Feeling like a million miles away from home?:

Well-being at work of expatriates in the resources sector in Indonesia

Abstract

As the world of business becomes increasingly globalised, there is greater mobility of workers internationally. Prior research has found expatriates (and their families) experience work and cultural stressors when living and working in host countries, and the stressors may be greater when working in remote locations. This research explores perceptions of well-being of expatriates at work in the resources sector, including how social capital impacts on the well-being of expatriates. The research was undertaken in Indonesia and involved semi-structured in-depth interviews with 43 resources sector expatriates, 8 spouses, and 7 human resource managers who provided their perceptions of the well-being of expatriates at work. The findings highlight nine aspects of well-being at work for expatriates in the resources sector in Indonesia, including: social aspect, safety/security, benefits and disadvantages, work aspects, job and other attitudes, eudaimonic aspect, work-life balance, affect, and external influences. The findings particularly emphasise the importance of safety, work life balances, and external (organisational) influences. The research contributes to expatriate, well-being, and social capital literature by providing an understanding of well-being at work for expatriates working in non-standard (often remote) workplaces in the resources sector. While the research was undertaken in Indonesia and includes context-specific examples from this developing country, the conceptualisation of well-being at work has broader application for employees working in non-standard workplaces across many sectors and contexts.

Introduction

As organisations and countries become increasingly globalised, there is greater mobility of workers internationally. Prior research has found expatriates (and their families) experience work and cultural stressors when living and working in host countries and these stressors can be even greater when working in remote locations. Although there has been substantive research about expatriate culture shock, adjustment and failure, there is limited research about expatriate well-being at work and even less about well-being at work for expatriates in non-standard workplaces and remote locations. This paper addresses this gap in the literature by exploring perceptions of expatriates, spouses and HR managers of well-being at work, and the impact of social capital on the well-being at work of expatriates, in the resources sector. The

research was undertaken in Indonesia, an important location for examining this issue because, while large numbers of expatriates are attracted to the location for its rich natural resources and the country is dependent upon expatriate knowledge and expertise, both the country and the resources sector present challenges for expatriate health, safety, and well-being. Though the study was conducted in Indonesia, the conceptualisation of well-being at work has broader application for international human resource management (IHRM) scholars, practitioners and employees about working in non-standard workplaces across sectors and contexts. The research questions are:

RQ1: *How is social capital perceived as impacting on well-being at work of expatriates in the resources sector?*

RQ2: *What are the perceptions of well-being at work of expatriates in the resources sector?*

Though there is increasing diversity in global mobility (Collings, Sculion, and Morley, 2007; McNulty and Hutchings, 2016) expatriates remain strongly utilised by multinational corporations (MNCs) operating across international borders. Defined as individuals who are legally working out of their country of citizenship to pursue career aspiration/s (McNulty and Brewster, 2017), expatriates are also important for local organisations because they fill skill shortages and allow access to the skills and experiences of MNCs (Armstrong, Francis, and Grow, 2017). Although the recent Covid-19 pandemic may change the extent of, and way in which, organisations utilise international assignments (see Caligiuri et al., 2020), a recent study by Employment Conditions Abroad Ltd. found only one third of organisations have repatriated assignees due to the pandemic and organisations are planning for new assignments when travel restrictions are lifted (FEM, 2020). Thus, expatriate well-being at work is a continuing issue of importance for global organisations and employees.

The issue of work-related well-being has gained increasing impetus (Peccei, 2004; Tehrani, Humpage, Willmott, and Haslam, 2007; Warr, 2007). Because it plays a major role

in determining organisational performance and success (Baptiste, 2008; Zakaria, Abdulatiff, and Ali, 2014) ensuring employees achieve and maintain well-being at work is of critical importance for human resource management (HRM). Much research on work-related well-being has focused on Western employees in standard workplaces (Fisher, 2010; Torrissi, 2012; Warr, 2007). Well-being of expatriates (and their families) has received some attention in the Western context (e.g., Van der Zee, Ali, and Salomé, 2005) and East Asia (e.g., Aryee and Stone, 1996). It has been examined in the public sector (e.g., Waibel, Aevermann, and Rueger, 2018), entrepreneurship (Janker, Vesala, and Vesala, 2021), nursing (Jarden et al., 2021) and teaching (Aydogan et al., 2009). There has been limited attention given to work-related well-being of expatriates in other Asian developing countries, the resources sector (cf. Valk and Hanon, 2016) or non-profit organisations (cf. Silbiger and Pines, 2014).

The resources sector comprises energy (e.g., hydroelectric, solar); minerals (e.g. bauxite, gold, iron ore) including exploration and mining; oil and gas industries, and associated auxiliary services such as construction, infrastructure, and consulting. It is an important part of the economy in many developed countries but is also important in developing countries that benefit from foreign direct investment in the sector. The Indonesia Investment Coordinating Board (BKPM) highlighted key reasons to invest including Indonesia's abundant natural resources (BKPM, 2014). Yet, despite the importance of the sector, there have been limited studies of work-related well-being of resources sector employees.

Working in the resources sector offers substantial financial rewards (Konopaske and Werner, 2005) but it also has high turnover rates (Hutchings, De Cieri, and Shea, 2011). The sector poses significant physical and psychological demands on employees who are more likely than employees in other sectors to suffer from physical and mental health conditions especially workers in fly-in fly-out (FIFO) arrangements involving long days and stretches of work interspersed with long periods of leave. These factors impact on work-life balance (Martin,

2021; McLean, 2012; Richardson, McKenna, Dickie, and Kelliher, 2015; Vojnovic, Michelson, Jackson and Bahn, 2014). This research is important as challenges for well-being at work would be expected to be greater for expatriates in the resources sector in developing countries who also experience cultural and relocation stressors.

Asia has more than half of the total world population and Indonesia is the fourth most populated country in the world. McNulty and Rason (2015: 3) note that “Asia is the headquarters of more than 100 Forbes Global 2000 companies. The hub of Asian market activity demands a high level of emotional and cultural intelligence among employees based in Asia to ensure the various markets within the region’s reach are effectively managed. Emotional and cultural intelligence can be critical resources to help overcome in-versus out-group status, increase sociability, well-being, job involvement, and overall life and job satisfaction among those who live and work in the region”. Asia is a challenging posting for many expatriates (Malek and Budhwar, 2013). To overcome these challenges, expatriates may turn to their networks for social support (Despotovic, Hutchings, and McPhail, 2015) and for Indonesia, specifically, social capital is of focal importance (Suseno, 2020). This research is significant in examining how expatriates’ social capital, especially structural social capital comprising network ties, network configuration, and appropriate organisation (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998) impacts on their well-being at work.

The primary contribution of this research is to extend the expatriate literature by examining well-being at work of expatriates and how social capital impacts on well-being at work for expatriates in contexts not well examined, specifically, the resources sector, remote locations, and developing countries. Shaffer and Harrison (2001) found when expatriates take assignments in locations that could be perceived as risky or dangerous, they not only need to deal with a new job, but they also confront other challenges from the risky location, and this presents additional stressors. This research extends this focus from dangerous country contexts

to potentially dangerous *sectors* (i.e., the resources sector) and examines how the sector impacts on well-being at work.

Second, this research extends the literature on work-related well-being in standard workplaces to global workers in remote locations which may pose additional stressors. Liu, Sector and Shi (2007; cited in Faeth and Kittler, 2017) noted stress levels of expatriates increase when they work in locations with lower safety standards and Neilsen et al. (2019) highlighted safety concerns for workers who are away from an organisation's main location. It could be expected these changes in standards may be more significant for expatriates in remote locations with less supervision for safety compliance, which would then impact on well-being at work. Third, this research extends social capital literature by providing an understanding of the impact of social capital on well-being at work of expatriates through examination of the structural dimension of social capital. Fourth, Indonesia is important to study as it remains under-researched in management and HRM (cf. Bennington and Habir, 2003). As a developing country with rich natural resources including oil and gas and mining (BKPM, 2014), Indonesia has attracted significant amounts of foreign investment and expatriates (The Jakarta Post, 2013). Though expatriate numbers have reduced in recent years (Salna, 2018) and the Covid-19 Pandemic has affected global mobility of workers, the research contributes to HRM research in Asia.

The next section presents the literature review. The following section outlines social capital – structural dimension. The subsequent section presents the research methods. The following section presents the findings. The discussion is then presented. Finally, the paper presents the implications of the research, conclusions, and issues for future research.

Literature Review

Well-being at work

The terms *happiness* and subjective well-being (SWB) are used interchangeably (e.g., Diener, 2000). Happiness is a term people use to refer to a positive state of emotions as well as positive evaluations of their lives. Diener (2000: 4) noted happiness signifies a “good life”, and, given happiness may have different meanings (e.g., joy, satisfaction), scholars use the more scientific term called *subjective well-being*. Individuals with high subjective well-being levels are called “happy people” (Diener, 2000: 36). There are two main distinctions in examining subjective well-being, namely hedonic and eudaimonic views of happiness (Fisher, 2010). The hedonic aspect views subjective well-being as “favorable judgments” (Fisher, 2010: 385), while the eudaimonic aspect views subjective well-being as any actions resulting from the thought of what is seen as “virtuous, morally right, true to one’s self, meaningful, and/or growth producing” (Fisher, 2010: 385). Hedonic views of subjective well-being regard “a happiness set point” as being where people adapt to a certain level of happiness, they will always return to even following a major joyful event or following a major downturn event (Diener and Biswas-Diener, 2008). In contrast, eudaimonic views of subjective well-being emphasise the pursuit of an individual’s goals and self-growth as well as self-actualisation, irrespective of an individual’s feelings at any given time (Warr, 2007). Feeling good is associated with hedonic mechanism that is experienced when life is pleasant or when achieving a goal whilst functioning well. The eudaimonic mechanism is experienced when dealing with challenging tasks to achieve certain goals (Straume and Vittersø, 2012). However, although hedonic and eudaimonic dimensions are found to be conceptually and empirically distinguishable, there is significant evidence that eudaimonic behaviour leads to hedonic pleasure (Kashdan, Biswas-Diener, and King, 2008).

The concept of SWB extends to all aspects of life, including the workplace. SWB as pertaining just to the workplace is called well-being at work. However, researchers have used different terms when examining this concept. Warr (1987) referred to work-related well-being.

Peccei (2004) used the terms well-being at work and employee well-being at work. Guest (2017) and Grant et al. (2007) used the term employee well-being. Bakker and Oerlemans (2011) referred to SWB in organisations.

Well-being at work is one of five domains comprising overall well-being i.e., career/ well-being at work, social well-being, financial well-being, physical well-being, and community well-being (Rath and Harter, 2010). Well-being at work is considered one of the most important parts of an individual's life since work is essential to an individual's identity (Scott, 2008). Guest (2017: 27) argued "in considering psychological well-being, a distinction is often made between hedonic and eudemonic well-being. The former is typically represented by job satisfaction, whereas the latter is more concerned with fulfilment of potential and finding meaning and purpose in work". Psychological well-being is directly referred to by Grant, Christianson, and Price (2007) and Guest (2017) but other researchers refer to issues which can be categorised as psychological.

Although well-being at work is not a one-dimensional concept, debate regarding dimensions of well-being at work remain. Guest (2017: 26) stated "our concern is with work-related well-being which Grant et al. (2007: 52), drawing on work of Warr (1987), define as 'the overall quality of an employee's experience and functioning at work'. Warr (1987) identified antecedents of work-related well-being, namely: opportunity for control; opportunity for skill use; variety at work; opportunity for interpersonal contact; externally generated goals; environmental clarity; availability of money; physical security; and a valued social position.

Peccei (2004) determined well-being at work as consisting of positive and negative affect, job stress, and job satisfaction; while Grant et al. (2007), later supported by Guest (2017), stated employee well-being comprised psychological, physical, and social well-being. Bakker and Oerlemans (2011) argued SWB in organisations has both a positive component (work engagement and happiness) and a negative component (workaholism and burnout).

Fisher (2014) argued well-being at work is multidimensional and consists of positive affect, negative affect, job satisfaction and similar attitudes, social well-being, and eudaimonic well-being. Abbey (2015) conceptualised well-being at work as consisting of three domains: self domain, relationships domain, and principles domain.

Figure 1 illustrates key conceptualisations of work-related well-being in extant literature.

Figure 1: Conceptualisations of work-related well-being

In workplaces well-being plays a major role in determining work outcomes. Researchers consider job satisfaction to be strongly related (Wright and Doherty, 1998) to broader well-being and well-being at work (Jarden et al., 2021). Carvalho and Chambel (2015) found work-family balance and well-being at work served as the serial mediators of the relationship between an individual's perceived high performance work practices and their SWB. Flexible working arrangements assist employees in balancing personal life and work demands positively contribute to well-being at work (Kalliath, Kalliath, and Kossek, 2012). Being happy, an indication of high well-being at work levels, has been shown to improve performance, while unhappy employees display poor productivity and more negative traits (Taris and Schreurs, 2009; Cropanzano and Wright, 2001). Unhappiness and poor work outcomes have also been found among expatriate employees (Selmer and Luring, 2014); thus, understanding well-being at work of employees is important for employees and organisations, including those operating in culturally-distinct contexts.

Well-being at work in the resources sector

Working in the resources sector may provide substantial financial rewards and increased opportunities for employees (Lovell and Critchley, 2010; Sharma and Rees, 2007) but also significant psychological and emotional strains (Martin, 2020; Vojnovic et al., 2014). Working in the resources sector often requires living in a remote or rural location. Challenges confronted by workers in the resources sector include a FIFO roster system, harsh climate, isolation from family and friends (McLean, 2012), and limited access to health and welfare support services (Neil, 1988). Researchers have identified poor mental health and well-being levels associated with working in the sector (McLean, 2012; Sharma and Rees, 2007), as well as lower levels of work-life balance (Carrington and McIntosh, 2013). FIFO arrangements, defined as “all employment in which the work is so isolated from the workers’ homes that food and

accommodation are provided for them at the work site, and rosters are established whereby employees spend a fixed number of days at the site, followed by a fixed number of days at home” (Storey and Shrimpton, 1989: 2), negatively influence employee well-being (Henry, Hamilton, Watson, and Macdonald, 2013) and have negative impacts on family well-being (Kaczmarek and Sibbel, 2008). Considering shortages of skilled labour in the resources sector (Hutchings et al., 2011), recruitment of expatriate workers plays a key role..

Expatriate challenges

Increasingly global mobility of employees involves expatriate assignments in hostile and/or dangerous environments (e.g., Dickmann and Watson, 2017; Faeth and Kittler, 2017) that may threaten expatriates’ safety and contribute to stress and strain. Even where there may not be direct safety risks to expatriates, researchers have noted expatriate stressors-strains (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005) with moving internationally involving cultural challenges including learning a new language, adjusting to different cultural norms, and developing a new social network (Selmer, 2001; Moeller and Maley, 2018). The stress expatriates experience may cause them to have burnout (e.g. Hechanova, Beehr, and Christiansen, 2003); significantly influencing their performance and intention to leave their job (Silbiger and Pines, 2014). Therefore, high cultural intelligence (CQ), defined by Earley and Ang (2003) as an individual’s ability to function effectively in the face of cultural diversity, is needed to ensure successful expatriate adjustment (Malek and Budhwar, 2013) and performance (Lee and Sukoco, 2010).

Research has examined how homesickness can impact on expatriate well-being and performance. It has been suggested that stress frequently results as a predictable reaction to issues such as insecurity, distress, and homesickness (Lei, Liang, and Kreiger, 2004). A study found cultural intelligence and psychological hardiness were very positively related to (lack of) homesickness for students studying abroad (Harrison and Bower, 2011). A systematic

review of homesickness (Stroebe, Schut, and Nauta, 2015) found homesickness is common to relocation and is related to adjustment difficulties and health problems including clinical disorders. Suggesting that, whilst adjustment of expatriates had been well examined, there had been limited research on expatriates' homesickness, a recent study focused specifically on expatriates from developing countries who were working in advanced/developed countries (Hack-Polay and Mahmoud, 2020). This research found homesickness has significant negative personal and organisational ramifications when there are no systematic HRM interventions (e.g. expatriate preparation, in-assignment support) and uncoordinated untested individual strategies could, in some cases, be detrimental to individual performance with medicalisation worsening the homesickness. Homesickness can decrease performance and organisational commitment and impact on the individual's well-being (Hack-Polay and Mahmoud, 2020). Moreover, culture shock and expatriate adjustment challenges also affect expatriates' partners and families (van Erp, Giebels, van der Zee, and van Duijn, 2011). Homesickness and cultural challenges are likely to be exacerbated when expatriates work in remote locations which can pose greater cultural differences than urban locations.

Expatriates in Indonesia and well-being at work

While there has been limited research undertaken specifically about expatriates in Indonesia, extant research does provide important insights into how expatriates perceived their experiences. Dean (2001) suggested successful expatriates are individuals who, while interacting with Indonesians, understand differences. These differences include being respectful to local culture, such as acknowledging Javanese business values stressing respect, understanding, and trust as key determinants in guiding business operations (Pruetipibultham, 2012). In Indonesia, accompanying spouses (the majority of whom are female) are restricted from working as it requires a Foreign Manpower Utilisation Plan (RPTKA) and work permit

(IMTA). These are issued by the Ministry of Manpower, and a limited stay permit (ITAS) or permanent stay permit (ITAP) must be sponsored by the company where the foreigner is working or by an Indonesian citizen spouse (PNB Immigration Law Firm, 2018). Fechter (2008) argued expatriate wives play a major role in establishing the link between an expatriate employee and expatriate community, and thus may contribute to the well-being of expatriates.

Though remote locations in the resources sector in developing countries pose health and safety risks for workers, expatriates form an important part of the workforce in this sector in Indonesia. The resources sector in Indonesia does not have the same length of operations as some other countries and, as such, local Indonesians (especially in remote locations where much of the mining and oil drilling occurs) may not always have the skills to work with the required technologies such as heavy machinery and, thus, the country is very reliant on expatriates for expertise. For instance, (Western) Australia's expertise in safety and mining software, artificial intelligence and robotics aligns to opportunities in Indonesia (Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science, and Innovation Government of Western Australia, 2020). It has been noted that "Companies running mining operations in Africa or Indonesia for example find it hard to locally source the types of skills and training required to run these operations. This creates a demand for FIFO mining professionals from more advanced mining countries like Australia. Many of these professionals choose FIFO over relocating their families for various reasons – security, political instability, education, living standards etc" (Tyson, 2018). Thus, given the mobility of international staff in both the country (Indonesia) and the sector, and the dangers associated with working in the sector and in remote locations particularly, it is important to understand well-being at work for these expatriates.

Theory

Social capital theory – structural dimension

Nahapiet and Ghoshal's (1998) framework of social capital theory, which focuses on resources embedded in the network of relationships possessed by an individual or social unit, is employed in this study. The research focuses on structural social capital (networks) because in a non-Western country like Indonesia (cf. Suseno, 2018), which is highly collectivist in nature, social capital is of focal importance, particularly with regards to social networks.

The structural dimension comprises network ties, network configuration, and appropriate organisation (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). Network ties allow the individual to gain access to resources and information benefits, or, as Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) argue, who one knows influences what one knows. McPhail et al. (2016) argued network configuration refers to the structures networks form, while appropriate organisation denotes ability to transfer social capital comprising norms, trust, and ties from one circumstance to the other. The structural dimension also represents network centrality (Kang, Kim, and Bock, 2010), number of social interactions (Wu, Hsu, and Yeh, 2007), frequent, face-to-face interactions, open and direct communication (Higginson, 2010), number of relations an individual maintains (McFayden and Cannella, 2004), and direct channels for interaction (Wiklesmann, Wilkesmann, and Virgillito, 2009).

In respect to relevance of this aspect of social capital theory in Asia, Horak and Yang (2016) examined the influence of social networks on expatriate effectiveness in South Korea and found that expatriates' inability to become a part of social networks contributes to their ineffectiveness, particularly represented by poor performance and adjustment issues. Community groups or expatriate networks (Despotovic et al., 2015) as well as social interaction (Caligiuri and Lazarova, 2002) and social ties (Johnson, Kristof-brown, and Klein, 2003) serve as a source of social support for expatriates and may aid adjustment and performance.

For expatriates in Indonesia specifically, the structural dimension of social capital may be represented through the expatriate community networks and forums as well as the frequency and number of social interactions an expatriate has with other expatriates and with local people. Being a member of an organisation and/or a professional body may provide expatriates with a sense of security and a feeling of being at home by connecting them with other expatriates. Examples of structural capital are the use of online forums connecting expatriates who live in Indonesia through gathering relevant information pertaining to living in Indonesia (<http://www.expatriate.or.id/>) and the business association that connects Australian and Indonesian professionals (Indonesia-Australia Business Council).

Other examples involve frequent, face-to-face interaction between an expatriate with locals in the workplace as well as open and direct communication between an expatriate and their local work colleague. This contact also involves contact between headquarters and a subsidiary (including expatriate employees) that aims to ensure head office-subsidiary consistency with regards to strategy, managerial practices, and operational policies (Shay and Baack, as cited in Massingham, 2010). Building networks and having a good number of social networks are vital for expatriates to be eligible to fulfil high level positions (Selmer, Luring, Zhang and Jonasson, 2016).

Thus, the structural dimension of social capital may be represented through the expatriate community networks and forums as well as the frequency and number of social interactions an expatriate has with other expatriates and with local people. The social experience is a vital element of living and working in Asia (Freeman and Rizvi, 2014). In sum, social capital may be expected to play a major role in contributing to expatriate well-being at work and thus requires further investigation.

Methods

An exploratory qualitative method was employed for this research utilising semi-structured, in-depth interviews with expatriates, spouses, and HR managers. Qualitative, interpretivist researchers emphasise the way individuals view an event and how they attribute meaning to that event and build understanding based on those views (Hammersley, 2001; Rubin and Rubin, 2005). Thus, the interpretivist perspective was deemed best suited to the current research as it allows for establishing meaning from individuals' experiences (Ryan, 2011). Moreover, qualitative studies also offer detailed descriptions of critical issues in the field of expatriate management (Nathan and Alcazar, 2020).

Interview questions

The interview questions were broadly developed from issues identified in well-being at work literature and structural social capital literature (social networks, ties, contacts/interactions). Deliberately, there were only a small number of open-ended questions to allow the participants to provide their own understanding and conceptualisation of well-being at work. The interview questions for expatriates and HR managers included three sections: 1) demographic questions, 2) questions about work experiences, and 3) questions about their understanding of well-being at work. The questions for spouses also included three sections: 1) demographic questions, 2) international experiences, and 3) understanding of expatriates' well-being at work.

Data collection

Data was collected in 2016-2017. Though the number of expatriates in Indonesia had slowed by this time due to a downturn in the resources sector, this was well before the Covid-19 Pandemic which has dramatically impacted the global movement of labour (see Caliguiri et al., 2020). Data collection used both purposive, convenience and snowball sampling

types/approaches. The research commenced with a purposive (selected) sampling approach with the lead researcher using professional network contacts to gain access to the Director of Potentia HR in Indonesia to provide contact with potential organisations including both MNCs and local organisations in the resources sector, as well as auxiliary industries, in Indonesia. The researcher approached the HR managers of the organisations directly and asked them to participate in the study. Upon completion of the interviews, the HR managers of the selected organisations were then asked to provide access to their middle-senior level expatriate employees. The researcher then contacted the expatriate employees directly to invite them to participate in the study. The expatriates then had the option to provide the researcher with access to their spouse. Given the limited sample gained from Potentia HR, the lead researcher's own personal and professional networks were also used to increase the sample size of HR managers and expatriates (and referral to spouses). Also, to increase the sample size, convenience sampling was used in the form of social media posts to contact HR managers, expatriates, and spouses. Though these approaches did increase the sample size, snowball sampling (i.e., asking the existing study participants to suggest future participants from among their acquaintances) was also used across all interviewee groups.

Data was collected through the following channels: a) a sample gained from Potentia HR; b) personal and professional networks; c) social media platforms and discussion forums such as LinkedIn and InterNations; (d) professional expatriate/expatriate spouse groups, such as the Djakarta Mining Club (DMC) and the Australia New Zealand Association (ANZA); e) participating in events organised by international business organisations (e.g., Indonesia-Australia Business Council and Australia-Indonesia Business Council); (f) attending expatriate events such as a gathering party; (g) using assistance from a professional business association as well as from 'gatekeepers', such as Trade Investment Queensland (TIQ); and (h) snowballing from earlier participants.

Sample

Interviews were conducted with a total of 58 participants across three groups (43 expatriates, 8 expatriate spouses, and 7 HR managers). Table 1 includes demographic interviewee data. The interviews ranged from 30 minutes to 2 hours in duration. All interviews were conducted in English, apart from the HR manager group in which some Bahasa (Indonesian language) was also used. These interviews were translated into English and back translated (see Brislin, 1970) into Bahasa Indonesia. The research was conducted in accordance with ethical requirements of the participating university.

Table 1: Participant demographic information

No	Group	Nationality	Position	Gender	Age group	Relationship status	Years resource sector	Years Indonesia	Accompanying Spouse/family	Previous international expat experience
1	Expat	Aus	General operation manager	M	≥ 56	Single	43	26	N/A	Yes
2	Expat	Aus	Director	M	46–55	Married	26,5	11,5	Yes	Yes
3	Expat	Eng	President director	M	46–55	Married	24	24	Yes	No
4	Expat	Aus	Consultant	M	36–45	Married	3	4	Yes	Yes
5	Expat	German	Associate director	M	26–35	Married	7	0,4	Yes	Yes
6	Expat	Aus	CEO/ director	M	46–55	Married	20	2,5	Yes	Yes
7	Expat	Aus	Project manager	M	46–55	Married	30	2,5	Yes	No
8	Expat	Aus	President director	M	≥ 56	Married	16	30	Yes	Yes
9	Expat	Aus	President director	M	≥ 56	Married	8	3	Yes	Yes
10	Expat	Aus	Director	M	36–45	Married	15	6	Yes	Yes
11	Expat	Aus	Principal mining engineer	M	46–55	Married	30	11	Yes	Yes
12	Expat	Indian	CFO	M	36–45	Married	10	15	Yes	Yes
13	Expat	Eng	Director	M	46–55	Single	16	4,5	N/A	No
14	Expat	Aus	Director	M	≥ 56	Married	40	26	Yes	Yes
15	Expat	Aus	Tech service manager	M	26–35	Married	10	4	Yes	Yes
16	Expat	Aus	Director/ CDO	M	36–45	Married	25	18	Yes	No
17	Expat	Eng	Director/ CFO	M	46–55	Married	12	19	Yes	No
18	Expat	US	COO	M	36–45	Single	15	18	N/A	Yes
19	Expat	Aus	Commissioner	M	36–45	Married	16	12	Yes	No

20	Expat	Indian	President director	M	46–55	Married	8	25	Yes	No
21	Expat	Aus	Project manager	M	≥ 56	Married	35	26	Yes	Yes
22	Expat	Eng	Director	M	≥ 56	Married	34	26	Yes	Yes
23	Expat	Aus	Principal consultant	M	≥ 56	Married	7	4	No	Yes
24	Expat	Aus	Engineer	M	≥ 56	Married	20	4,5	No	Yes
25	Expat	Russian	Quality control	M	26–35	Single	7	7	N/A	No
26	Expat	South African	General Manager	M	46–55	Married	31	17	Yes	Yes
27	Expat	Aus	President Director	M	46–55	Married	35	20	Yes	Yes
28	Expat	Scottish	Director	M	46–55	Married	24	18	Yes	Yes
29	Expat	Aus	Consultant	M	≥ 56	Married	44	33	Yes	No
30	Expat	Canadian	President Director	M	≥ 56	Married	30	13,5	Yes	Yes
31	Expat	Aus	Consultant	M	46–55	Married	28	22	Yes	No
32	Expat	Aus	Geotechnical Group Manager	M	≥ 56	Separated	30	18	N/A	No
33	Expat	Aus	Blasting Advisor	M	26–35	Married	7	1	No	No
34	Expat	Indian	Director	M	36–45	Single	15	4	N/A	Yes
35	Expat	Indian	Country service manager	M	46–55	Married	25	0,5	No	No
36	Expat	Aus	Technical director	M	≥ 56	Married	11	11	Yes	No
37	Expat	Aus	President director	M	46–55	Married	27	11,5	Yes	Yes
38	Expat	Aus	Senior HR Advisor	F	46–55	Married	15	18	Yes	No
39	Expat	Aus	Technical Advisor	M	≥ 56	Married	20	20	Yes	Yes
40	Expat	Aus	Country Manager	M	≥ 56	Married	38	5	Yes	Yes

41	Expat	Aus	Managing Director	M	36–45	Married	20	3,5	Yes	Yes
42	Expat	US	Advisor	M	46–55	Married	18	1,5	Yes	Yes
43	Expat	Eng	CEO/MD	M	46–55	Married	33	4	No	Yes
44	HR expat #26	Indo	HR/GA manager	M	46–55	Married	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
45	HR expat #10	Indo	HR manager	M	46–55	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
46	HR expat #9	Indo	GM HR	M	≥ 56	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
47	HR expat #20	Indo	HR manager	M	46–55	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
48	HR expat #19	Indo	HR manager	F	36–45	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
49	HR Expat #33	Indo	HR manager	M	46–55	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
50	HR expat #32	Indo	HR consultant	F	26–35	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
51	Spouse expat #28	Indo	N/A	F	46–55	Married	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
52	Spouse expat #7	Aus	N/A	F	46–55	Married	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
53	Spouse expat #2	Aus	N/A	F	46–55	Married	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
54	Spouse expat #4	US	N/A	F	36–45	Married	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
55	Spouse expat #6	Jap	N/A	F	46–55	Married	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
56	Spouse expat #15	Aus	N/A	F	26–35	Married	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
57	Spouse expat #11	Indo	N/A	F	46–55	Married	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
58	Spouse expat #31	Indo	N/A	F	46–55	Married	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Note: # refers to the expatriate associated with that HR manager or spouse.

Data analysis

The data were analysed with NVivo 11. Thematic analysis of the data was employed (i.e., individuals' perceptions of work-related well-being of expatriates) and the coded categories were directly determined by the text data (see Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). Thematic analysis is commonly described as "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 79) and it is generally seen as an independent qualitative descriptive approach (Vaismoradi, Turunen, and Bondas, 2013). The data analysis process in this study involved identifying patterns and recurring issues within the data and examining, relating, and grouping them into themes. In coding the data, this research used first-order concepts and second-order categories that lead to emerging themes.

There were two first order concepts: well-being at work (in general) and well-being at work in Indonesia (specifically). There were 16 second order categories under well-being at work: challenges, company growth, eudaimonic aspect, financial benefits, job performance, job satisfaction, negative affect, organisational factors, passion and engagement, personal growth, physical elements, positive affect, security, team/employee growth, work atmosphere, work-life balance. Well-being at work in Indonesia contained 17 second order categories: attitudes and perceptions, financial and non-financial benefits, country and economic growth, culture, geographical proximity, government regulations, internal satisfaction/eudaimonic, lifestyle, nature of the work or job role, organisation and its elements, people, personal growth, physical elements, safety/security, technical issue, trailing family (family in general), work style. The coding also included identifying aspects of the social capital structural dimension.

The lead researcher led the process of coding the data into categories and discussed areas where there were challenges in coding with the two other researchers. For instance, there were areas in which a quote could have been coded into two categories and a decision needed to be made about which was the most suitable category. When this occurred, the team examined

the quotes and through an iterative process came to a final decision. For instance, the following quote “... *the logistics are moving around this country ... the psychology, the size of Indonesia and the number of people ... that’s very hard to get a grip on ... and the fact that we are broken into all these regencies, the tiers of society ... that’s very difficult to deal with*” (Expatriate-Oil and Gas-02), may have been coded into either 1) security/safety or 2) benefits and disadvantages. The final decision was to code this quote as security/safety because of the challenges presented to an expatriate who was not familiar with how to move around, and they could have become lost or faced other obstacles when away from more familiar areas of the country.

Findings

In exploring the research question (RQ1): How is social capital perceived as impacting on well-being at work of expatriate in the resources sector?, this study found structural social capital (social networks and contacts with headquarters) significantly impacted on well-being at work of expatriates. Further, in exploring the research question (RQ2): What are the perceptions of expatriates, spouses and HR managers about well-being at work of expatriates in the resources sector?, this study found nine aspects/themes associated with well-being at work.

Individual comments are included in reporting the findings. To ensure anonymity, each participant was assigned an individual code. For instance, Expatriate-Oil and Gas-01 refers to the first Oil and Gas Expatriate interviewed.

Structural social capital and expatriate well-being at work

Most expatriates (n = 39) and all spouses (n = 8) said social networks impacted on expatriate well-being at work in Indonesia, while only a small number of expatriates (n = 4) and none of the spouses (n = 0) thought social networks did not have a significant impact on expatriate

well-being at work. HR managers had mixed views; the majority indicated significance of social networks (n = 5) while others (n = 2) did not think this was important. The main reasons mentioned about value of social networks were: (a) act as a buffer between work and social life; (b) provide support with work tasks; (c) help develop business; and (d) provide a sense of belonging/save them from isolation. First, social networks shield expatriates from work stress and provide expatriates with an avenue to share ideas and experiences. For example, as noted by an expatriate, “... if you got a good social network, it just makes life a bit easier ... you got people to bounce idea off, you got people to share experiences with” (Expatriate-Mining-02). Expatriates tend to have separate professional and social groups: “They both do (impact on my work well-being) ... one creates a filter ... separates me from work” (Expatriate-Mining-07). Similarly, Expatriate-Mining-07’s spouse also confirmed social networks improves her partner’s well-being at work, “He gets to talk to other men about things that he might be worried about or confused about ... [to] share [ideas], brainstorm” (Spouse-Mining-07).

Social networks provide a source of support for expatriates in completing their job or dealing with challenging tasks. For instance, as mentioned by an expatriate, “If I need information, or advice about something ... I can call these networks, or contacts, or friends ... they give me advice ... help me doing my job” (Expatriate-Mining-04). Social networks also help expatriates in developing business and securing a job. This eventually contributes to expatriate success and well-being at work. However, there is a significant difference in dealing with Indonesians and expatriates. As pointed out by an expatriate “... you have a good set of personal relationship with them as well as business relationship ... if I went to see Indonesian clients, I would talk to them about personal things and then they are ready to get around to talking about business ... with expatriates they were more wanting to talk about business and possibly talk about family things afterwards” (Expatriate-Auxiliary-06).

A small number of expatriates (n = 4) and a couple of HR managers (n = 2) thought social networks do not impact on expatriate well-being at work. This is particularly evident for expatriates living and working in a remote site due to the limited social life. As an expatriate mentioned:

“... everybody knows that you’re there to work as opposed to say, if I was living at home in Australia and I had a job nearby, when I am home I know that I am at home but because I am living abroad I know that I am abroad to work. So in my situation, you are always in company housing, eating in a company restaurant with a company car, working and even socialising with the people you work.....it has a bit of a different mood than if you’re doing the same thing in your home town” (Expatriate-Mining-33).

How social networks impact on expatriate well-being at work may also be ambiguous. This was pointed out by an expatriate participant:

“I mean social as opposed to what? If I was just purely in work mode where I would just give instructions all the time and we just purely talk about work I can still get by with that ...whether it’s like in a network point of view (where) some of these guys that have worked in my previous company, whether we’re just chatting about what the other guys are up to ... I’m happy not to have a huge amount of networks. I can get by without it right?” (Expatriate-Mining-19).

In respect to impact of contact with headquarters to expatriate well-being at work, there were mixed findings. An expatriate commented:

“... puts me in the negative area ... we used to be a lot more autonomous ... whereas now it is a lot more autocratic ... so all of the decisions are centralised through (global head offices) so we’re more of a function of... become more of a function of preparing recommendations and reports and everything rather than doing thing”. (Expatriate-Mining-10).

Also, Expatriate-Mining-10’s HR manager confirmed this, adding:

“In the past is that the expatriates felt more comfortable ... they had better work wellbeing because they were able to gather more information ... from global office... now the information is only locally ... the communication channel with the global executives was better in the past ... the opportunity gets lesser ... they take more precautions and be more careful of passing statements or providing approvals unlike in the past so now people feel different” (HR-Mining-01).

On the contrary, some expatriates believed having close contact with all offices is important to survival of the business, hence, it is critical to expatriate well-being at work. An expatriate said: *“There’s gonna be a feeling of being left alone or they feel that they’re not important to the company ... it generates jealousies ... they are the bread and butter of the business” (Expatriate-Mining-03).* Despite its importance of having close contacts with headquarters and other offices to success of the business, there are some issues in maintaining regular contacts. An expatriate said: *“We are spread across the world ... social distance thing becomes really challenging because of the time gap, the time zone differences ... the distance” (Expatriate-Mining-09).*

Generally, social networks and regular contacts with headquarters impacted on expatriate well-being at work, as stated by most expatriates ($n = 39$) and the majority of HR managers ($n = 5$) and all spouses ($n=8$). This shows expatriates, HR managers, and spouses perceived structural social capital as having significant impact on expatriate well-being at work.

Perceptions of expatriate well-being at work in the resources sector in Indonesia

1. Social aspect

The social aspect was mentioned by most participants ($N = 37$, including 32 expats, 2 spouses, and 3 HR managers), and the most cited aspect was Indonesian culture ($n = 23$, including 21

expats, 1 spouse, and 1 HR manager) followed by people ($n = 20$, including 17 expats, 1 spouse, and 2 HR managers). Indonesian culture places importance on family and communal values and this strongly positively influences well-being at work of expatriates. It was suggested those who achieve *“a lot more sense of family and community....culture in their team are more successful than others”* (Expatriate-Mining-10). An HR manager also described Indonesians as *“helpful, welcoming to expats, and also friendly...”* (HR-Mining-01). Most participants reported a positive experience working with Indonesians, while others noted challenges working with Indonesians. The most frequently mentioned positive quality of Indonesian people was their friendliness and strong emphasis on family values. An expatriate explained Indonesians’ social nature: *“People are more like family, more of like a unit ... people seem to work better together ... people have relationships. They are going together as a group”* (Expatriate-Mining-05). However, there is also a flip side in that Indonesians can be overly accepting and resistant in taking responsibility, as suggested by an expatriate: *“The culture of just obeying expat is really dangerous and leaves people with lower quality of work ... people refuse to take responsibility for actions or decisions”* (Expatriate-Mining-06). Some expatriates also struggled with language issues. A spouse participant explained: *“the only thing he struggles with is the language but besides that everything is very positive”* (Spouse-Mining-07).

2. Safety/security

Working in Indonesia brought concerns about security and safety that negatively affected well-being at work. This was mentioned by many participants ($N = 23$, including 20 expats, 2 spouses, and 1 HR manager) with the most cited issue being physical, psychological, and financial security ($n = 10$, including 9 expats and 1 HR manager). Financial security resulting from the downturn in the resources sector causes organisational financial debts and lower

revenue, which in turn, also creates psychological insecurity among resources sector expatriates in Indonesia. Also, working in the resources sector involves exposure to physical threats (e.g., toxic materials, dust, explosion, heavy equipment) and even psychological threats (e.g., isolation, alienation, work stress), particularly given remoteness of Indonesian islands. An expatriate suggested:

“... I am relatively safe...here is always in this type of profession an element of risk ... when you are in the field... you are isolated ... and if anything happens, you’ve got to get out ... so there is that physical element, particularly say in Sumatra, when you are out in the field and there might be tigers in the area, or elephants... mentally fit as well. I have been at camps, remote camps where one or two of the other people could not...they went chopper, they went a little bit crazy, running around with a knife...” (Expatriate-Mining-29).

The other key issue related to this theme is Indonesia’s economy. As a country rich in natural resources, Indonesia is considered a good posting for resources sector expatriates:

“... if you want to be close to the action and coal industry on coal field that was growing, a lot of opportunities and growth of business, Indonesia is probably one of the best places to be and has been that way for the last twenty years” (Expatriate-Mining-28).

However, as the biggest archipelagic country, Indonesia’s geographical and physical infrastructure can pose challenges for expatriates in terms of logistics, distribution, and even socially, as noted:

“... the logistics are moving around this country ... the psychology, the size of Indonesia and the number of people ... that’s very hard to get a grip on ... and the fact that we are broken into all these regencies, the tiers of society ... that’s very difficult to deal with” (Expatriate-Oil and Gas-02).

Participants also mentioned physical elements and health issues in working in Indonesia. Indonesia is a tropical country with a warm temperature and the islands are polluted by industrial waste, creating health concerns for expatriates and their spouses.

3. Benefits and disadvantages

Many participants believed expatriates benefit from undertaking an international assignment ($N = 19$, including 16 expats and 3 HR managers). The most cited benefit was financial benefits and non-financial benefits ($n = 17$, including 14 expats and 3 HR managers). Financial benefits include a good package and privileges such as special treatment and luxury facilities. An expatriate stated:

“... we are rather treated better than everyone else. We have privilege. We have benefit of better packages... you get cars and driver, housing allowances for where you live... school fees paid for your children” (Expatriate-Mining-22).

An expatriate spouse also highlighted the benefits of schooling for their children:

“...(first child) goes to JIS... an awesome school... it has been amazing for her, the school is incredible. It has incredible opportunities, it has very holistic approach, very artistic... a lot of sports... incredible teachers... a lot of choices for kids, so it has been great and the (second child) has been at the NIS... that has also been good for him... we have an awesome teacher there and so that school has also been great” (Spouse-Mining-04).

Financial benefits play a major role in determining expatriates' decisions to undertake international assignments, as suggested by an HR manager:

“... if they can't find a job in the next (placement) country and they can't go back to the US, that is when benefit becomes really crucial for them because they want to get as much as possible during their international assignments” (HR-Oil and Gas-01).

Non-financial benefits include international exposure and an opportunity to learn about a new culture. An expatriate commented:

“The international experience, the exposure to the Indonesian culture ... and the different challenges of working internationally and not being fluent in the local language” (Expatriate-Mining-09).

However, there is also the flipside to the benefits of a luxury lifestyle in the form of marriage breakups, which eventually impact on well-being at work. As noted by an expatriate:

“... they feel in position of power over a lot of people ... they can do things and get away with it...sometimes their family seems a little boring and there are interesting things outside so I have seen many marriages collapse” (Expatriate-Auxiliary-05).

4. Work aspects

Several expatriates ($n = 18$) indicated elements of their job as one of the main themes in defining well-being at work, namely: job role ($n = 7$ expats), challenges of the job ($n = 6$ expats), and work atmosphere and work culture ($n = 6$ expats). Job role was shaped by the nature of the business. For example, working as a consultant is different from working for a construction company and being an entrepreneur is different from working as an employee, as explained:

“... being an entrepreneur, I don't feel like I have the security at all. I feel like I have a lot of responsibility to the staff” (Expatriate-Auxiliary-05).

A number of expatriates also reported challenges of the job as an important factor negatively affecting well-being at work. Working as an expatriate entails more challenges than working in the home country including more ‘hands-on’ work with greater responsibilities, language barriers, and pressure to meet higher standards.

The last key issue was work atmosphere and work culture. This also relates to the Indonesian collectivist nature and mentality. Working for a local organisation is different from working for an international organisation as they have different work cultures. An expatriate explained:

“[here] is pretty unique compared to other international companies I’ve worked with, here is very people-oriented, very family-driven ... quite religious in terms of praying before meetings and lots of positive affirmation ... company song ... “all for one, one for all” type of thing ... the more I immerse in it, the more that I see the people are getting behind it ... it is positive... they’re doing to bring people together to have shared common goals and values...”
(Expatriate-Mining-02).

5. Job attitudes and other attitudes

Some participants discussed job attitudes and other attitudes ($N = 13$, including 10 expats and 3 HR managers), namely: other attitudes towards and perceptions about Indonesia ($n = 9$, including 7 expats and 2 HR managers); job satisfaction ($n = 3$, expat only); and passion, engagement, and commitment ($n = 1$, HR manager only). Positive attitudes toward Indonesia contribute to high well-being at work. An expatriate commented:

“Absolutely positive ... I stayed in Indonesia through crisis and bombs and Australian troops and all these things when everyone else ran away ... through those times, I had people walk across the street in Jakarta and shake my hand and say thank you for being here ... that is remembered today in business ... and with the downturn in the mining industry, most people left but I am still here ... I don’t think I am capable of living anywhere else now” (Expatriate-Mining-27).

However, expatriates also experience difficulties dealing with Indonesian employees showing resistance in taking orders from expatriates. As suggested by an expatriate:

“...it's harder as an expatriate than it is as an Indonesian to get the work force to do their job ... an Indonesia manager can ask the same person to do the same thing as I have and they will do it very quickly for them” (Expatriate-Auxiliary-07).

In respect to their experiences in living and working in Indonesia, expatriates can be categorised into two major groups, those who succeeded (‘supporters’) and those who failed (‘haters’). Those who successfully lived and worked in Indonesia, including working effectively within the national culture, are more likely to have a higher level of well-being at work. Expatriates who fail in understanding the culture, tend to do poorly at work as they are not successfully adapting to work culture, and have less well-being at work. A spouse said:

“I think there is a group of people, they’re like me, they’re really happy to be here and we just see the positives and then there is another group of people who would just don’t like it at all here... they focus on negatives... bad traffic, cultural differences, pollution, on everything that Jakarta does not have...[they should] everyday think about what you can do” (Spouse-Mining-04).

Job satisfaction is also important to the well-being at work of expatriates in Indonesia and is a key to being successful in Indonesia and thriving at work. Further, job commitment is significant to well-being at work in Indonesia since expatriates show high levels of commitment to their job. An HR manager mentioned: *“... compared with Indonesians ... the expats are more committed to do the job and they have a sense of belonging with the company and higher trust” (HR-Mining-04).*

6. Eudaimonic aspects

Several expatriates indicated issues (categorised as eudaimonic aspects) ($n = 13$) as being critical to well-being at work, namely: helping other people grow ($n = 6$); personal growth ($n = 4$); and intangible rewards and contribution to others ($n = 3$). Helping other people grow

brings about internal satisfaction among expatriates, especially seeing their subordinates grow and progress in their career. An expatriate explained:

“... they started working for me as fresh graduates ... they are all managers and General Managers [now] ... from that sense I feel ... [it] gets to the top of the triangle with personal actualisation ... self-actualisation when you see people that you develop achieving good things and being recognised ... I feel good because I know what contribution I might give up ... so that’s really positive, really good” (Expatriate-Mining-26).

Personal growth was also seen as critical to well-being at work in Indonesia, especially for expatriates who have spent most of their professional years in Indonesia. As highlighted by a long-term expatriate:

“I actually stay here because we can make a difference in this company, I’m not just an accountant ... that I find satisfying ... I have been in ten different things that I would never get the opportunity probably in Australia to do ... personally satisfying” (Expatriate-Mining-16).

Last, intangible rewards provide expatriate well-being at work in respect to positive feelings gained from contributing to society. An expatriate said:

“What we’re doing in this place is creating employment for Indonesians ... bring in good international practices to Indonesia, which hopefully people learn from and then get paid” (Expatriate-Auxiliary-08).

7. Work-life balance

Many participants reported work-life balance ($N = 12$, including 8 expats, 1 spouse, and 3 HR managers) is crucial to well-being at work. As explained by an expatriate: *“having a balance between actual work hours and you’re spending more time with your family and they’re getting the attention that they need” (Expatriate-Mining-05).* An expatriate employee asserted work-

life balance becomes more critical for expatriates since they live in a foreign country, away from their family and support base:

“... have a balance between work and family ... especially when you live in a foreign country. You don't have family here... (and) relatives, so it is good to have friends and contacts who can help you” (Expatriate-Mining-20).

Having a balance between work and personal life is important as it maintains positive attitude at work which leads to happiness and higher well-being at work, as explained by an expatriate:

“... knowing if you are spending more time with your family and they are getting the attention that they need ... if you go the opposite direction and you put a lot of efforts in your work ... you don't get long term benefits ... that lead to happiness ... having like a good friend of mine when you are at work, having a positive attitude ...” (Expatriate-Mining-05).

8. Affect

Affect includes emotions, moods, and feelings displayed at work or resulting from work. Positive affect includes presence of positive feelings, moods and emotions, as well as absence of negative pressure. Some participants mentioned what we categorised as affect ($N = 8$, including 7 expatriates and 1 HR manager) and its significance to well-being at work, including positive affect ($n = 4$, including 3 expats and 1 HR manager), and negative affect ($n = 4$ expats).

An expatriate commented:

“...here probably is more positive pressure, there is always balance here ... In Australia there is a lot of anxiety, a lot of pressure ... I didn't feel the same way here or that they existed” (Expatriate-Mining-07).

Similarly, an HR manager expressed:

“... (expatriates) are happy, I see them smiling every day, every morning, even at night” (HR-Auxiliary-01).

However, expatriates also reported negative affect such as stress and negative feelings associated with rejection when dealing with local workers, such as: “... *it is more difficult to get the workforce to do what it is that you need done ...so for an expatriate that is the main difference ... the interaction of the local work force*” (Expatriate-Auxiliary-07).

9. External influences

A few participants indicated external influences as affecting well-being at work ($N = 6$, including 3 expats, 1 spouse, and 2 HR managers). External influences were mostly related to care the organisation gives to employees, especially expatriates, which significantly improved well-being at work of expatriates. Supportive organisational policies and a fair organisational system were also mentioned by interviewees. In highlighting organisational care, an expatriate stated:

“What I have enjoyed more is working for a lady... I think I am the luckiest man in this world, she is so conscious, she was so good” (Expatriate-Mining-14).

However, absence of supportive organisational policies or care given by the organisation resulted in low well-being at work among expatriates, as highlighted by an expatriate:

“... in my experience expat is seen as a specialist he is a hired gun ... I’ve looked after my work well-being myself, none of the companies that I’ve worked for years has given a damn about me, whether I’m happy or depressed ... they just don’t care” (Expatriate-Mining-26).

Organisation turbulence was reported to have a major negative impact on well-being at work. This was apparent to a spouse participant:

“His organisation is having financial issues ... some of the business are struggling ... things are not going as smoothly as he imagined” (Spouse-Mining-06).

Differences across participant groups

The findings highlighted differences in how the three groups of participants (expatriates, HR managers, and spouses) perceived well-being at work of expatriates in the resources sector. Expatriates' perceptions of their well-being at work in the resources sector in Indonesia focused on novel cultural context (Indonesia) and associated challenges, such as language barriers and communication issues. An expatriate commented:

"...it's just their culture, Indonesians in my experience don't like direct confrontation and don't like to say no and so you have to work a little bit harder to get to the bottom of a thing... you definitely have to adapt to Indonesia, in relation to how you carry out your activities, you still generally carry out the same activities, however it is just done with different tools or different inputs or different success..." (Expatriate-Mining-17).

HR managers' perceptions of well-being at work of expatriates in the resources sector in Indonesia emphasised organisation policies, care, and support to meet expatriates' needs as well as the needs of the families of the expatriates to achieve work-life balance. An HR manager suggested:

"... based on their concern, well-being at work is about family concern because whatever decision they will take regarding their work, they will always refer back to their family needs, whether it aligns with their family needs, such as the schooling for their children, whether there is a good school for their children or not" (HR-Oil and Gas-01).

Spouses emphasised the nature of the work (e.g., junior/senior level, business industry, type of work). A spouse highlighted:

"He (my partner) is more senior now. He was quite junior in Argentina... he has more control over the work he chooses to do... I think he is a lot more happier and a lot more confident in himself now and in his current role than he was when he was more junior" (Spouse-Mining-02).

Discussion

In this study structural social capital was perceived as significantly impacting on well-being at work. This impact was also apparent in how expatriates, spouses, and HR managers perceived the concept of expatriate well-being at work that we coded into nine key aspects/themes. Across all three groups of participants (expatriates, HR managers, and spouses), social aspects were the most frequently mentioned, while external influences were least mentioned.

First, well-being at work was perceived as *social aspect* and includes importance of network ties as a form of structural social capital determining expatriates' success and significantly affects their well-being at work. Second, well-being at work was viewed as *security/safety*, and highlights importance of social networks as a form of structural social capital that assists expatriates in dealing with adversities related to safety/security issues. Third, well-being at work included *benefits* highly connected to the existence of their social ties and interactions as forms of their structural social capital. Fourth, well-being at work included *work aspects*, within which people and national culture relate to forms of structural social capital, namely social interactions and network configurations. Fifth, the *eudaimonic aspect*, strongly relates to expatriates' social networks, personal ties, interactions, and appropriate organisation as forms of structural capital central to expatriate well-being at work. Sixth, *job attitudes and other attitudes*, where Indonesian people and culture are central, confirms the importance of social ties and interactions as forms of structural social capital significantly influencing well-being at work. Seventh, well-being at work included *work-life balance*, which was significantly related to appropriate organisation and social networks as forms of structural social capital. Eighth, well-being at work was construed as *affect*, in which how expatriates feel was highly influenced by other people with whom they work, namely network ties and social interactions. Finally, well-being at work included *external influences*, significantly relates to appropriate

organisation and network configuration as forms of structural capital that significantly affect well-being at work.

Although all the aspects identified in the research contribute to expatriate well-being at work and incorporate expatriate use of their structural social capital, specific aspects identified in the findings support and extend extant expatriate literature and well-being at work literature. First, the findings of this study indicate well-being at work is largely determined by the social aspect, hence, it supports Guest's (2017), Fisher's (2014), and Grant et al.'s (2007), notion of social well-being. The social aspect includes people at work and culture (language). This finding reveals the importance of HRM practices that build relationships to nurture well-being at work. Baptiste's (2008) study highlighted the importance of management relationships, support and employees' trust, and other research has highlighted the value of expatriates not only having good relationships with local employees, but social networks are vital for expatriates to be eligible to fulfil high level positions (Selmer et al., 2016). In addition, when discussing social well-being, some participants mentioned the importance of being culturally intelligent in dealing with cultural diversity in Indonesia. Past research has found that cultural intelligence (CQ) is important for successful expatriate adjustment (Malek and Budhwar, 2013) and performance (Lee and Sukoco, 2010). Moreover, extant research has suggested homesickness can negatively impact adjustment, well-being, and performance (Hack-Polay and Mahmoud, 2020; Lei, Liang and Kreiger, 2004; Stroebe, Schut and Nauta, 2015) and has also found cultural intelligence can contribute to minimising homesickness (Harrison and Bower, 2011). The current study *extends* expatriate literature by suggesting CQ is also significant for expatriate well-being at work.

Second, this study found security and safety plays a key role in determining well-being at work of expatriates. This finding *extends* the earlier literature on well-being at work by highlighting the importance of security and safety by adding to Grant et al.'s (2007) and

Guest's (2017) notion of physical well-being. This current research highlights physical and psychological threats are especially associated with working in the resources sector (Martin, 2020), such as the presence of wild animals and dangerous dust, and risk in operating heavy equipment, while psychological safety is concerned with isolation (Lovell and Critchley, 2010). The findings also reinforce financial security/having a stable job, which has been noted as an attraction of working in the sector (Konopaske and Werner, 2005). Importantly, this research *extends* literature that has referred to dangerous locations that present stressors for expatriates (Shaffer and Harrison (2001). In this study a location (country) that presented dangers (such as the wild animals) was examined but it highlighted that the sector (resources) is also dangerous especially because it often involves work in remote locations which can have more safety dangers and less access to requisite medical facilities. Thus, the findings *add to* prior research that has found safety concerns for workers who are away from an organisation's main location (Nielsen et al., 2019) but extend this in identifying the resources sector is dangerous to health and safety, and this is exacerbated when it is also in a (potentially) dangerous location. Liu, Sector and Shi (2007; cited in Faeth and Kittler, 2017) noted that stress levels of expatriates increase when they work in locations that have lower safety standards. These risks in remote locations in the resources sector in a country that is also culturally distinct from the expatriates' home country also impacts on expatriate well-being at work.

Third, this study *extends* earlier research on work-life balance. Studies on the relationship between work-family balance and work-related well-being among expatriates (Carvalho and Chambel, 2015) and in the resources sector specifically (Richardson et al., 2015) showed work-life balance (understood more broadly than just family) is important. This research suggests work-life balance should be included as a dimension of well-being at work as maintaining work-life balance is important to avoid workaholism – a negative form of well-

being at work (Bakker and Oerlemans, 2011) which also likely contributes to an associated aspect of social adjustment and integration with the local community.

Fourth, the findings of this study indicate well-being at work of expatriates is affected by external (organisational) influences. This study *extends* prior research in suggesting organisational factors such as supportive organisational care and a perceived fair system valued by all employees are also important in improving well-being at work of expatriates. Thus, having good expatriate well-being at work requires effective working systems that support expatriates, enable them to grow in their work, and minimise their stress by assisting them to work with the complexity of a context that is culturally and institutionally distinct.

Finally, prior well-being literature found the experience of more positive and fewer negative moods and emotions at work are important to work-related well-being (Cropanzano and Wright, 2001; see also Fisher, 2014; Peccei, 2004). This current study supports this by confirming the significance of moods and emotions i.e., affect -positive or negative (Kidger et al., 2016) for expatriate well-being at work.

Figure 2 shows contribution to the literature in presenting a conceptualisation of well-being at work for expatriates (in the resources sector in remote locations); which might also be examined for other workers in similar, non-standard workplaces and contexts.

Implications for theory, and business and management practice

Implications for theory

This research makes an important theoretical contribution to the expatriate literature through offering perceptions of expatriate well-being at work and the way in which social capital impacts on expatriate well-being at work in a new context, the Indonesian resources sector; a nation and sector that are un(der)-researched in business and international HRM literature. Although there has been substantive research on expatriate adjustment and stressors, this research adds to the literature in specifically examining well-being at work. Moreover, while much earlier research has examined one group of stakeholders, this research is valuable in presenting the views of expatriates, HR managers and spouses. The study enhances existing literature on work-related well-being by offering understanding of expatriate well-being at work in remote locations in the resources sector which may present dangers to health and safety. Extending studies of dangerous locations to a dangerous sector and identifying implications of such for expatriate well-being at work may have application to other global workers in non-standard workplaces. A third contribution is that the research extends social capital literature by providing an understanding of perceived impact of social capital on well-being at work of expatriates, though particular examination of the structural dimension of social capital.

Implications for business and management practice

The research offers practical implications for organisations and expatriates. Since social aspects were perceived as the most important factor determining well-being at work for expatriates in the resources sector in Indonesia, this research highlights the importance of expatriates' adopting Indonesian values and norms. Organisations that employ expatriates need to conduct effective cross-cultural training about working in Indonesia, and design specifically

tailored expatriate support policies (including for family) to better improve expatriate satisfaction (cf. van Erp, et al., 2011).

As work-life balance was found to be a significant issue for expatriates' (cf. Richardson et al., 2015) well-being at work in the resources sector in Indonesia. Organisations need to offer flexible work arrangements (e.g., flexibility to be effective in multiple roles and in compressed work weeks), that support expatriates (and their spouses/partners, where applicable) to juggle responsibilities of personal/family life and job demands (Kalliath et al., 2012). This flexibility provides expatriates with more time to attend to other roles outside work such as family and children, as well as to engage in stress-relieving activities they enjoy. HR managers also need to have an "open door" policy that welcomes expatriates to discuss issues they are facing working and living in Indonesia. Moreover, given the dangers inherent in working in remote locations in the resources sector, organisations need to identify how they can better support health and safety of expatriate workers particularly as expatriate expertise is so crucial to this sector in developing economies, especially Asia (Tyson, 2018).

Individual expatriates need to focus on their social well-being (Guest, 2017; Fisher, 2014; Grant et al., 2007) to improve their well-being at work in Indonesia. This can be done by building trust through embracing Indonesian family values and building social networks with other expatriates and local Indonesians to better understand Indonesian culture, and work with cultural diversity and improve their well-being at work. Having a high level of cultural intelligence (see Earley and Ang, 2003) is related to expatriate performance (Malek and Budhwar, 2013) and is important to help expatriates in adapting to Indonesian values, such as to work well in a team, to recognise individual success depends on team success, to move away from the individual Western value of the superior "I", to the culture of respecting others (especially older people). To overcome locals' resistance, expatriates need to build a family environment, which is valued highly by Indonesians, who are highly collectivist. Building a

family environment was found to be effective to manage HCNs/locals' work and maximise outcomes because people work better when they are together as a group.

Conclusions and issues for future research

This research has some limitations and thus there are suggestions for future research. First, the data collection technique was cross-sectional and future studies may consider a longitudinal approach across different career stages and varying expatriate postings to better understand the impact of such for well-being at work of expatriates. Second, given the resources sector is a male-dominated sector, and there was only one female out of 43 expatriate participants in this study, there is not clear understanding of whether well-being at work differs across genders; thus, future research might use more social media recruitment to achieve better gender representation. Third, the sample of this study is, to a certain extent, context bound, and since country context influences expatriates' experiences, future research could examine more diverse host contexts, such as Asian countries with larger expatriate populations. Fourth, this study focuses only on the structural dimension of social capital. Future research could employ all three dimensions of social capital (structural, relational, and cognitive dimensions) to yield a more comprehensive understanding. Fifth, the research was conducted prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, and future research might examine how expatriate well-being at work was affected by this or similar pandemics, and support provided by organisations to ensure safety of international employees, especially working in remote locations with fewer or less advanced medical facilities.

In conclusion, this research contributes to expatriate, well-being, and social capital literature by providing an understanding of well-being at work for expatriates working in non-standard (often remote) workplaces in the resources sector in a developing nation, which, due

to its abundant natural resources, is an important location for investment by international businesses in the Asian region.

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