activities. He suggests four types for creativity. First, "Response Creativity" is the specific response of individual to imposed problem or external demands. Second, "Contributory creativity" is

individual's solution internally driven for a particular problem. The third one, "Expected creativity" is the way that person fulfills external expectation for solving a self-diagnosed problem. The fourth listed as "Proactive creativity" is the solution for a self-diagnosed problem which is fulfilled in an inherently motivated way.

In the majority of studies which investigated the affecting factors on employees' creativity, the greater degree of creativity in organizational performance is always desirable (Shalley et al. ,2001). In this regard, continuous improvement in innovations is referred to as a crucial element for effectiveness in organizational operations (Davenport, 1993).

Madjar & Gilson(2008) reported that M&M boosts its sales just with introducing "blue" chocolate beans. Such examples reveal the value of creativity in organizational performance even in a low level of newness. Zhou & Shalley (2003) also claimed that different degrees of newness and novelty are favorable for managing different conditions.

According to Nord&Tucker (1987), the successful result of applying creativity capabilities is innovation. March (1991), expressed that in some adaptive systems, organizations improve their creative performance through the process of organizational learning and experience.

Although the topic of creativity in hospitality has attracted lots of attention particularly during recent years few studies have focused on this issue (Hon, 2011; Hon et al, 2013). In the hospitality industry frontline employees play a prominent role specifically in forming the perceived value of customers regarding service

quality; furthermore, frontline employees (FEs) provide first contact with customers and represent the service conception of hotels (Hon & Leung, 2011). Therefore their crucial role in service delivery and customer demands fulfillment is undeniable. Innovative FEs create new solutions for each challenging and difficult situations which they are faced with. They can improve the whole process of service delivery through creativity and by bringing new ideas to the table (Hon, 2012).

Employees who work in the hospitality industry are constantly faced with customers' requests and their complaints; consequently they need to find new solutions according to the situations before them in order to please the clientele (Hon & Leung, 2011). Therefore, creativity among employees seems to be a necessity which needs managerial attention and organizational investment to be improved (Hon, 2012). Service quality, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty is in close correlation with novel ideas which employees who are in direct contact with the customers develop (Hon et al., 2013).

3.2 Stress (Work-Related Stress)

Recently stress is considered one of the main topics in this field among many researchers and organizational practitioners (Fox & Spector, 2006; Dormann & Zapf, 2002). Avey et al. (2009) believe that in spite of considerable practical and scholarly focus on this prominent issue, still new research and perspectives are in high demand.

Parker and DeCotiis (1983) believe that "... there is no consensus on the concept of stress... it is whatever a given researcher says it is" (p. 161). According to several scholars (i.e. Ganster & Schaubroeck, 1991; Jex et al., 1992; Karasek, 1979), the concept of stress is perceived by some as a cause and others as an effect. The lack

of consensus of definition may be driven by variations in theoretical connotations and in some cases opposite perceptions of the factors associated with stress process.

In order to understand the different views on stress concept, Jex et al. (1992) classified them into three different groups; In the first group are those who believe that work related stress is a trigger factor and a result of job stressors or environmental conditions (cause dimension); those in the second group believe that stress is a response to events or others' reaction which occur within the workplace (effect dimension); The last group defines stress as a stimulus towards a response to launch a process. It is predominantly an interaction between cause of stress and the individual's reaction (Kouloubandi et al., 2012).

Some scholars who utilize transactional characteristics of stress opined that stress is not only related to the environment or an individual but is the result of the interplay between individuals and the work environment. (Lowe&Bennett, 2002; Dewe, 1992).

Based on Dewe (1992) three key factors are involved in the stress process; stress generator or cause, its evaluation, and how individuals manage and handle it. The way an event is perceived and evaluated by an individual may also cause a negative reaction and it is not just related to the source of that event. (Kouloubandi et al.,2012).

Ellis (2006) summarized that the threat to the individual's well-being is considered as stress, also Janssen (2004) claimed that stress is a reaction such as apprehension and burnout which are usually known as strain.

Lowe and Bennett (2002) considered anxiety and anger as two key stressors; they also referred to coping mechanisms or strategies particularly in highly stressful conditions to handle the circumstance more effectively. Dewe (2003) stated that type of coping responses vary depending on the situation and nature of emotional reactions.

A study launched by Jex et al.(1992) assessed the perception of participants from the term stress. As part of this activity candidates were asked to fill in a survey containing 16 different items, utilizing term stress in different shapes and forms; some of the work stressors were conflicts (either role or interpersonal) and lack of role's clarity as well as workload perception, and physiological strains including anxiety, depression, job dissatisfaction, etc. The results showed that stress has a strong correlation with anxiety. Most of participants also considered stress as a response to an undesirable event; the utilization of the word "stress" in placing both stressors and strains positions is implied (Jex et al.,1992).

There are different factors in the work-place which cause stress; rapid changes in technology, environment uncertainty and downsizing are common conditions that generate stress within the organizations (Dewe et al, 2012; Cavanaugh et al, 2000). In addition, work overload, lack of competent managers, absence of clarity in roles and responsibilities, along with lack of reward and recognition are the key factors causing stress (Avey et al., 2009; Fox& Spector, 2006; Byron et al., 2012; Coelho et al, 2011; Dormann, 2002; Glazer& Beehr, 2005). Stressful work environments negatively affect a firms' productivity as it increases losing times and some sever problems among employees (Kouloubandi et al., 2012).

Stressors and stressful situations, day by day are becoming more various and complex. Fox and Spector (2006) believe that counter productive work attitudes are the main sources that generate stress via decreasing level of autonomy or increasing pressure and negative emotions.

Hospitality work environment is naturally harsh and intense and stress is an inseparable attribute of this work environment (Kristensen et al.,2002). He reported deadline pressure, unpredictable nature of guest interactions, night shifts, long working hours and low level of control and coordination as inseparable elements of hospitality work environment. Sampson & Akyeampong (2014), listed some factors as the main effects of stress among FEs and categorized them as physical, emotional, behavioral and intellectual symptoms; some symptoms such as headaches, experiencing anxiety, lack of motivation and concentration.

Brownell (1990) stated that employees who work in customer-oriented industries encounter a variety of customers which makes them more volatile towards the challenges in their job. Lo and Lamm (2005) claimed that many of the workers in hospitality are vulnerable because of inappropriate work conditions and low salaries. In several studies the adverse outcomes of stress are demonstrated as low satisfaction and commitments, poor performance as well as high rate of turnover (Ortqvist and Wincent, 2006). Within the hospitality field this becomes even more critical when employees perform multiple and often contradictory roles to bridge both the company and customer's interests. FEs are subject to the stress due to the lack of clear standards in a very dynamic and challenging environment serving multitude of customers with different level of expectations (Sampson& Akyeampong, 2014).

3.3 Psychological Capital (PsyCap)

Psychological capital(PsyCap) is categorized as human positive construct and identified as a positive psychological state of individuals which affects organizational attitudes (Luthans et al. ,2010; 2007; Avey et al., 2010). It is also recognized as personal capacity and positive organizational behavior which is measured and represented by four indicators including optimism, self-efficacy, resilience and hope (Luthans et al., 2002; 2007; Avey et al. ,2010).

The four components of psychological capital according to Luthans et al. (2002) are briefly defined respectively: first, optimism is identified as having a positive look and attitude about being successful now and in the future; the second component as self-efficacy which is confidence to take actions and exert efforts in order to succeed; the third is persevering and sustaining to ‘bounce back’ from uncertainty and failure to a positive change and progress which is attributed to resilience; fourth is hope which is defined as motivational state to identify the alternative ways of reacting and handling the situation until the success and objective is achieved.

Psychological Capital as the higher-order construct should meet distinctiveness through empirical and conceptual criteria (Judge et al., 2004; Schwab, 1980). Positive Psychology is one of the key distinctions between psychological capital and the rest of the constructs (Snyder & Lopez, 2002; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Peterson, 2006) by highlighting a specific view on the state-like rather than trait-like distinction (Luthans et al., 2007). State-like essence of PsyCap segregates it from trait-like constructs such as the “Big Five” discussed about personality dimensions (Barrick & Mount, 1991) or other trait-like constructs. In particular when

being “state-like” is utilized as an inclusion criterion in PsyCap (Luthans et al., 2007), character strengths and virtues must comply with the condition of being “trait-like, an individual difference with demonstrable generality and stability” (Seligman & Peterson, 2005).

Some studies have shown the conceptual independence of the four positive constructs (Bandura, 1997; Snyder, 2000, 2002) while it is proposed by Luthans et al. (2007) that there might be a very strong underlying connection between these four factors which glue them together powerfully which he recognized as higher-order core representative. This background connection between each of the four indicators, which is referred to as the PsyCap definition, plays a role in motivational trend to achieve goals and complete the tasks (Luthans et al., 2007). Law and colleagues (1998) have defined a conceptual framework describing the quiddity of multidimensional factors such as the proposed higher-order construct of PsyCap.

Luthans et al. (2007) claimed that all considered facets with unique and shared cognitive and motivational mechanism, collaboratively boost the performance; when facets are combined together as PsyCap construct, the resultant is expected to be more impactful and engaged in a broader job performance.

It is proposed by Avey et al. (2010) that PsyCap as a core factor has a stronger relationship with job satisfaction and job performance than the four individual ingredients which embrace it; When all the key facets of PsyCap (optimism, self-efficacy, resilience and hope) are considered together as one force, the resultant motivational effects has a much wider impact in comparison to each construct

individually; for instance, the impact of resilience and optimism compared to the individual impact and function of resilience or optimism is greater (Luthans et al. 2007).

In the same context Luthans et al.(2007) explain that urgent outcome of resilience and optimism along with self-efficacy and hope can be justified: Employees could be more persistent and nominate themselves for higher effort while exploring the alternative solutions and pathways to find their original level, they illustrate resilience with more confidence when they are hopeful and at the same time more efficacious. They also claim that this combination could support a more successful function. In addition, the employees with higher potential and capacity for optimism might have a positive viewpoint, however, empowered with hope and self-efficacy adds confidence and persistency to explore several options to achieve optimistic goals.

The more resilience employees have, the more the likelihood that they will recover from the failures at work; however, when overlaid with hope, the motivation of resilient employees drives them to identify the alternative ways of reacting and handling the situation (Luthans et al., 2010). This is also unintentionally boosting the degree of self-efficacy implying that they could overcome most difficult challenges in growing a positive outlook and optimism to face such events in the future (Luthans et al., 2007).

Despite the fact that the main focus has been on performance improvement, higher levels of job and leadership satisfaction also could be gained when higher level of

PsyCap are achieved (Larson & Luthans, 2006). Schaufeli et al. (2007) claimed that employees with higher psychological capital are more likely to be in psychologically positive state which leads to positive and satisfactory organizational behaviors. In addition, employees possessing components of psychological capital are more energetic and engaged in their work environment (Karatepe & Karadas, 2015).

As mentioned above, Luthans et al. (2002) considered four components for PsyCap which are globally accepted to meet inclusively the most important criteria of PsyCap. These indicators are described separately in following part:

3.3.1 Optimism

Optimism as one of the psychological capital facets which can be generalized as positive outlook attributed to events and outcome that is usually accompanied with motivation and good emotions. In defining optimism, preserving the reality is the point that should be taken into consideration (Luthans, 2002a).

Seligman (1998), described optimists as individuals who attribute positive events or elements to stable, internal and worldwide testimonies and in reverse assign instable, external and limited reasons to negative facts. On the organizational level, task accomplishment can be sampled as a positive event and a missed deadline as a negative one.

According to Schneider (2001), optimism is not a positive outlook without percipient and realistic evaluation. It means optimists evaluate what they can and also what they cannot carry out in various situations; therefore, it stands in relation with a person's

efficacy and hope. Realistic optimism is categorized as a dynamic element which is considered as changeable and state-like element over time (Peterson, 2000).

Bandura (1998, p. 56) has noted “evidence shows that human accomplishments and positive well-being require an optimistic sense of personal efficacy to override the numerous impediments to success.” So he believes that there is a relationship between optimism and self-efficacy.

Snyder (2002, p. 257) states that “optimism is a goal-based cognitive process that operates whenever an outcome is perceived as having substantial value.” According to Chen and Lim (2012), optimistic employees have internally motivated characters and positive outlooks towards their success in current and future endeavors.

According to Youssef and Luthans (in press), optimism is positively related to job satisfaction and happiness in the workplace. Seligman (1998) showed that optimism has a positive and significant relationship with task performance in the workplace. In a similar study which is done by Luthans et al. (2005), the same results manifested among employees in Chinese factories.

3.3.2 Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is considered as one of the important components of PsyCap (Luthans, et al., 2007). It might be considered as a person’s ability or expecting outcome, but it should be taken more as a positive belief (Luthans, et al., 2007). Stajkovic & Luthans (1998) defined self-efficacy 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.”

Self-efficacy in the view of Lewis (2011) is regarded as self-belief and in the definition of Wood (1996) it is an individual's belief about his or her competency in attempted activities. Therefore it is believed that the greater degree of self-efficacy leads to improved confidence as an available perception of a bigger chance for success (Setar et al., 2015). According to Luthans et al.(2007), self-efficacy is about something over and above a single task or domain and Bandura (1998) indicated that perceived level of efficacy by groups or individuals is a good measure to predict motivation and success. Bandura (1997) claims that employees with a higher degree of self-efficacy are more likely to go for challenging situations and tasks. After failures, they are ready again to take risks and move forward (Luthans, 2002a). Self-efficacy can be developed through approaches such as modeling, experience and motivating (Wood and Bandura,1989).

In reference to prior studies on efficacy, individuals regularly adjust their goals based on how they view and believe their capacities to accomplish a focused task. (Locke & Latham, 1990; Bandura, 2012; Seo & Ilies, 2009). Self-efficacious employees according to Chen and Lim (2012) predominantly have required abilities, skills and competence which result in higher performance. According to prior researches there is a significant positive link between self-efficacy and job performance (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998; Bandura & Locke, 2003;Bandura, 2000).

3.3.3 Resilience

According to the positive psychology, resilience is determined by positive management and adoption of high risk or adversity (Masten, 2001; Masten & Reed, 2002). In the context of the work place it is defined as “positive psychological capacity to rebound, to ‘bounce back’ from adversity, uncertainty, conflict, failure, or

even positive change, progress and increased responsibility” (Luthans, 2002a, p. 702). Empirical studies show that positive sentimentalities enrich resilience when encountering negative events which is a reflection of the state-like modality per se (Tugade, Fredrickson, & Barrett, 2004).

In a nutshell, resiliency of the individual in unfavorable situations might be enhanced when they effectively spring back from previous setbacks. Fredrickson & Joiner (2002) have demonstrated that such positive reactions around emotions may have positive rising effects.

Richardson (2002) also suggested that there is usually a synchronicity and interplay between hope, optimism and self-efficacy which can uplift the degree of resiliency. “Success usually comes through renewed effort after failed attempts. It is resiliency of personal efficacy that counts.” noted by Bandura (1998, p. 62) which is a good example of the impact of efficacy.

Avey et al.(2008) claimed that employees with high levels resilience are more capable for positive adaptation in challenging situations; such employees are more likely to display perseverance in challenging and stressful situations. Therefore, resilience is an important attribute for employees involved in service industries.

Luthans et al. (2005) illustrated that resilience has a positive and significant relationship with employees’ performance. Maddi (1987) found that the health, happiness and performance of resilient employees in an organization undergoing significant downsizing exercises are hardly maintained.

3.3.4 Hope

To elaborate this with an example it is best to refer to the definition of hope which emerged from the research which took place in 1991 by Snyder and colleagues (p. 287) defining hope as a “positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal directed energy) and (b) pathways (planning to meet goals).”

This expresses three different perceptual foundations of hope; agency, pathway and goals. In particular the agency part of hope is perceived as willingness to achieve a wish or desired effect (Snyder, 2000, 2002; Snyder et al., 1996). That being the case, to chase a goal, hope takes into account the agency and incentive energy which is similar to the effect in a state. Moreover, hope intensifies the pathway which is demonstrating the goals and potential sub-goals as well as the vision of how to achieve them (Luthans et al., 2007).

Contingency planning is usually practiced by those who have a high level of hope as they usually foresee the upcoming challenges to achieving their goals. As a result they are constantly seeking all possible alternative routes to reach their goals; plus, hope comprises the will to prosper and the ability to detect, elucidate, and pursue the way to prosperity (Snyder, 2000).

The Construct credibility of hope is mainly obtained when applied in conjunction with different dimensions of PsyCap. All researches along with theory building activities based on Snyder analysis (2002) have illustrated the convergence of hope while it is unique in its own. While compared to the other positive constructs has a diacritic validity through empirical experiments in connection with similar sets of

positive constructs (Bryant & Cvengros, 2004; Carifio & Rhodes, 2002; Magaletta & Oliver, 1999; Youssef & Luthans, in press).

As an example, an ongoing survey conducted by Adams et al. in 2002 has observed that firms who have responded with higher degree of hope are aiming to be more triumphant than otherwise.

A study conducted on fast-food managers by Peterson and Luthans (2003) showed that different levels of hope are associated with the financial performance, staff attrition and job satisfaction. Another study along the same lines undertaken in a Chinese factory has demonstrated the dependency of their performance rates with their supervision and the worthiness of their appraisal (Luthans et al, 2005). Luthans et al., (2008) stated that employees with a higher level of hope have the willingness and means required to do a task.

Along with performance there is some evidence that hope might be boosted by positive work attitudes. For instance, Larson & Luthans (2006) studies proposed that the hope level of staff in a small size mid-western factory were related to their job satisfaction and what they get in return from their firm commitments. Scaling this up to much larger population of employees, Youssef & Luthans (in press) suggested that work happiness, firm commitment and job satisfaction are tied closely to hope.

3.4 Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory

JD-R theory (Demerouti et al., 2001) applied in current study as the explanatory framework to assess the relationship between stress and creative performance. In JD-R theory as a job-related stress theory, strain is assumed as an imbalance between demands placed on a person and available resources for him or her to deal with demands. Job demands can be exemplified as role ambiguity, role conflict, work overload, job insecurity, time pressure and resources are training, supervisor support, rewards, and empowerment.

High levels of demand lead to negative effects and this relationship offsets with the availability of resources. The main assumption is that strain occurs when job demands are high and job resources are limited and work engagement develops when job resources in comparison to imposed demands are high (Bakker& Demerouti, 2007).

This theory explains how job demands result in employees' exhaustion both mentally and physically, energy depletion and health issues which is called health impairment. In contrary, job resources can foster positive organizational behaviors such as extra-role behaviors and high level of performance, so called motivational process. JD-R theory can be applied as a tool in HR management (Bakker& Demerouti, 2007).

3.5 Conservation of Resource (COR) Theory

One of the most recognized theories of stress process is known as the Conservation of Resources theory (COR) developed by Stevan Hobfoll (1989). This theory suggests that individuals attempt to accumulate and preserve what they have as resources. The term “resource” mainly refers to what contributes strongly and positively to individuals’ well-being and empowers them to fit in smoothly. Objects, personal characteristics, conditions and energies are the key classification of resources made by Hobfoll (1989). Actual or potential losses result in a negative “state of being” and anxiety, depression, physiological tension and dissatisfaction. Stress is a response to a threat of a loss.

COR theory concentrates on objective gauging in actual fit. “Individuals strive to obtain, retain, protect and foster those things that they value” (Hobfoll, p. 341). Hobfoll ended up classifying different sorts of resources through his researches in the COR theory. Some referred to “personal resources” (mainly internal) and others are categorized as the “environmental resources” (external). The dimensions of COR theory (both environmental and individual elements) have been assessed as equally important as each other while a person is able to retain his/her resources (Dewe et al., 2012).

Individual differences and personal values (such as prosperity, valuable life acquirement, internal possession of control, directional optimism, and self-esteem, etc.) (Nelson & Simmons, 2003), in COR theory are considered as resources and may play a buffer role against loss of resources or stress. As an example, individuals with higher self-esteem and confidence, have the potential to cope with problematic

conditions as they have internal self-worth, which they draw on in such loss of resources (Grandey& Cropanzano, 1999).

Depending on the nature of the work environment and what individuals are performing in, the existing resource varies. The features such as rewards and recognitions for a successful task, they are considered as components of the environmental resources (Hakanen, Perhoniemi et al., 2008). Halbesleben (2006) referred to the combination of colleagues and organizational support to fulfill one's need, as big part of environmental resources which significantly assists in eradicating stress and burnout and also is referred by Luszczynska and Cieslak as a way to increase the positive mood and healthiness (2005). Hobfoll theory digs into the environmental characteristics that have a significant importance on resource retention and this is why COR theory has a wide range of application in practice.

One of the most important underlying concepts promoted by COR theory is around the stressful conditions which lead to resources attrition; an example of this perspective is clashes with other co-workers in the workplace. This drains energy to deal with others and results in loss of time all of which cost the firm money and more importantly the loss of resources (Dewe et al.,2012). On the flip side, smooth and pleasant conditions results in resource gain. To illustrate assume a situation where positive feedback is received by an individual which affects the self-esteem and gives assurance to the person that they are on the right-track (Dewe et al.,2012).

Considering COR theory touches upon both resource gain and losses, the emphasis is mainly on the loss factors which is justified by Hobfoll as supremacy of the issue due

to the high risk for the firm survival particularly when the person is struggling with stressful and undesirable circumstances (Dewe et al.,2012).

So as two key principle of COR theory first, individuals tend to not only secure their resources but also like to accumulate them and second, in order to deal with risky conditions and volatile situations individuals tend to invest their resources to safeguard themselves from any unfavorable outcomes (Hobfoll, 1989).

COR theory also has a couple of other principles around resources, which are important to be considered including resource spirals and caravans. Spirals are viewed as a lack of resources to handle stressful situations by an individual. These are exposed to the vulnerability and the fact that “loss brings more loss” (Hobfoll, 2001, p. 354). Resource spiral is popularly supported by several studies. For example the resource shortage experienced by people involved in the combat in Vietnam resulted in the struggle to handle the post-combat wounds, which increased the risk of slow recoveries (King et al., 1999).In a similar manner, resource gain could be a spiral especially when top performance leads to over achievements. According to spiral process, accumulating resources serves individuals in gaining more resources. For example a developed job performance leads to more self-efficacy and optimism and higher motivation for employees. Efficacy and Optimism gained in accomplishing effective tasks encourages them to have higher and more confident performance in the next tasks. Hobfoll pointed out that people’s healthiness is threatened more by loss spirals than gains.

Resource caravans focuses on empowerment based on the facts that resources can collaborate to aggregate and build upon each other's capabilities. Hobfoll stated caravanning of self-efficacy with optimism as an example. The impact of effective job performance could be revealed in more self-efficacy and uplifting the optimism and motivation. This makes the person become more optimistic and even challenges them to be a top performer in the future. Social support availability could reinforce self-esteem and help grow confidence in individuals. Hence this makes them become more comfortable in their skins and using the social support more often (Hobfoll , 2001).

The inference made by Xanthopoulou and colleagues is that the personal and job resources play a critical role in boosting the work engagement with the consideration of gain spirals (2009). It is also noted that resource caravans are mainly derived by the fact that resources are producing more resources which ultimately could improve the individuals' well-being and enhancement of coping mechanisms (Hobfoll, 2002). Individuals try to protect or replace their resources by exhibiting some behaviors such as intention to leave their work-place (Wright & Cropanzano, 1998).

Xanthopoulou et al.(2007) believe that there are some fundamental similarities between COR theory and JD-R model. The first commonality is that both are strongly emphasizing the moderator role of resources in connection with risks or demands and the adverse outcomes. Secondly, COR theory supposition about resource accumulation is compatible with motivational mechanism of JD-R model; the resource accumulation due to the approachability of job resources is explainable which usually secures desirable outcomes. In this regard, Llorens et al. (2007)

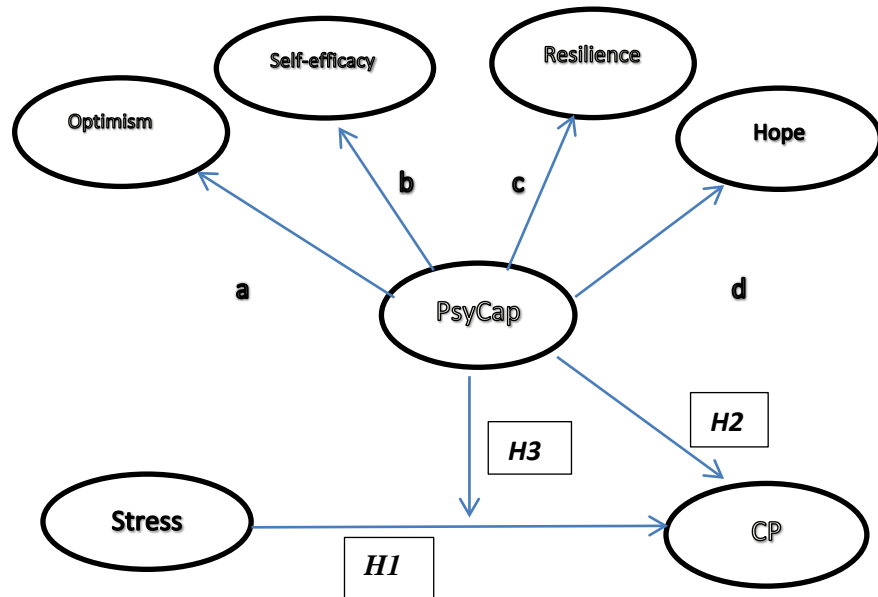
determined that Efficacy, which is a key driver for high degree of engagement, is developed through availability of more job resources. In a nutshell, according to two COR theory principles, personal resources could contribute in various ways in the JD-R model.

Chapter 4

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

In this section, the proposed model and relationships between variables and related hypotheses will be explained.

4.1 Conceptual Model



H1: $S \rightarrow CP$
H2a: $OP \rightarrow CP$
H2b: $EF \rightarrow CP$
H2c: $RE \rightarrow CP$
H2d: $HO \rightarrow CP$

H3a: $S * OP \rightarrow CP$
H3b: $S * EF \rightarrow CP$
H3c: $S * RE \rightarrow CP$
H3d: $S * HO \rightarrow CP$

Figure 1: Research Model

4.2 Stress and Creative Performance

JD-R theory as a job-related stress theory is applied to explain how stress effects CP. In this theory strain is assumed as an imbalance between demands burdened on a person and available resources for him or her to deal with demands. As mentioned before, the main assumption is that strain occurs when job demands are high and job resources are limited (Bakker& Demerouti, 2007).

Occupational stress in literature is defined as any incongruence or discomfort perceived by individuals or employees triggered by stressors which are too intense to tolerate or occur too frequently so that it exceeds coping capabilities and disposal resources to control and handle in an appropriate way (Malta, 2004). In general, work related stress congruent with JD-R theory is a result of mismatch between employee perception of demands imposed on him or her and perception of capabilities and resources to handle these demands and usually this mismatch means the demands are beyond disposal resources.

Stress as a limiting factor of employee performance which has also negative impact on employee well-being has been studied a considerable amount and there is no doubt that stress has negative effects such as strain and tension on employees. In fact it is in accordance with JD-R theory which explains how job demands result in employees' exhaustion both mentally and physically, energy depletion and health issues. Avey et al.(2012) claimed potential effect of stress on creativity or creative performance has not attracted much attention by scholars.

Avey et al.(2012) proposed a model in which strength of wisdom have a positive relationship with creativity but they explain how stress can intervene as one of the possible mediators in this mechanism. They stated that the relationship of stress and performance can be delineated by a U-shaped curvilinear. They proposed distress as the source of negative effects particularly on cognitive performances like creativity. Similar results had been achieved by Nelson& Sutton (1990) and they claimed that although a small amount of stress can be beneficial to keep a certain amount of excitement and concentration (referred as eustress), passing over the threshold point will lead to deteriorating effects (referred as distress).

Work pressure can affect creativity in different ways (Byron et al., 2010). Some studies have proved the negative impact of pressure on creativity (Shalley & Perry-Smith, 2001), while some scholars have shown the curvilinear or even positive relationship with creative performance (Yuan & Zhou, 2008; Baer & Oldham, 2006; Ohly & Fritz, 2010; Eisenberger & Aselage, 2009). Work pressure according to Gutnick, Walter et al. (2012) has a complex double facet effect and potential which can either enhance or undermine employees' creativity. In addition, some scholars have considered different kinds of stress and pressure (challenge vs. hindrance) which may have different kinds of impact on creativity (LePine, Podsakoff, 2005; 2007). Ambile et al.(2002) in his research reported the reduction of creativity performance of employees caused by workload, interruptions and time pressure to nearly half. Baer et al.(2006) gave their explanation through the fact that employees encountering time pressure or workload, tend to just focus on task execution by copying and applying repetitive ways instead of bringing new ideas or creative solutions.

Ellis (2006) believes that some physiological reactions such as limiting of thought and focus on information only with first priority will lead to little attention to other information which may produce creativity. George (1986) claimed that cognitive rigidity in stressful situations prevents individuals from tolerating ambiguity and being flexible and creative. Kouloubandi et al. in 2012 investigated the effect of job stress, work load and motivations on creativity among Iranian railways workers; they found a significant positive relationship between role conflict and employee creativity while they observed a significant negative relationship between role ambiguity and creativity; furthermore, intrinsic motivation manifested a significant affirmative effect on creativity.

Çekmecelioglu & Günsel (2011) on their study emphasized the necessity of changing views on evaluating underlying and influential factors on creative performance. They assessed the effects of contextual factors including role stress and also autonomy on creativity and performance. They found a partial proof for their proposition both about existing opposite relationship between role stress and creativity and also job Performance. Similarly in recent studies, the important role of stress on task performance and creativity has been proved (Coelho et al.,2011; Mohr & Puck, 2007).

Based on a study done by Karatepe & Uludag (2008) on hotel FEs in North Cyprus which was investigating the impact of stress on job performance, the role of ambiguity showed a negative effect on job performance. Avey et al.(2012) targeting 974 distributed adult workers across various industries found stress to be negatively

related to CP and workers' strengths of wisdom was found to be adversely related to stress and positively related to CP.

Westman et al.(2004), have shown that resource loss in organizations is an important contributor in the mechanism of stress and impacts. Also it is demonstrated that loss process prevention plays a crucial role in successful performance. In a similar study conducted by Notebaert et al. (2011), threat appraisals were indicated as a fiddler of employees' concentration with the cost of losing information and lower level of performance.

Sampson & Akyeampong (2014) organized a study among FEs in Metropolis Ghana with the aim of evaluating the work-related stress (causes and effects). They found seven factors of work-related stress causes. The employees were reflecting the effects of these causes in different ways: they were suffering from headaches, they were losing concentration, or they become frustrated. Sampson and his colleague in this study suggested some beneficiary measures including empowering the employees, training them and also encourage them to engage in some relaxation activities. O'Neill & Davis(2011) found similar stress symptoms among hotel employees. We propose as our first hypothesis that:

(Hypothesis 1: stress has a negative impact on employees' creative performance.)

4.3 Psychological Capital and Creative Performance

COR theory suggests that individuals attempt to accumulate and preserve what they have as resources. Any actual or potential losses eventuate in negative “state of being”, stress and negative outcomes. Individual characteristics in COR theory are considered as resources and may act as a buffer against loss of resources. Therefore, individuals with higher personal resources have internal resources, which they can draw on during threats of loss and its negative outcome.

Luthans et al. (2010) investigated the relationship between components of psychological capital (optimism, efficacy, resilience and hope) and creative performance. In their study psychological capital is presented as a psychological resource with motivational function which improves creativity (Ambile et al.,2004, Rodan, 2004; Zhou, 2003). Luthans et al. (2007), have associated intrinsic motivations and psychological resources to performance and job attitudes (Luthans et al., 2007).

According to previous studies motivational mechanisms are introduced as an underlying reason to generate creativity; PsyCap and its components have such motivational effects (Sweetman et al. ,2011). PsyCap, due to stronger effects of combined motivational impacts, has a more significant relationship with desirable outcomes compared to other personality dimensions or constructs (Avey et al., 2010; Luthans et al., 2007).

There are lots of studies which have investigated the relationship between personality and performance, however, studies with the content of assessing the relations

between psychological resources such as PsyCap and CP are still rare (Sweetman et al., 2011). Through the study of Avey et al.(2009), PsyCap was found as an effective tool to deal with various symptoms of occupational stress and undesirable organizational attitudes or behaviors such as job-search and turnover.

Recently a related research in China was undertaken by Hsu & Chen (2015) in which they examined the impact of both factors of work-place innovational climate and employees' PsyCap on creativity behavior of employees. Upon studying employees from 16 different organizations, they found both aforementioned factors in significant correlation with creativity. Therefore, social and individual resources were advised by Hsu & Chen to enhance by managers to improve effective innovation.

Abbas & Raja(2015), through their study conducted in various organizations in Pakistan showed that employees with a higher degree of PsyCap portrayed a higher rate of creative performance to their supervisors while their reported job stress compared to other employees was lower.

Sweetman et al. (2011), examined the effect of four components of PsyCap on CP based on almost 900 employees who were working on different industries. This study indicated the positive relationship between employees' psychological resources and their performance; in addition, the combination of hope, resilience, self-efficacy and optimism with the title of PsyCap revealed a more significant and impactful relationship with creative performance than separately.

Karatepe and Karadas(2015) proposed a model of PsyCap impact on job and life satisfaction. In this study, optimism was introduced as the most relevant component and indicator of PsyCap, with resilience, self-efficacy and hope being the following indicators respectively. In addition, PsyCap was suggested as the booster of job engagement which can bring higher job satisfaction and improved job performance.

As second hypothesis we propose the followings:

(Hypothesis 2(a): Optimism has a positive impact on Creative Performance.)

(Hypothesis 2(b): Self-efficacy has a positive impact on Creative Performance.)

(Hypothesis 2(c): Resilience has a positive impact on Creative Performance.)

(Hypothesis 2(d): Hope has a positive impact on Creative Performance.)

4.4 PsyCap as a Moderator between Stress and CP

Lazarus & Folkman(1984) claimed that stress is the result of lacking resources in hard situations and emphasized the positive role of cognitive process and individual interactions to reduce this stress. Costa & McCrae(1990) reported personality dimensions as other factors which affect stress. Lazarus (1984) mentioned psychological capital as an appropriate resource which employees can take advantage of to cope and overcome the stress. He clarified how psychological capital components may help individuals to better adapt and cope with stress (2003). Lazarus & Folkman (1984) referred to coping and appraisal factors which intervene in the impact process of stress and potential outcome.

PsyCap, with all its components has the possibility of being developed and improved via short training (Luthans et al., 2008; Snyder, 2000; Seligman, 1998). Luthans et al. (2008) believed that today's stressful work conditions need to develop such

resources; he claimed that it helps employees and managers to adopt the right approach in terms of providing appropriate resources to combat stress. Personal perception of sufficient available resources to face the threat of loss, results in reduced stress and its negative outcomes (Avey et al., 2012). Therefore, PsyCap through a direct impact leads to improved creative performance but also through its undoing effect towards stress, contributes to new idea generation and creative performance. Setar et al.(2015) conducted a study to assess the relationship between job stress, job involvement, incivility demonstrations and PsyCap among employees who were working in call centers in South Africa. PsyCap was positively related to job involvement and adversely related to stress and uncivil behaviors in workplace.

Baron et al.(2013), assessed PsyCap factor among entrepreneurs and claimed that higher psychological capacity of entrepreneurs is the underlying reason for them better combating stress and its negative consequences. Indeed, PsyCap with an interaction role helps entrepreneurs to manage stressful situations towards more productivity, income and success. Gutnick et al. (2012) in an integrative framework assessed the effect of stress on employees' creativity with an illustration of employees' resources and commitment as a moderator. In this study, stress was manifested as either challenge or threat trigger. Employees involved in pressure, were influenced by cognitive flexibility or persistence. In a related work done by Dollard et al.(2012), it was demonstrated that high levels of demand in the workplace leads to stress and presence of job resources offsets this effect. However this interaction effect is dependent on the context of organization; safety climate which is referred to as 'right' climate results in proper utilization of resources and reducing stress. Khalid et al. (2012) conducted a research to investigate the relationship

between job-related stress, employee performance and supportive leadership. Study results revealed the moderating effect of supportive leadership that buffers role stress and enhances job performance. Lu & Kuo (2016) conducted a research in Taiwan to examine the negative effect of job stress on safety behaviors as well as testing the moderator effect of emotional intelligence. Results indicated that employees' emotional intelligence has a moderating effect on the relationship between stress and safety behavior.

The third hypothesis of this current study in accordance with JD-R and COR theories, suggests that PsyCap assumed as personal resource and positive psychological state has a buffer effect on stress:

(Hypothesis 3(a): Optimism moderates the negative impact of stress in employees with regard to creative performance.)

(Hypothesis 3(b): self-efficacy moderates the negative impact of stress in employees with regard to creative performance.)

(Hypothesis 3(c): Resilience moderates the negative impact of stress in employees with regard to creative performance.)

(Hypothesis 3(d): Hope moderates the negative impact of stress in employees with regard to creative performance.)

Chapter 5

METHODOLOGY

This chapter concentrates on methodology and issues related to it, including an explanation about deductive approach, measures, questionnaire structure and data collection procedure. Finally it provides information regarding data analysis and results.

5.1 Research Approach

In this research procedure a quantitative approach is used to examine the proposals and model hypotheses. This study is designed based on theoretical framework including COR and JD-R theory. Descriptive and Inferential statistical analysis including frequencies, correlation, regression, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Cronbach Alpha are used to test proposed hypotheses.

5.2 Data Collection and Procedure

This study is conducted in 4 and 5 star hotels all located in TRNC. According to current statistics of tourism ministry there are fifteen 5star and four 4star hotels in North Cyprus.

A permission letter provided by EMU was presented to the HR management of hotels in order to get authorization in the procedure of data collection. However, the questionnaires were distributed and collected through management or related responsible people while the researcher did not get permission for direct supervision of the process. Generally after 2 or 3 days the filled in questionnaires were returned

back to the researcher. The whole of this process lasted for three weeks during September 2015. 11 hotels out of 14 accepted to participate in this research. 9 of them were 5star hotels and 2 hotels were 4star hotels. Eventually a sample was selected via judgmental sampling of 4 and 5star hotels in North Cyprus who were working as receptionists, food and beverage servers, bartenders, door attendants as well as bell attendants all of which generally have close contact with customers.

300 questionnaires were distributed and, as mentioned above, the main targets were the frontline employees because of the important role they play in hotel performance. 210 questionnaires were returned back to the researcher however 23 of them were invalid. So the rate of response was 62% and final analysis was performed with 187 cases. Employees profile including gender, age, level of education and organizational tenure all are presented here and then are summarized in the following table.

As it is observed from the first table, 73% of respondents were men and 27% of them were women. The employees aged between 28-37 have the highest numbers between respondents with 40% percentage, and the least frequent age-group belonged to employees older than 48 years old. In regards to employees' tenure, the majority of participants (65%) had less than 5 years experience in the current organization and only less than 11% of respondent employees were tenured above 10 years. As can be seen from education table, the majority of frontline employees involved in this survey (almost 67%) did not have a university degree or training, only 4% of frontline participants had a graduate degree. Frequency and percentage of each demographic profile are presented in following table.

Table 1: Demographic statistics of participants (FEs)

Demographic Variable	sample composition	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	male	117	62.57%
	female	70	37.43%
Age	48-57	23	12.30%
	38-47 years	56	29.90%
	28-37 years	74	39.60%
	18-27 years	34	18.20%
Education	Graduate degree(master or PHD)	7	3.70%
	university degree (4years)	54	28.90%
	vocational school	79	42.20%
	High school	47	25.10%
Organizational Work Experience	16-20 years	8	4.30%
	11-15 years	12	6.40%
	6-10 years	46	24.60%
	5 YEARS AND LESS	121	64.7%

Note: n=187

5.3 Measurements

Relevant scholars' studies were reviewed and their valid and reliable scales were used to measure different research variables as well as to verify the suggested model.

Psychological capital was measured by the original 24-items PCQ (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007). Sample item for PsyCap self-efficacy is "*I am confident in my performance that I can work under pressure and challenging circumstances*", Sample item for PsyCap Optimism is "*I believe that all the problems occurring at work always have a bright side*", Sample item for PsyCap Hope is: "*I have several ways to accomplish the work goal* ", and for PsyCap Resilience "*Although too much responsibility at work make me awkward, I can go through to work successfully*".

Stress was measured by the seven items derived from the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (Lovibond and Lovibond, 1995) and a sample item is “I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy”.

Creative Performance is measured through 6 items adapted from Wang and Netmeyer (2004) and a sample item is “This employee comes up with new ideas for satisfying customer needs”.

Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree was applied for all constructs’ measurement (PsyCap, Stress, Creative Performance).

Table 2: Measurement information and References

Construct	Item	Reference
Employee Stress	7 items	Lovibond & Lovibond (1995)
Creative Performance	6 items	Wang and Netmeyer (2004)
Psychological Capital (self-efficacy)	6 items	Luthans et al. (2007)
Psychological Capital ((Hope)	6 items	Luthans et al. (2007)
Psychological Capita (Optimism)	6 items	Luthans et al. (2007)
Psychological Capital (Resilience)	6 items	Luthans et al. (2007)

The questions first was prepared in English then applying back to back method translated to Turkish by two experts master of both languages to evaluate face validity, contently there was not any difference after conversion (Mc Gorry, 2000). Ten questionnaires were distributed to hotel employees as a pilot study before conducting the main survey in order to minimize the ambiguity of items in the questionnaire. It also helped to maximize the validity of measurements.

5.4 Data Analysis

As data analysis procedure, study variables' means and standard deviations are demonstrated for a descriptive result. For Data analyses and testing the correlations the causal relationships between the research variables, SPSS v.20 is applied. For testing the variables' reliability Cronbach Alpha is used; the prevalent accepted cutoff level for Cronbach Alpha test is 0.7. For evaluating construct validity, which includes convergent and discriminant validity, statistical software package LISREL was used. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) are done to check the appropriate loading level of items under pertained factor. In this stage and after this examination, the items which were loaded in a low level (below 0.4) or under two factors (cross-loading) ought to be dropped from the items list of corresponded factor. Hierarchical regression analysis using SPSS is done to test the Hypotheses and the moderating effect of PsyCap on the considered relationship between work-related stress and CP.

Chapter 6

RESULTS

This chapter provides the results from the data analyses including Alpha coefficients to test the reliability, EFA and CFA analyses to check the appropriation loading levels of each variable measuring item, means and standard deviations and hierarchical regression tests for checking the research model.

6.1 Measurement Results

The reliability test results which were done using Cronbach Alpha test are provided in table 4. As pictured, all coefficients are more than the commonly accepted cutoff (.70). $C\alpha$ for PsyCap-efficacy is .92, PsyCap-Optimism is .92, PsyCap-Resilience is .93, PsyCap-Hope is .90, for Stress it is .94 and for CP is .82. Therefore, according to these results our variables' measures are sufficiently reliable. EFA and CFA were conducted to check the measurement model validity. In table 3a and 3b, EFA loading factors and information about standardized factor loading value and fitness statistics are demonstrated. After observing the results of EFA, two items of Stress and two items of CP are dropped from further calculation due to cross-loading.

Fitness indices in table 3b, indicated that the suggested model possesses adequate and desired fitness. X^2/df is used as model fitness index which in regards to our model, 1.91 is equated from this division and also sited in acceptable range (the indexes above 5. cannot be acceptable). Moreover, other indexes manifested above,

including GFI=0.82; NFI= .89; IFI=.95; CFI= .95; RFI= .88, all indicate that the proposed model enjoys a fitness with pretained data.

Table 3a: Exploratory Factor Analysis loading factors

	psyef	psyopti	psyresil	psyhope	stress	creativity
psyef1	0.894					
psyef2	0.816					
psyef3	0.823					
psyef4	0.873					
psyef5	0.815					
psyef6	0.821					
psyopti1		0.819				
psyopti2		0.819				
psyopti3		0.846				
psyopti4		0.835				
psyopti5		0.843				
psyopti6		0.778				
psyresil1			0.874			
psyresil2			0.772			
psyresil3			0.786			
psyresil4			0.863			
psyresil5			0.906			
psyresil6			0.843			
psyhope1				0.811		
psyhope2				0.831		
psyhope3				0.808		
psyhope4				0.772		
psyhope5				0.845		
psyhope6				0.794		
stress1					0.85	
stress2					0.865	
stress3					0.878	
stress4					0.88	
stress5					0.902	
creativity1						0.726
creativity2						0.63
creativity3						0.602
creativity4						0.757

Table 3b: Fitness indecies

$\chi^2 = 917.34, (P=0.0); df=480; \chi^2/df= 1.911$	
GFI=0.82; NFI= .89; IFI=.95; CFI= .95; RFI= .88;	RMSEA= 0.064; RMR=
0.028	

6.2 Correlation Test

This section is dedicated to descriptive information including means and standard deviations, plus correlation between variables, which are all demonstrated in table 4.

Based on the correlation results, stress is negatively and significantly related to employees' CP ($r = -.47, P < .01$).

According to results, optimism as one of the PsyCap components is positively and significantly related to CP ($r = .46, P < .01$) while it is negatively and significantly related to Stress ($r = -.21, P < .01$).

Self-efficacy as the second component of PsyCap is likewise positively and considerably related to employees' CP ($r = .43, P < .01$) and simultaneously has a negative and significant relationship with stress. ($r = -.27, P < .01$).

The correlation between the third component of PsyCap known as resilience and CP is also positive and significant ($r = .23, P < .01$); however, its magnitude level compared to the two previous variables is reduced approximately to half. Although resilience has a negative relationship with stress this relation is not significant ($r = -.12, n.s.$).

Hope as the fourth indicator of PsyCap, has very little significant and positive correlation with CP, however, its correlation magnitude is even less than resilience ($r = .17, P < .05$). Hope in a similar way to resilience, is negatively but not significantly related to stress ($r = -.06, n.s.$).

Table 4: Correlations of composite measures of model constructs and control variables

	Mea n	SD	Ca	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.Age	2.36	.92		1	-.58**	.10	.09	.00	.05	-.01	.09	.11	.02
2.Gender	.27	.44			1	.04	.04	.02	.05	.08	-.10	-.02	-.07
3.Educat	3.11	.83				1	.02	.02	-.02	.00	.04	-.11	-.11
4.Tenure	1.50	.80					1	- .07	-.03	-.05	.06	.08	.10
5.CrPer	4.31	.61	.82					1	.46**	.43**	.23**	.17*	-.47**
6.PsyOpt	4.18	.71	.92						1	.14	.21**	.09	-.21**
7.PsyEff	4.37	.57	.92							1	-.03	.18*	-.27**
8.PsyRes	4.53	.49	.93								1	.06	-.12
9.PsyHo	4.46	.48	.90									1	-.06
10.Stress	1.51	.81	.94										1

*correlations are significant at the 0.05 level(2-tailed test)

**correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed test)

6.3 Hypotheses Test Results

To check our hypotheses, hierarchical regression analysis was carried out and the results are displayed in table 6.

More specifically we entered the stress, efficacy, hope, optimism, resilience, in the first step and then followed by the product term of stress and efficacy, stress and optimism, stress and resilience, stress and hope in step 2.The results are shown in table 5.

Table 5: Regression Results

Variables	Creative Performance			
	β	t	β	t
Step1				
Stress	-.30**	-5.17	-.20	-7.72
EF	.29**	5.05	.15	1.31
OP	.32**	5.61	.27*	2.17
RE	.13*	2.28	.04	.35
HO	.07	1.19	.10	.85
Step2				
ST*EF			.68**	4.70
ST*OP			.75**	4.75
ST*RE			.19	.86
ST*HO			.05	.31
F		51.63		26.47
R^2 at each step		.47		.65
ΔR^2				.38

Note: * P<.05, **P<.001 (2-tailed test)

Extracted from the regression results, stress has a significant and negative impact on employees' CP ($\beta=-.30$, $P<.001$) and thus hypothesis1 (H1) is supported. This suggests that the amount of stress experienced by employees in work-place, substantially decreases the level of these employees' CP.

Optimism has shown a significant positive effect on CP ($\beta= .32$, $P< .001$). Agreeing with our hypothesis, it is revealed that FEs with more optimism manifest a greater level of CP in the work environment.

Self-Efficacy like optimism, has a positive and significant effect on CP ($\beta= .29$, $P< .001$). This result is concurrent with what we expected in the proposed hypothesis namely that a higher level of employee Self-Efficacy leads to a higher level of CP.

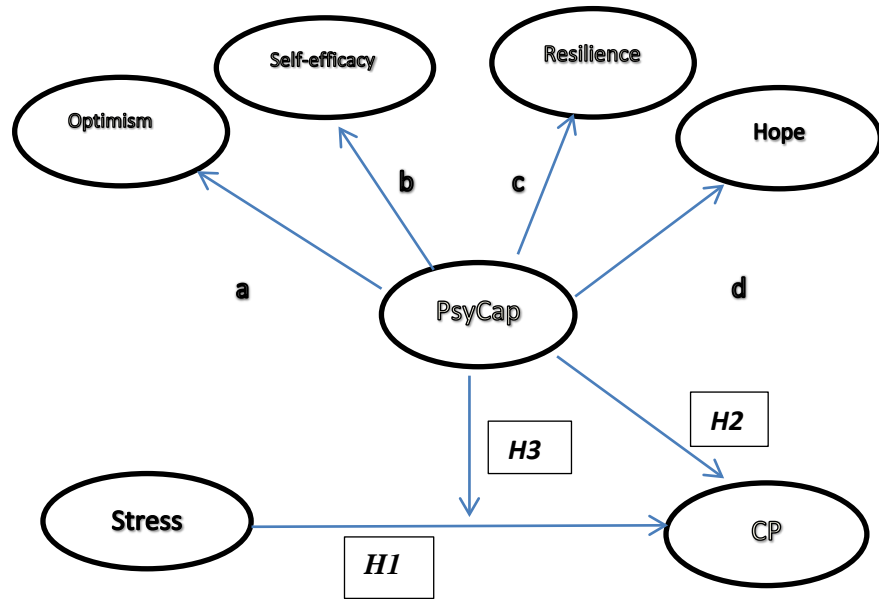
Resilience similarly has a positive effect on CP. Although, the significance level is not as big as the first two indicators ($\beta = .13$, $P < .05$), but the effect is strong enough to support our hypothesis and it means that FEs with higher level of resilience, are more likely to show creativity when encountering customers.

Hope as the fourth indicator has a positive but not significant effect on CP. ($\beta = .07$, n.s.). Therefore, respectively hypotheses H2a, H2b, H2c are supported while hypothesis H2d is not supported.

As predicted the interactive effect of stress and efficacy has a significant impact on CP ($\beta = .68$, $P < .001$). In a similar way, the interactive effect of stress and optimism also positively accounts for CP ($\beta = .75$, $P < .001$). Therefore, hypotheses H3a and H3b are supported. But the interactive effect of stress and resilience ($\beta = .19$, n.s.), and stress and hope ($\beta = .05$, n.s.) are not significant. Thus, H3c and H3d are not supported.

Table 6: Results for Hypotheses test (Regression Analysis)

Hypothesis	Effect	Beta	t value	R2	F	Status
H1	S→CP	-.30**	-5.17	.47	51.63	Supported
H2a	OP→CP	.32**	5.05			Supported
H2b	EF→CP	.29**	5.61			Supported
H2c	RE→CP	.13*	2.28			Supported
H2d	HO→CP	.07	1.19			Non-Supported
H3a	S*OP→CP	.75**	4.70	.65	26.47	Supported
H3b	S*EF→CP	.68**	4.75			Supported
H3c	S*RE→CP	.19	.86			Not Supported
H3d	S*HO→CP	.05	.31			Not Supported
<p><i>Note:</i> * P<.05, **P<.001 (2-tailed test). S is Stress, CP is Creative Performance, EF is Self-Efficacy, OP is Optimism, RE is Resilience, HO is Hope</p>						



H1:	$S \rightarrow CP$	-.30**	✓
H2a:	$OP \rightarrow CP$.32**	✓
H2b:	$EF \rightarrow CP$.29**	✓
H2c:	$RE \rightarrow CP$.13*	✓
H2d:	$HO \rightarrow CP$.07	✗
H3a:	$S * OP \rightarrow CP$.75**	✓
H3b:	$S * EF \rightarrow CP$.68**	✓
H3c:	$S * RE \rightarrow CP$.19	✗
H3d:	$S * HO \rightarrow CP$.05	✗

Note: * $P < .05$, ** $P < .001$ (2-tailed test). *S* is Stress, *CP* is Creative Performance, *EF* is Self-Efficacy, *OP* is Optimism, *RE* is Resilience, *HO* is Hope

Figure 2: Summary of Model Testing

Chapter 7

CONCLUSION

7.1 Discussion and Findings

The current study assessed the relationship between stress and creative performance (CP) as well as the effect of psychological capital (PsyCap) on CP among frontline employees (FEs). Furthermore, the possible moderator effect of PsyCap in the relationship between Stress and CP was examined as another contribution of this study. COR and JD-R theories were applied as a base for the proposed model. These theories emphasize the role of resources as a moderator in connection with risks or demands and the adverse outcomes. In fact in the COR and JD-R models it is expected to secure more positive outcomes by implementation of resource availability and accumulation.

Based on the health impairment process of JD-R theory, persistent job demands strain employees' resources, including mental and physical assets and if they are not compensated with external resources to interact with demands, it will result in negative outcomes such as low performance. Stress is an inseparable part of service delivery; particularly FEs experience an exhausting level of stress which leads to unfavorable outcomes and shortcomings in job performance. The result of this study evidenced the negative and significant effect of stress on creative performance, which is also compatible with related studies (i.e. Avey et al., 2012) which proposed stress as the source of negative outcomes particularly in cognitive performances like

creativity. Ambile et al.(2002) in his research reported the reduction of creativity performance of employees due to workload, interruptions and time pressure. Baer et al. (2006) showed that employees encountering time pressure or workload, just focus on task accomplishment in following standard procedures instead of creating new ideas or creative solutions.

According to spiral loss in COR theory, being exposed to loss situations and vulnerability brings more loss (Hobfoll, 1989). It is consistent with results of this study; stress and over-demanding tasks of frontline positions resulted in negative outcomes and lower CP. Struggling with stressful events and conditions alarms employees with the threat of loss so individuals tend to safeguard and secure their valuable resources, they also try to invest resources to prevent undesirable outcomes. They just resist in order combating stressful conditions and gradually deplete their energy resources on working hours, which results in not bringing new ideas to their tasks. In this situation the whole organization faces high existential risks (Dewe et al.,2012).

According to the results, employees with higher degree of PsyCap, exhibit a higher level of CP. Such results reveal the significance of psychological capital as an important personal resource among frontline employees in hotels. This is also in line with COR theory that the availability of personal capital will result in positive outcomes (Alarcon et al., 2013). Self-efficacy and resilience help FEs to be confident in their assignments and find alternatives in task accomplishment. When it is combined with optimism, their outlook towards future success is more pleasant exhibiting a higher level of possibility in attaining their goals. Sweetman et al. (2011)

reported positive effects of four components of PsyCap on CP. In a related work on hotel industry, Karatepe & Karadas(2015) suggested PsyCap as a booster of job engagement and higher job satisfaction.

With a higher level of optimism, confidence, resilience and hope, the employees have adequate resources to fulfill requirements of job development and they are more satisfied in their current task and organization (Karatepe & Karadas, 2015). FEs who are internally satisfied are more likely to engage in extra-role behaviours or accomplish their tasks in an innovative manner. Among four components of PsyCap, three indicators of optimism, efficacy and resilience exhibited a significant and positive effect on CP; however, hope had a positive but non-significant effect on CP.

Based on motivational process of JD-R theory, available resources can produce positive organizational behaviors such as high level of performance (Bakker and Demerouti (2007). Considering PsyCap components as personal resources, employees with a sufficient level of psychological capital have more opportunity to cope with stressful situations. Availability of individual capital interacting with demanding tasks may mitigate the stress level and insulate them in stressful conditions. Accordingly, all four indicators of PsyCap were negatively related to stress. Based on COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989), more resources lead to the production of other resources, which ultimately improves individuals' well-being and enhance coping mechanisms (Hobfoll, 2002).

Importantly, personal or psychological resources can buffer the negative effects of job demands such as workload and time-pressure on employees' performance. Conversely, resources have a motivational effect particularly when task demands are

high. In fact, the presence of psychological capital can provide adequate resources to combat against stress. Subsequently through this reduction, the employees' CP will be strengthened. Such employees interact more calmly and friendly with customers and colleagues, plus they can satisfy their managers better by accomplishing their tasks in a more creative way. Accordingly, this study examined the role of PsyCap as a moderator between Stress and CP. Optimism and efficacy evidenced a moderating effect between stress and CP, while resilience and hope did not manifested such a considerable significance.

The effects of optimism, efficacy, resilience and hope are explained respectively:

According to definition, optimists attribute positive events or elements to stable and internal factors and in reverse assign instable, external and limited reasons to negative facts. Also optimism is usually accompanied with motivation and good emotions. So individuals with a higher level of this important facet of PsyCap when dealing with tough and tense situations, are more likely to take it as a temporary issue and base their function and performance on their positive outlook towards their own capabilities and internal motivations. Internally they have enriched resources to use against unfavorable external circumstances and exhibit positive outcomes. Luthans et al. (2005), found similar evidences regarding the relationship between optimism and job performance among workers in Chinese factories.

Bandura (2012) showed that individuals regularly adjust their goals based on how they view and believe their capacities to accomplish a focused task. The positive effect of self-efficacy on CP can be explained if employees have sufficient personal resources and confidence to deal with challenging situations because they are less

likely to feel threatened by loss, plus more motivated to invest their internal capitals and competence to achieve top performance. It helps them to gain positive feedback from external environment and probably gain more resources. It is consonant with prior studies which indicate a significant positive link between self-efficacy and job performance.

The third facet of PsyCap, resilience also presented a significant and positive relationship with CP. Luthans et al. (2005) relatively illustrated the relationship between resilience and job performance among Chinese employees. Apparently employees with a higher level of resilience have a positive psychological capacity to rebound after conflict or failure to a positive change or progress.

In contrast to other components of psychological capital, in this study, hope exceptionally does not follow similar patterns in possessing a significant effect on employees' creative performance. Considering statistical results, hope does not considerably reduce stress amounts among FEs. Such results can be attributed to the nature of hope which is more dependent on circumstances and events rather than on fixed characteristic of individuals. It also can be attributed to this presumption that hope might considerably be impacted by work attitudes. For instance, Larson & Luthans (2006) in their research suggested that hope level of staff is highly related to their job satisfaction and what they get in return from their firm commitments; so a reciprocal relationship between probable satisfaction and hope may affect this.

7.2 Implications

The achieved results include theoretical and practical implications for academics, practitioners and specifically HR managers. Although creative performance is

globally recognized as an important key to competitive advantage, it is still essential that it be implemented by hospitality organizations.

First implication relates to the necessity of supervisors and managers' effort to decrease the level of stress in work environment. Stress and over-demanding tasks of frontline positions resulted in negative outcomes and lower CP. It is beneficial not only for successful service delivery and customer satisfaction but also has its implication in reducing organizations' usual expenses on covering employees' health problems because of stress and non-adaptive personality resources. Some problems such as conflicts, absenteeism and voluntary turnover could be diminished and result in a positive financial effect on the organization. Providing a supportive climate has a corresponding positive impact on diminishing stress which in turn leads to more satisfying outcomes. It also has a positive impact on retaining employees with higher levels of experience and performance. The employees who gain support, promotion and adequate resources in the work-place, are less likely to leave their organization. In this regard, appropriate training and providing facilities to employees to participate in sportive and recreational activities to release their stress is highly recommended.

Secondly, job-employee fit is an important standard when creating a competent and tailored staff. Direct supervisors of FEs are recommended to get involved in this part; with regards to their real-life job experiences, it helps them to recognize more suitable applicants for such positions. In fact it requires that employees be devoted and immersed efforts in their job as well as passionate for customer relations in order

to better handle their problems and satisfy them. Hinkin & Tracey(2010) emphasized the need for having senior employees' voice in the hiring process.

Thirdly, it is suggested that HR managers consider personality attributes of applicants including their psychological capital in hiring process. Due to the positive impact of PsyCap on FEs' CP, it may be used in the selection process particularly in service-job positions.

Considering the criticality of the issue, a fourth implication is also related to the hiring process. One approach in this regard suggested by Karatepe & Karadas (2015), is filling out online questionnaire by job applicants before job interview which determines their level of knowledge, ability and skills. They also recommend the use of short case studies to evaluate candidates encountering challenging situations. PsyCap questionnaire can be designed to examine their personal resource and internal motivations.

As Luthans et al.(2010) and Avey et al.(2008) claimed, psychological capital should be treated as a state-like characteristic which has potential to be developed. Research has revealed that efficacy (Bandura, 1997), resilience (Masten&Reed, 2002), hope (Snyder, 1994) and optimism (Seligman, 1998), all have the potential to be enhanced and developed through training. Luthans et al.(2008; 2010) have achieved similar results about PsyCap development. Therefore as a fifth implication; it is highly recommended that managers take some measures to develop employees' PsyCap due to psychological capital contribution on improving creative performance and reducing stress. Karatepe et al.(2014) claimed that some work practices such as

empowerment, training, rewards, promotions and job opportunities are effective measures.

The potential of PsyCap to be developed by training is another reason that managers should underline training programs in their strategic plans for meeting promised service quality. Therefore, a sixth implication is related to training plans which can be designed in a way that employees improve their personal resources such as self-efficacy and optimism; simultaneously they may learn how to be resilient and hopeful in dealing with probable real-life problems and display appropriate prompt reactions.

7.3 Conclusion

Task innovation and creativity are shown to be necessary and crucial elements in organizational performance, service quality and customer satisfaction. Stress is a considerable concern which is a commonly observed factor in the service industries and particularly in hospitality. Furthermore, Psychological Capital as a personal capital and positive psychological state has been related to employees' positive organizational behavior and creative performance.

This study underscores the destructive impact of stress on performance and particularly on creative performance. In fact internal and disposable resources of such employees are mostly used to resist and struggle with stressful conditions, in this way they lose their well-being interacting with such exhausting and tough situations and as a result they are less motivated to seek creativity and favorable performance as "loss brings loss".

In current conditions of work environment, managers and practitioners are encouraged to hire employees who rely more on their personal resources to cope with stress and pressure and still stay intrinsically motivated. PsyCap can provide employees with such personal resources to adjust and reduce their job stress as well as upgrade their creative performance. So one of the key roles for managers is selecting the most promising employees with a high service mind set who put their heart, mind, energy and efforts to go the extra mile for customers.

Xanthopoulou et al. (2009) focused on the reciprocal relationship of job and personal resources. They found that simultaneous availability of both resource types play a remarkable role in the enhancement of engagement and its positive outcomes while the lack of these resources leads to opposite consequences.

The unique specificity of this study compared to other studies with its focus on personality and trait dimensions, might provide a positive opening for PsyCap to be developed and managed. In general, positive personality traits and dimensions in most of the cases were recognized as unchangeable dimensions. Luthans et al.(2008) introduced PsyCap as a state-like rather than trait-like characteristic which has great potential to be a subject of HR development.

Aside from the above mentioned positive effects of psychological capital among FEs, they also have a positive impact on generating a better work environment and demonstrating good relations and sense of cooperation with other colleagues (Karatepe & Karadas, 2015). They are valuable members of organizations with high self-efficacious personalities and well-committed to their jobs. Remarkably, they are

able to draw from their psychological and personal resources to buffer scarcity of organizational resources. Avey & Luthans(2009) believed that in today's organizations, employers need to rely on the new generation and untapped resources which they can draw on to help them combat work-related stress and its consequent dysfunctions. A precise plan for staff selection and hiring a pool of staff high in PsyCap per se attracts valuable inimitable resources to the organization.

Human resource is recognized as a precious capital in all organizations and industries particularly in hospitality industry which handles an intense market. Sustainable competitive advantages and inimitable human capital play an important role in such an industry. Obviously hotels and related organizations in this industry should make more concerted efforts in hiring and retaining talented human resource. Frontline employees are direct representatives in hotels and contribute to a large extent to service quality and brand reputation of hotels.

7.4 Limitations and Further Research Recommendations

This study has some limitations and proposed a direction for future researches. First limitation is that data collected at one time and one country; the participants were FEs in hotels of north Cyprus. So, this study is cross-sectional research and it is recommended to perform this research as longitudinal study in other countries and over a period of time. Second limitation is that this study focuses on FEs of the hotels. It is suggested to add other sectors of hospitality industry (e.g. travel agencies and restaurants) and even other industries to the selected sample to prepare a more extensive image form the proposed model.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Thanks for your participation, answering these questions will take about 20 minutes.

All of the information will be secret. Please indicate your disagreement or agreement with each statement by crossing the number using the following five-point scale:

(1) I strongly disagree

(2) I disagree

(3) I am undecided

(4) I agree

(5) I strongly agree

	Psychological capital					
1	I feel confident in analyzing a long-term problem to find a solution	1	2	3	4	5
2	I feel confident contacting people outside the company (e.g., suppliers, customers) to discuss problems.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Although supervisor assigns me an extra job which I never had done it, I still believe in my ability that I can do it.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I am confident in my performance that I can work under pressure and challenging circumstances.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I feel confident that I can accomplish my work goals.	1	2	3	4	5
6	If organizations transform new working system which is difficult to understand, I am still confident that I can learn new things from this system.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I'm optimistic about what will happen to me in the future as it pertains to work.	1	2	3	4	5
8	At work, I always find that every problem has a solution.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I believe that all the problems occurring at work always have a bright side.	1	2	3	4	5
10	If I have to face with bad situation, I believe that everything will change to be better.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I believe that success in the current work will occur in the future.	1	2	3	4	5

12	I always stuck with the problem and found that the problem cannot do anything.	1	2	3	4	5
13	At the present time, I am energetically pursuing my work goals.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I have several ways to accomplish the work goal.	1	2	3	4	5
15	When I found that my performance appraisal was less than the expected goal, I am trying to find the ways to improve, and then start to do better.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Now, I feel that I am energetic to accomplish the work goal.	1	2	3	4	5
17	When I set goals and plan to work, I will be concentrated to achieve the goal.	1	2	3	4	5
18	I work as the goals set by the belief that “Where there is a will, there is a way”.	1	2	3	4	5
19	I usually manage difficulties one way or another at work.	1	2	3	4	5
20	I usually take stressful things at work in stride.	1	2	3	4	5
21	Although my work is failed, I will try to make it success again.	1	2	3	4	5
22	Although too much responsibility at work makes me feel awkward, I can go through to work successfully.	1	2	3	4	5
23	I am undiscouraged and ready to face with difficulties at work.	1	2	3	4	5
24	When I faced with disappointment at work, “I fell but I could quickly get through”.	1	2	3	4	5
	Stress					
25	I found it hard to wind down	1	2	3	4	5
26	I tended to over-react to situations	1	2	3	4	5
27	I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy	1	2	3	4	5
28	I found myself getting agitated	1	2	3	4	5
29	I found it difficult to relax	1	2	3	4	5
30	I was intolerant of anything that kept me from getting on with what I was doing	1	2	3	4	5
31	I felt that I was rather touchy	1	2	3	4	5
	creativity					
32	This employee carries out his/her routine tasks in ways that are resourceful	1	2	3	4	5
33	This employee comes up with new ideas for satisfying customer needs	1	2	3	4	5
34	This employee generates and evaluates multiple alternatives for novel customer problems	1	2	3	4	5

35	This employee has fresh perspectives on old problems	1	2	3	4	5
36	This employee improvises methods for solving a problem when an answer is not apparent	1	2	3	4	5
37	This employee generates creative ideas for service delivery	1	2	3	4	5

Demographic information:

Please indicate your answer in the appropriate alternative

1. How old are you?

18-27

28-37

38-47

48-57

2. What is your gender?

Male

Female

3. What is the highest level of education you completed?

High school

Vocational School

University Degree (4

degree)

Graduate Degree (Master or PHD)

4. How long have you been working in this hotel?

5 years and less

6-10 years

11-15 years

16-20 years