

Teachers' Work Engagement: The Role of Perceived Organizational Support and Meaningful Work

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Abstract

This research aimed to determine the effect of perceived organizational support and meaningful work on engagement. The design used was cross-sectional research with the respondents of honorary public 107 Elementary School teachers in Pangandaran Regency. Furthermore, simple random sampling was used and data collection were conducted through three measuring scales, namely Perceived Organizational Support Scale (SPOS), The Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI), and Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES). Data analysis used multiple linear regression to show the effect of the two variables on work engagement. Therefore, perceived organizational support and meaningful work have a fairly strong role ($=.541$) in affecting engagement.

Keywords: perceived organizational support, meaningful work, work engagement

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan mengetahui pengaruh *perceived organizational support* dan *meaningful work* terhadap *work engagement*. Desain penelitian menggunakan cross-sectional dengan responden para guru honorer sekolah dasar negeri di kecamatan Pangandaran berjumlah 107 orang. Teknik *sampling* menggunakan *simple random sampling*. Pengambilan data melalui tiga skala ukur, yaitu: Skala *Perceived Organizational Support* (SPOS), *The Work and Meaning Inventory* (WAMI) dan *Utrecht Work Engagement Scale* (UWES). Analisis data menggunakan analisis regresi linear berganda dengan hasil menunjukkan adanya pengaruh *perceived organizational support* dan *meaningful work* terhadap *work engagement*. *Perceived organizational support* dan *meaningful work* memiliki peran yang cukup kuat ($R^2=.541$) dalam memengaruhi *work engagement*.

Kata Kunci: *perceived organizational support, meaningful work, work engagement*

Introduction

As a strategic component, teachers play a role in developing a nation. The educational process in schools can run well to achieve the desired goal with good work performance. As written in Government Regulation 74 of 2008, teachers have various professionals in planning, implementing, assessing learning outcomes, guiding, and training students, as well as carrying out additional tasks (BPKRI, 2008).

Employment status can be grouped into permanent and non-permanent or honorary teachers. The Circular Letter of the Minister for Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform Number B/185/M.SM.02.03/2022, on May 31, 2022, mentions the abolition of honorary staff starting November 28, 2023. This circular letter raises anxiety among honorary

teachers regarding their increasingly unclear status.

In Pangandaran Regency, the shortage of permanent teachers with civil servants status is still relatively large, reaching 1,613 people at the Elementary and Junior High School levels (Fadillah, 2022). According to the regional secretary, honorary teachers are still needed to fill this void (Adji, 2022). Therefore, these teachers are essential to education, particularly in the regency.

The duties and responsibilities of permanent and honorary teachers are similar, conducting and managing learning administration. However, they have some differences, including unclear status and welfare. The unclear status caused by the absence of a teaching decree has resulted in the absence of health and other benefits.

Furthermore, there is difficulty meeting their daily needs due to small salaries (Pangestuti et al., 2021).

Teachers have higher psychological stress and burnout levels than other jobs (Fathi et al., 2021; Ouellette et al., 2018). The results showed high burnout among school teachers (Cahyani et al., 2019; Rahmi & Nio, 2021). Therefore, honorary teachers are at risk of experiencing burnout, affecting their performance and psychological well-being.

A strategy is needed to overcome burnout in honorary teachers. Bakker et al. (2008) stated that work engagement could overcome the risk. According to Smulders (2006), teaching requires high work engagement because it involves service quality as the main capital. Employees who feel engaged will have high enthusiasm for work and are often focused due to high performance and productivity (Xanthopoulou et al., 2013). Individuals with a high level of job engagement also exhibit the highest performance levels (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). Work engagement will bring enthusiasm, and stress can be interpreted as a challenge to give the best performance.

The research on work engagement has experienced a rapid increase in the last few decades, and William A. Kahn first developed the concept in 1990 (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018). In addition, personal engagement is the state of individuals who employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally in carrying out duties. Work engagement refers to a positive affective-motivational condition accompanied by high dedication and strong focus (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010). Schaufeli et al. (2002) described engagement as a state of mind related to positive and fulfilling work characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. The presence of enthusiasm is characterized by a large amount of energy and mental resilience at work, persistence to invest effort, and facing difficulties. Dedication is shown by actively, enthusiastically, and inspirationally involved in work. Absorption is a quality of a state in

which a person is fully focused and absorbed in an activity, where time appears to fly rapidly, and it is difficult to break away.

Many research tried to identify the factors affecting work engagement. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) stated that the variable could be caused by job and personal resources. Job resources refer to a job's physical, psychological, social, and organizational aspects that can reduce employee demands related to the psychological costs incurred. This can affect the achievement of goals and provide stimulation for development and learning (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). Meanwhile, personal resources are aspects of resilience and refer to a person's ability to control and affect the environment. These personal resources are associated with a person's resilience and refer to an ability to control and affect their environment (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

Perceived organizational support is an important psychological resource included in job resources (Zeng et al., 2020). *It is a subjective feeling that the organization cares about the dedication and well-being of employees* (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Furthermore, it can be seen as a form of commitment from the organization to employees. It is defined as employees' general beliefs regarding the extent to which the organization values their contributions and well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The theory (Eisenberger et al., 2002) stated that employees who feel they receive good treatment in terms of fairness and management support, as well as fair procedures, incentives, and working conditions will increase.

Eisenberger et al. (2016) found that perceived organizational support is important for work engagement. Generally, employees are more motivated to do their jobs when employer values them as individuals (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Perceived organizational support positively and significantly affects work engagement (Eisenberger & Stinglhamber,

2011; Jankelová et al., 2021; Saks, 2006). The results indicated that high perceived organizational support will be followed by work engagement (Mufarrikhah et al., 2020; Mujiasih, 2015; Ramdhani & Ratnasawitri, 2017), although the magnitude of the effect is still different, such as in the research by Man and Hadi (2013).

Another factor that has been analyzed to contribute to engagement is meaningful work, a form of personal resource (Goran, 2016). According to Hackman and Oldham (1976), meaningful work is an individual's perception of important and valuable roles and responsibilities that fulfill several goals. In principle, it is an evaluation and the importance of work (Rosso et al., 2011). Chalofsky (2003) explained that the meaning of a job is a unity between personal goals, life values, social relationships, and various activities. Steger et al. (2012) defined that meaningful work has both meaning and a positive valence (meaningful), which means an orientation towards growth and goals. Furthermore, three aspects describe meaningful work, namely positive meaning, meaning-making through work, and greater good motivations. They explain that meaningful work is obtained from experience and how to build personal meaning.

According to May (2004), the research is important because when individuals perceive their work as meaningless, it can lead to boredom and a lack of concern. Some results confirmed that meaningful work could predict work engagement (Fairlie, 2011; Geldenhuys et al., 2014; Van Wingerden & Poell, 2019). Meta-analysis of 30 research found that meaningful work positively and strongly correlates with predicting work engagement (Mulyati, 2020). Previously, some research has been carried out (Aeni & Paradila, 2020; Prabawati, 2017) by examining the role of meaningful work and engagement on organizational commitment. These factors are important for employees to stay in the organization. Wahyuni (2017) also concluded that meaningful work significantly affects engagement. Even though individuals are

honorary teachers, they are expected to contribute positively to the school and its development. This shows the important role of these two factors, which becomes the basis for further research.

Previous studies showed that there is a significant positive relationship between perceived organizational support and work engagement. Further analysis is needed to determine these internal and external factors' roles simultaneously. Therefore, this research examines the role of the two factors in influencing work engagement. It is different from previous results, including Mufarrikhah et al. (2020), which examined the role of perceived organizational support on work engagement and several other research (Aeni & Paradila, 2020; Prabawati, 2017). The hypotheses are 1) Perceived organizational support affects work engagement, 2) Meaningful work affects work engagement, and 3) Perceived organizational support and meaningful work simultaneously have a positive effect on work engagement.

Methods

This quantitative research used a cross-sectional design that takes data from a population at a certain time. In other words, it measures exposure and outcome at one time to obtain a quick overview of a group of individuals (Wang & Cheng, 2020). There are three research variables, namely perceived organizational support and meaningful work as independent and work engagement as the dependent.

Simple random sampling is used, and the sample size is determined by the Slovin formula, which calculates the minimum number with a finite population survey. This formula has conditions for use on a limited sample, including a 95% confidence level and a population proportion (P) equal to 5. Furthermore, the number is calculated through the Slovin Formula calculator on a website (Rumus Statistik, 2021). There are 145 honorary Elementary School teachers in Pangandaran Regency, and the value is

106,422, rounded to 107 people based on calculation.

Data collection is conducted using the adapted results questionnaire, while the adaptation procedure is carried out by forwarding translation by two translators. All items are translated, considering the context in Indonesia, without making any substantive changes from the original scale. Furthermore, a review of the results is carried out by an expert in the field of Psychology who understands English. This research is performed by comparing the two translations with the original scale. This expert review is a form of content validity analysis, which tests the extent to which the elements of an assessment instrument are relevant and represent the targeted construction (Yusoff, 2019). The results are in the form of a suitability assessment between the translation and the original, and three scales were declared to have good content validity based on the expert review.

The first scale measuring perceived organizational support was developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986) and covers three aspects consisting of 36 items, namely fairness (10 items), supervisor support (13 items), as well as organizational rewards and job conditions (13 items). The response model uses a Likert scale with four options, namely a score of 1, 2, 3, and 4, representing Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Agree (A), and Strongly Agree (SA), respectively. The total reliability value of the measuring instrument is 901, and examples of items on this scale include "Assistance from the school is available when I have a problem" and "The school ignores any complaints from me".

The second scale is an adaptation of the proposed Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI) scale by Steger et al. (2012). It contains 10 items consisting of three aspects, namely positive meaning (4 items), meaning making through work (3 items), and greater good motivation (3 items). In addition, the response consists of 4 choices, namely scores 1, 2, 3, 3, and 4, representing Very Inappropriate (VI), Inappropriate (I),

Appropriate (A), and Very Appropriate (VA), respectively. The total reliability value of the measuring instrument is 901, and examples of items on this scale include "I perceive my work contributes to my personal development" and "My work helps to understand the world around me".

The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), developed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), is the third scale. It consists of 17 items covering three aspects, namely vigor (6 items), dedication (5 items), and absorption (6 items). Furthermore, the response consists of 4 choices, namely, scores 1, 2, 3, and 4, representing Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Agree (A), and Strongly Agree (SA), respectively. The total reliability value of the work engagement scale is 926, and examples of the items include "At work, I feel strong and energetic" and "I can work long hours at a time". The analysis method used multiple linear regression statistical tests, and the classical assumption includes normality, heteroscedasticity, and multicollinearity.

Results and Discussion

Results

Respondents' Characteristics

Table 1
Respondents' Characteristics

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	16	15%
Female	95	85 %
Age (M=33; SD=7.3)		
23-29	31	29 %
30-36	33	30.8%
37-43	22	20.6%
44-50	21	19.6 %
Marital status		
Married	91	85%
Not married yet	16	15%
Years of service		
< 6 years	34	31.8%
6 – 10 years	31	29%
>10 years	42	39.3%

This research obtained a total of 107 respondents with an average of 33 years old (SD=7.3). There are 85% and 15% female and male respondents, respectively, and the majority were married (91%), aged 30-36 years (30.8%), and 23-29 years (29%). Furthermore, the most working period is more than 10 years (39.3%).

Assumption Test Results

In the normality test, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov value is 401 (Asymp.Sig. > .05), meaning the data on the research variables are normally distributed. The results of the multicollinearity test showed a tolerance score of .897 (> .10) and a VIF of 1.115 (< 10.). Therefore, the independent variables do not overlap, or there is no multicollinearity. The perceived organizational support significant value is .468 (>.05), and meaningful work is .246 (>.05). This indicates that there are no symptoms of heteroscedasticity. Based on the classical assumption test, it can be concluded that the data meet the requirements for hypothesis testing with multiple linear regression analysis.

Hypothesis Test Results

Partial Test. The results of the partial test (t-test) can be seen in Table 2, where the first hypothesis is accepted (B= .146; p= .040 <.05). Partially, perceived organizational support affects work engagement. Therefore, the second hypothesis was accepted (B= .676; p= .000 <.05), and meaningful work significantly affects engagement.

Simultaneous Test. The results in Table 3 showed that the third hypothesis is accepted [F(2)=61350; p=.000; R2 = .541], which means that there is a significant simultaneous effect of perceived organizational support and meaningful work variables on engagement.

Regression Equation. Based on Table 2, the regression equation $Y = 6.583 + .148X_1 + 1.190X_2$ is obtained. The equation shows that when X1 increases by 1 point, assuming X2 remains constant, Y will increase by .148. Therefore, work engagement will also increase with perceived

organizational support. In addition, the value of X2 and Y will increase by 1 and 1.190, assuming X1 remains constant. This shows that meaningful work increases with engagement.

Coefficient of Determination. The coefficient of determination results can be seen in Table 4. It is known that perceived organizational support and meaningful work variables affect 54.1% of engagement, while the other 45.9% are affected by unexamined variables.

Furthermore, the results of the partial determination coefficient are presented in Table 5. It is known that perceived organizational support affects work engagement by 13.2%, while meaningful work affects engagement by 52.2%.

Table 2
Partial Test Results (t-Test)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1 (Const)	6.583	5.422		1.214	.227
POS	.148	.071	.146	2.085	.040
MW	1.190	.123	.676	9.643	.000

Table 3
Simultaneous Test Results (Uji F)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1964.697	2	982.349	61.350	.000 ^b
Residual	1665.265	104	16.012		
Total	3629.963	106			

Table 4
Simultaneous Coefficient of Determination

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. The error in the Estimate
1	.736 ^a	.541	.532	4.00152

Table 5
Partial Coefficient of Determination

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. The error in the Estimate
POS	.363 ^a	.132	.124	5.47859
MW	.723 ^a	.522	.518	4.06479

Discussion

This research was conducted on honorary teachers in Pangandaran Regency, West Java. The results of the first hypothesis test showed that there is a significant effect of perceived organizational support on work engagement. These are appropriate to the previous findings (Mujiasih, 2015; Ramdhani & Ratnasawitri, 2017; Saks, 2006), which stated a significant relationship between the two variables. This research is also in line with Man dan Hadi (2013) regarding the correlation of the two variables in high school teachers. There is a belief that the organization will provide full welfare support, making honorary teachers give the best performance and feel bound to work (Bakker et al., 2011). According to Social Exchange Theory (SET), there is reciprocity between employees and the company. This is because teachers will feel obliged to give their best performance with the feeling of being indebted (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). With the organization's backing, they will have a sense of belonging and a responsibility to contribute and perform to the best of their ability (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

The second hypothesis test showed a significant effect of meaningful work on engagement. Perceived organizational support and meaningful work are a form of personal resources (Goran, 2016). This suggested that work perceived as meaningful can be a resource for individuals. The results indicated that perceived work is meaningful by honorary teachers in Pangandaran and can play a role in increasing engagement.

These support existing research (Cartwright & Holmes, 2006; Siahaan & Gatari, 2020; Van Wingerden & Poell, 2019; Van Wingerden & Van Der Stoep, 2018; Wahyuni, 2017) which stated that the two variables are significantly related. Work engagement is a personal resource as an internal factor that controls external stimuli. High meaningful work promotes individuals to view their problems and abilities positively to create higher goals, expectations, and contributions. Therefore, the quality of high

personal resources can increase work engagement.

Meaningful work will be motivated by an internal force that enables the exploitation of the environment's possibilities. The results also strengthen previous research that the variable has a very strong positive relationship or is the strongest predictor of work engagement (Demirtas et al., 2017; Fairlie, 2011; Johnson & Jiang, 2017). Individuals who consider their work meaningful will be more involved in carrying out the expected responsibilities (Van Wingerden & Stoep, 2017). Teachers who judge their work as physically and mentally meaningful will also be enthusiastic about carrying out the task. Therefore, it triggers enthusiasm, inspiration, and pride in the work (Hirschi, 2012). This becomes a part of self-identity, which fosters a greater concentration on work as a teacher.

The results of the third hypothesis test showed a significant effect of perceived organizational support and meaningful work on engagement. These align with Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), which stated that job and personal resources affect work engagement.

Based on the coefficient of determination test, perceived organizational support and meaningful work variables affect work engagement by 54.1%. The effect of perceived organizational support and meaningful work on engagement is 13.2% and 52.2%, respectively.

The determination test showed a significant difference between perceived organizational support and meaningful work variables on engagement. These results are in line with Ayu et al. (2015), which stated that personal resources are variables with the largest contribution among other variables. Moreover, self-efficacy, self-esteem, meaning, and optimism are reflected in these variables.

There are several limitations to this research. First, the content validity test only involved one psychologist. A minimum of two experts is required to make the assessment more objective. Second,

respondents involved only honorary teachers, hence, generalization cannot be carried out. Further research is recommended to expand the scope by examining permanent teachers to determine employees' status effect on work engagement. In addition, other predictors that increase work engagement on honorary teachers besides the variables discussed should be determined.

Conclusion

This research proved that the two-variable model used is significant for work engagement, tested separately (partial) and simultaneously. The results have practical implications for strengthening the interaction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivators as resources at work. This strengthening is an effort to develop intangible resources within the organization. For honorary teachers, organizational support by giving adequate rewards for tasks is needed to work harder. Furthermore, the meaningfulness of the work provides a better and healthier psychological well-being.

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