

**INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN  
ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION AND WORK  
ENGAGEMENT AND THE ROLE OF SUPERVISOR SUPPORT**

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**Abstract:**

*Although organizational identification has gained a reasonable attention and researchers investigated the relation of organizational identification with various outcomes, there is no study that investigates its possible relationship with work engagement. The purpose of the study is to investigate the relationship between organizational identification and work engagement. Social support in the organizational context has a positive influence on several attitudes and behaviors of employees. Especially, when employees receive a support from a key actor in the workplace, they reciprocate through positive outcomes. With this in mind, supervisor support is examined whether it moderates the relationship between organizational identification and work engagement. Questionnaire was used as a data collection method and sample consisted of 212 employees working in private sector in İstanbul, Turkey. Results showed that employees who identify with their organization have high levels of work engagement. Support received from supervisor is found to have a moderating role in this relationship.*

**Keywords:** Organizational Identification, Work Engagement, Supervisor Support

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## **ÖRGÜTSEL ÖZDEŞLEŞME VE İŞLE BÜTÜNLEŞME ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİNİN VE AMİR DESTEĞİNİN ROLÜNÜN İNCELENMESİ**

### **Öz:**

*Çalışanların organizasyonları ile duygusal ve bilişsel bir bağ hissederek psikolojik bir köprü kurmaları, kendilerini çalıştıkları şirketin bir parçası görerek şirkete özdeşleştirmeleri, son yıllarda araştırmacıların ilgisini çeken bir konu olmuştur. Bunun en temel nedeni, çalışanların kendilerini organizasyonları ile özdeşleştirmelerinin gerek çalışan gerekse organizasyon açısından olumlu sonuçlar doğurmasıdır. Örgütsel özdeşleşme, bireylerin kendilerini sosyal bir grup ya da kategori içinde tanımlamaları ve anlamlandırmaları sonucu yaşanan bir durumdur. Bireyler, kişisel değer, inanç ve normlarıyla uyum içerisinde olan organizasyonlarda çalışmayı tercih etmektedirler. Örgütsel davranış, iş psikolojisi ve endüstri sosyolojisi gibi alanlarda gerçekleştirilen araştırmalarda örgütsel özdeşleşmenin, iş memnuniyeti, örgütsel vatandaşlık davranışı, işten ayrılma niyeti gibi tutum ve davranışlarla olan ilişkisine odaklanılırken, çalışanın işiyle bütünleşmesi üzerindeki etkisine değinilmemiştir. Son yıllarda pozitif psikolojiye olan ilginin artmasıyla beraber çalışanın işiyle bütünleşmesi (işine angaje olması) hem araştırmacılar hem de yöneticiler tarafından üzerinde önemle durulan bir konu haline gelmiştir. Çalışanın işiyle bütünleşmesi pozitif, tatmin edici ve zihnin işle ilgili bir durumudur. İşiyle bütünleşmiş çalışan işini yaparken yüksek seviyede bir enerji hisseder, yaptığı işte bir anlam bulur ve etrafındaki her şeyi unutacak kadar kendini işine verir. İşiyle bütünleşmiş çalışanlar işinden daha fazla tatmin duyar. Kişinin işiyle bütünleşmesini sağlayan bireysel ve işle ilgili faktörlerin yanı sıra çalışanın örgütüne yönelik duygu, inanç ve tutumları gibi faktörler de yer almaktadır. Örgütsel özdeşleşme de bu etmenler arasında çalışanın kurumuna yönelik tutum, inanç ve duygu durumunu gösteren bir olgudur. Çalışan, örgütüyle özdeşleştiği yani birçok alanda uyum içinde olduğu oranda yaptığı işle de bütünleşmektedir. Örgütsel özdeşleşme çalışan ile örgüt arasındaki duygusal ve bilişsel bir bağ durumu olduğundan ve çalışanın kendini çalıştığı örgüt üzerinden tanımlaması durumunu ifade ettiğinden, bu bağ ve tanımlamanın kişinin işine yönelik duygu, tutum ve davranışlarını da etkilemesi beklenebilmektedir. Örgütsel özdeşleşme, örgüt amaç ve hedeflerine bağlılığı ve da çalışanın yaptığı işe bağlılığını yani işiyle bütünleşme durumunu etkilemektedir. Kişilerin çalıştıkları yer ile özdeşleşmelerinin, performansları üzerinde olumlu katkıları olmaktadır. Bunun bir nedeni, örgütsel özdeşleşmenin çalışanın işiyle bütünleşmesini sağlamasıdır.*

*Örgütsel özdeşleşme ile çalışanın işiyle bütünleşmesi arasındaki ilişkiyi irdelemek, bir kurumsal bir de işle ilgili iki farklı durumun etkileşimini görmek açısından önemlidir. Bireylerin işlerine yönelik duygu, düşünce ve tutumlarının*

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*oluşumunda, örgüt unsurunun yeri ve önemini görmek açısından örgütsel özdeşleşme ve işe bağlılık ilişkisinin irdelenmesi faydalı olacaktır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın amacı örgütsel özdeşleşme ve çalışanın işle bütünleşmesi arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektir. Bu ilişki incelenirken çalışanın amirinden alabileceği desteğin rolü de araştırmaya dâhil edilmiştir. Gerek organizasyondan gerekse amirden alınan sosyal desteğin çalışanların davranışları ve tutumları üzerinde önemli etkileri söz konusudur. Araştırmada, organizasyon yerine amirden alınan desteğin kullanılmasının sebeplerinden biri çalışanların şirket içerisinde sıklıkla amirleriyle etkileşim içerisinde olması ve çalışanla amiri arasındaki ilişkinin niteliğinin yüksek olması durumunda çalışanın da daha yüksek performans ve benzeri olumlu davranışlarla karşılık vermesidir. Bununla birlikte, çalışan amirini organizasyonun bir temsilcisi olarak görmekte ve çalışanın organizasyonla ilgili algısının oluşumunda amir önemli bir paya sahip olmaktadır. Bu nedenle, çalışanın amirinden aldığı desteğin çalışanın örgütsel bütünleşmesi ve işiyle özdeşleşmesi arasında önemli bir role sahip olacağı düşünülmektedir. Araştırmaya İstanbul'da özel sektörde görev yapan 212 beyaz yakalı çalışan katılmıştır ve kolayda örneklem kullanılmıştır. Veriler anket yöntemiyle toplanmıştır. Araştırma sonuçları çalışanın organizasyonu ile bütünleşmesi ve işiyle özdeşleşmesi arasında anlamlı bir ilişkinin olduğunu göstermiştir. Buna göre, çalışan şirketiyle kendini özdeşleştirdikçe işiyle de daha fazla bütünleşmektedir. Amirden alınan desteğin bu ilişkide şartlı değişken rolüne sahip olduğu da ortaya konulmuştur. Yöneticiler bu araştırma sonuçlarına dayanarak çalışanların organizasyonlarıyla özdeşleşmelerini sağlayacak insan kaynakları politika ve uygulamalarını hayata geçirmelidirler. Organizasyon için pozitif bir imaj yaratacak ve çalışanların kurum kimliğini güçlendirecek programlarla örgütsel özdeşleşmeyi de sağlamalıdır. Bunu sağladıklarında çalışanların işlerine karşı olan duygusal motivasyonlarını arttıracaklar ve işleriyle bütünleşmelerini sağlayacaklardır. Bununla birlikte, amirin çalışanlarına sağlayacağı desteğin önemi de göz ardı edilmemelidir. Amirler ya da yöneticiler çalışanlarına geribildirim verdiklerinde, onları önemsediklerini ve değer verdiklerini hissettirdiklerinde ve manevi destek sağladıklarında çalışanların şirket için de faydalı olabilecek olumlu davranışlar ve tutumlar sergilemelerini teşvik ettiklerini unutmamalıdır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Örgütsel Özdeşleşme, İşle Bütünleşme, Amir desteği

## **INTRODUCTION**

Organizational identification has gained attention in the research arena over the last two decades. This reasonable attention is due to the fact that employees should develop a psychological contract with the organization they work for in order to improve performance. There are also some other positive outcomes associated with organizational identification such as increased motivation, willingness to stay with the organization and performing beyond the tasks (Reade, 2001:1269). So, these reasons make the concept important and attention getting.

However, the term has often been kept in the shadow of organizational commitment and it has especially confused with the affective dimension of organizational commitment. These two concepts have been treated as synonyms, or the difference between them has not been made for true conceptual and measurement (Boroş, 2008:1). Although many organizational commitment definitions include some form of identification (Mowday, Steers, and Porter, 1979:227; Cook and Wall, 1980:40), Meyer and Allen (1991:63), whose conceptualization of organizational commitment is widely used in the literature by scholars, contributed to this overlapping by differentiating those two concepts. They defined organizational commitment as emotional attachment to the organization, calculation of the costs associated with leaving the organization and moral obligation to remain with the organization and they expressed that their analysis does not show that the two concepts are used and defined as the same. Additionally, Cole and Bruch (2006:602) found that organizational identification and organizational commitment are empirically distinct concepts as a result of their study which was conducted among 10948 steel manufacturer employees.

The degree to which employees truly feel part of the organization for which they work is really an important factor and it is found to have benefits for the organization and for employees. However, there are many studies that investigate the relationship between organizational identification and work related attitudes of employees (Mishra and Bhatnagar, 2009:6; Van Dick, Hirst, Grojean, and Wieseke, 2007:144), but not with work engagement which it is thought worth to study.

Engagement is an affective motivational indicator of work-related well-being (Schaufeli and Salanova, 2007:179). In the relevant literature, work engagement has been studied mostly as an outcome of work/task related characteristics or as a predictor of satisfaction, burnout (Hakanen, Schaufeli and Ahola, 2008:236; Salanova and Schaufeli, 2008:125) etc. The study conducted in Turkey by Celep, Doyuran, Sarıdede and Değirmenci (2004:17) among primary school and secondary school teachers found a significant effect of multidimensional work ethic on work engagement. In this study, work engagement which is an individual level outcome will be discussed within the framework of individual's organizational identification and supervisor support.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between organizational identification and work engagement and to measure how supervisor support influences this relationship. It is thought that when employees feel a psychological bond and belongingness to the organization, they will feel a pervasive bond to their work as well. Additionally, when employees receive positive feedback and benefits from their supervisors, then the relationship between organizational identification and work engagement will be stronger. Although organizational identification and work engagement, separately, got attention from the researchers and different associations were established between them and different concepts, the relationship between the two is an untouched area and deserves attention.

## **I) THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Variables of the study and the relationship between them will be discussed in the following section.

### **A) Organizational Identification and Work Engagement**

Individuals' relationship to social group is characterized by identification (Bornewasser and Bober, 1987:267). The dominant theory which most organization identification studies are based on is social identity theory. Social identity theory developed from Tajfel's work on categorization and perception explains how individuals define themselves as members of social categories or groups (Hogg and Grieve, 1999:80). The theory also describes that individuals define themselves in terms of their

social group membership. When social identity is salient, members of the group should be motivated to behave in such a way that will enhance group goals (Lipponen, Bardi and Haapamäki, 2008:243). Social identity theory also explains that the basic motivation for self enhancement is achieved in group contexts compared to other outgroups by positive evaluations. This means that membership in a distinct group may lead to a positive self evaluation (Fielding, Terry, Masser and Hogg, 2008:25).

Organizational identification can also be discussed from the self-categorization theory perspective. The theory developed by Turner and his colleagues explains group phenomena in terms of social identity processes. It suggests that all identities are self-categorizations. It is the fit of a category in a given situation that will influence which identity becomes salient at any given time. The leading motivation for self-categorization is the individual's need to reduce uncertainty. By categorizing themselves into a social category, individuals adopt prototypical group characteristics, which help to reduce uncertainty about who they are and how they should behave (Hogg and Grieve, 1999:82). Self-categorization theory provides an understanding about the conditions under which individuals' behavior is consistent with their attitudes. When individuals identify with a group and think that being a member of that group is important, they will behave in accordance with the norms of that group. Individuals will behave in such a way because norms show appropriate context specific behaviors and attitudes for members (Smith, Hogg, Martin and Terry, 2007:772).

Applying social identity and self categorization to membership in organizations, organizational identification is seen as a form of social identification. Ashforth and Mael proposed that to the extent that an individual identifies with an organization, the organization provides the individual with a sense of identity (Knippenberg and Van Schie, 2000:138).

Organizational identification is defined as “a psychological linkage between the individual and the organization whereby the individual feels a deep, self-defining affective and cognitive bond with the organization as a social entity” (Edwards and Peccei, 2007, p.30). Mael and Ashforth (1992:104) defined organizational identification as “the perception of oneness with or belongingness to an organization, where the individual defines him or herself in terms of the organization in which he or she is a

member". Some researchers have stated that organizational identification is necessary for the organization to function effectively, so it should be one of an organization's most important tasks to form and maintain this identification among employees (Fuller, Marler, Hester, Frey and Relyea, 2006:702).

Organizational identification is thought to have a number of potentially important benefits both for organizations and for employees. Organizational concept is vital in order to understand the exchange relationship between individual and the organization. As the organizational identification of an employee increases, the way of thinking and acting from the organization's perspective increases (Tüzün and Çağlar, 2008:1022). Previous research has found organizational identification to be related to various important organizational outcomes, such as low turnover intentions (Cole and Bruch, 2006:585), organizational citizenship behavior (Dutton, Dukerich and Harquail, 1994:259), high levels of job performance (Turunç, 2010:263), job satisfaction and extra-role (Van Dick, et. al., 2007:351). The study conducted by İşcan (2006:160) in Erzurum on 213 employees showed that both transformational and transactional leadership have a positive effect on organizational identification. Although researchers investigate the relation of organizational identification with various outcomes, none of them studied its possible relationship with work engagement which is a relatively newly developed concept. This study will clear this relationship between these important variables.

The engagement concept developed from role theory and specified as an experiential state including engaging behaviors which people employ and express themselves physically, emotionally and cognitively during work performances (Kahn, 1990:694). Kahn (1990:700) defined engagement as "the simultaneous employment and expression of a person's preferred self in task behaviors that promote connections to work and others, personal presence (physical, emotional and cognitive) and active, full role performances. More recently, Maslach and Leiter considered work engagement and burnout as two poles of a continuum, burnout representing the negative pole and engagement the positive one. Since they defined burnout in terms of exhaustion, cynicism and reduced professional exhaustion, they defined engagement in terms of opposites of these three

aspects of burnout such as energy, involvement and efficacy (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003:4).

Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzales-Roma and Bakker (2002) treated work engagement from a different perspective and as an independent phenomenon defined as “a persistent and positive affective-motivational state of fulfillment in employees characterized by **vigor, dedication and absorption**” (p.72). Rather than a momentary and specific state, engagement refers to a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior. **Vigor** is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one’s work and showing persistence even faced with difficulties. **Dedication** refers to being strongly involved in one’s work and experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge. **Absorption** is characterized by full concentration and being happily engrossed in one’s work, so that time passes quickly and one has difficulties to detach oneself from work (Schaufeli, et. al., 2002:72).

When organizational identification is considered as an affective and cognitive bond between the individual and the organization whereby the individual defines herself/himself with the organization as a social entity (Edwards and Peccei, 2007:30) it is likely to expect that this bond and self-definition may affect his/her emotional state toward work and result in high levels of energy and resilience while working. It is very likely for him/her to get strongly involved in his/her work activity.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a positive relationship between organizational identification and work engagement.

Specifically, employees who identify with their organization are thought to be more likely to involve in organization’s goals and activities, therefore, be more motivated to work hard to achieve these goals (Dutton et al., 1994:256). Individuals who have strong identification with the organization are concerned with the well-being of their organization (Carmeli, Gilat and Waldman, 2007:977). Individuals direct their efforts on behalf of their colleagues and the organization as a whole (Dutton, et.al., 1994:254). Hence, it is likely that employees who identify with their organization will perform their tasks better. It is assumed that desire to perform tasks better will lead employees to engage in their work mentally and psychologically.



Organizational identification also stimulates a sense of oneness with the organization, which leads individuals to internalize the organization's aims and goals as their own (Mael and Ashfort, 1992:104). This, in turn, strengthens work motivation ultimately work engagement. It is also assumed that there might be another variable which may influence the relationship between organizational identification and work engagement. This variable is thought to be supervisor support.

### **B) Supervisor Support as a Moderator between Organizational Identification and Work Engagement**

Social support (organization or supervisor support) in the organizational context has a positive effect on several attitudes and behaviors of employees (Lepine, Erez and Johnson, 2002:54). It helps to understand the relations in the organization. The positive effect of social support can be explained within the framework of social exchange theory. According to Blau (1964:91-92), establishment of a social exchange relationship is based on a situation in which one party contributes and the other party reciprocates. Within this framework, support from the supervisor refers to the positive feedback and benefits which employees receive from their supervisors as a result of their contributions. Employees form a view concerning the extent to which supervisors value their contributions and care about their well-being (Kottke and Sahrainski, 1988:1076).

Employees, who are good in exchange relationships, receive more rewards and greater support from their supervisors (Murphy, Wayne, Liden and Erdoğan, 2003:64). The quality of the relationship between an employee and the supervisor is vital for the employee to achieve higher performance and develop positive attitudes. According to the social exchange theory, when an employee in an exchange interaction with a key actor in the workplace evaluates the relationship as being fair and satisfactory, she/he is likely to reciprocate based on Gouldner's norm of reciprocity through increased performance of in-role and discretionary behaviors and positive work attitudes (Ladebo, 2008:480). Laschinger, Finegan and Shamian (2001:44) found that if supervisors provide more supportive environment to their employees, employees will engage in better work attitudes. Work engagement can be one of these positive attitudes. "Supervisors are considered as agents of the organization, who are responsible for providing

information on organizational goals and values, implementing policies, scheduling work, setting performance standards, and performing appraisals” (Kreitner, Kinicki and Buelens, 2002). Accordingly, supervisors also have a critical role in developing employees’ perceptions about the organization (Deconinck and Johnson, 2009:336) because employees perceive their supervisors as the representative of the organization. Based on these linkages, it is likely to expect that when employees receive support from their supervisors, they will develop belongingness to the organization and define themselves with their organization and this will positively influence their state and affection toward their work. In other words, when there is a support between the employee and the supervisor, organizational identification will influence work engagement in a positive way.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Supervisor support moderates the relationship between organizational identification and work engagement.

Based on this framework, this study focuses on the relationship between organizational identification and work engagement. It also tests the moderating role of supervisor support in this relationship.

## **II) METHOD**

### **A) Sample**

Data were gathered from white collared employees working in companies in İstanbul that have more than 100 employees. All the respondents work in private sector such as banking, insurance, telecommunication, pharmaceutical, and chemical. Convenience sampling is used. 250 questionnaires distributed and 220 of them turned back with a response rate of 88%. 8 of the questionnaires were left out of the study because of too many unfilled questions. So, the sample consisted of 212 respondents. 57% percent of the sample was male and 60% of the sample was single. 66.5% of the respondents had a university degree. The average age of the respondents was 31.73 (SD= 8.14), the average tenure in the organization was 5.1 years (SD= 4.5) and the average job experience was 9.7 years (SD= 4.5).

## **B) Measurement**

The survey instrument consisted of 4 independent sections. In the first section, there was a cover letter explaining the purposes of the study and providing assurances of anonymity. In addition to the cover letter, there were demographic questions to determine some individual characteristics of the respondents such as gender, age, marital status, education level, number of years in work life and in current workplace. The next section included work engagement scale, third section was supervisor support and the last section included organizational identification scale.

Work engagement was measured by Utrecht Work Enthusiasm Scale (UWES). The scale was developed by Schaufeli et al. (2002). It includes 17 items that cover three aspects of the work engagement construct: vigor, dedication and absorption. Vigor is assessed with 6 items. A sample item is “At my work, I feel bursting with energy”. Dedication is assessed with 5 items. A sample item included in the dedication dimension is “I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose”. Absorption is measured with 6 items. A sample item refers to the absorption dimension is “When I am working, I forget everything else around me”. A 6-point response scale was used for organizational commitment test, ranging from “never” (1) to “always” (6).

Supervisor support was measured with 8 items adapted from Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli and Lynch’s (1997) perceived organizational support measure. The items were modified and authors inserted the word ‘supervisor’ instead of the word ‘organization’. In order to ensure respondents referred to the support received from their immediate supervisors, respondents were asked to refer to their immediate superior in directions provided in subsections. The sample item included in the scale is “My supervisor cares about my well-being”. The items were measured on a 6 Likert type scale ranging from “strongly agree” (6) to “strongly disagree” (1).

Organizational identification was measured by Organizational Identification Questionnaire developed by Mael and Ashforth (1992). It consists of 6 items. Example items of Organizational Identification Questionnaire are “When someone praises this organization, it feels like a

personal compliment” and “This organization’s successes are my successes”. The measure adopted a six point Likert scale, ranging from “strongly agree” (6) to “strongly disagree” (1).

### III) RESULTS

#### A) Descriptive Statistics

**Table : 1**  
**Descriptive Statistics of the Sample**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standart Deviation</b>	<b>Range</b>
Gender					
Male	121	57			
Female	91	43			
Age	212		31.7	8.14	22-73
Marital Status					
Married	84	40			
Single	128	60			
Education Level					
High School	27	13			
University	141	66			
Post Graduate	44	21			
Tenure	212		5.17	4.50	1-23
Total Experience	212		9.70	8.20	1-49

As it is shown in Table: 1, majority of the sample is male and 52% of the sample is between the ages of 22-30 with a mean of 31.7 years. 60% is single and 66 % of the respondents have a university degree. The work experience of the respondents varied between 1 and 49 years with a mean of 9.7 years. About 90 % of the respondents had been working for 1-12 years in their organization.

## **B) Factor Analysis of Work Engagement**

In order to find the factor structures of work engagement, factor analysis using principal components solution with varimax rotation was used. Any item with a factor loading less than .50 or loading to more than one factor was discarded from the analysis. Factors with Eigenvalues 1.00 or more were taken into consideration in total variance explained.

17 items of work engagement measure were entered into factor analysis. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was found as .918 which is above the accepted value. This result marked the homogeneous structure of the variables and the result of Bartlett Test (.000, Chi-Square: 2052.105, df: .105) showed that the variables were suitable for factor analysis. Two rotations were made to obtain the best representation of the data and 2 items were left out of the analysis that had crossloadings. The remaining 15 items were loaded on two factors explaining 61.226 % of the total variance. Considering the original factors (dedication, absorption and vigor) that Schaufeli et. al. (2002:86) found as a result of their study, loaded differently in the study. Dedication and vigor items loaded on a single factor and absorption items loaded on a separate factor. So, the resulting factors were named as dedication and vigor and absorption. The results of the factor analysis are shown in Table: 2.

**Table : 2**  
**Results of the Factor Analysis of Work Engagement Scale**

<b>Factor 1: Dedication &amp; Vigor</b>	<b>% variance: 41.529</b>	<b>Factor Loadings</b>
I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose		.872
To me, my job is challenging		.842
I am enthusiastic about my job		.822
I am proud on the work that I do		.803
At my work, I feel bursting with energy		.719
My job inspires me		.693
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work		.674
At my job, I feel strong and vigorous		.654
At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well		.638
At my job, I am very resilient, mentally		.578
I feel happy when I am working intensely		.525
<b>Factor 2: Absorption</b>	<b>% variance: 19.697</b>	
When I am working, I forget everything else around me		.842
It is difficult to detach myself from my job		.831
I am immersed in my work		.607
Time flies when I am working		.531

### **Reliability Analysis**

Reliability analysis was conducted for organizational identification, work engagement and supervisor support scales and their subscales. All the scale and subscales have fairly high internal consistency. The reliability coefficients, means and standart deviations for factors of work engagement and overall organizational identification and supervisor support are represented in Table: 3.

**Table: 3**  
**Means, Standart Deviations and Reliability Coefficients of Organizational Identification, Work Engagement and Supervisor Support Scales and Subscales**

Scale	Mean	Standart Deviation	Cronbach Alpha
Organizational Identification (overall)	20.24	7.21	.85
Work Engagement	68.41	15.91	.94
Dedication & Vigor	44.08	11.08	.92
Absorption	16.22	3.92	.80
Supervisor Support (overall)	27.81	10.05	.93

### C) Hypotheses Testing

In order to test the first hypothesis stating “There is a positive relationship between organizational identification and work engagement”, correlation analysis is used. As a result of the correlation analysis, significant relationship is found between organizational identification and all of the work engagement factors. Results are shown in Table: 3.

**Table: 4**  
**Correlations between Organizational Identification and Work engagement Factors**

	1	2	3
Organizational identification	1	.676* *	.579**
Dedication and Vigor	.676**	1	.470**
Absorption	.579**	.470**	1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Results in Table: 3 show that there is a positive and strong correlation between organizational identification and dedication and vigor factors of work engagement. There is a strong and positive correlation between organizational identification and absorption. According to these results, Hypothesis 1 is supported.

#### **D) Testing the Moderating Influence of Supervisor Support**

All continuous predictor variables, including the moderator are centered prior to conducting such regression analyses. Centering is accomplished by subtracting the sample mean from all individuals' scores on the variable, thus producing a revised sample mean of 0. This procedure reduces the multicollinearity between predictors and any interaction terms among them and facilitates the testing of simple slopes. Then, the interaction terms were calculated by multiplying new independent variable score and moderator variable score. A significant change in the variance explained by the regression step and a significant beta coefficient for an interaction term constitutes a moderating effect.

In the first step of the hierarchical regression analysis, independent variable (organizational identification) was entered. Following the independent variable, moderating variable (supervisor support) was entered. In the third step, the interaction term of the two variables was entered into the analysis (organizational identification \* supervisor support). The results are tabulated in Table: 5.



**Table : 5**  
**Results of the Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Testing the Moderator**

<b>Dependent Variable: Dedication &amp; Vigor</b>			
<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Step 2</b>	<b>Step 3</b>
<b>Organizational identification</b>	.450*	.324*	.168
<b>Supervisor Support</b>		.428*	.408
<b>Org. Identification*Supervisorsupport</b>			.582*
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.261	.282	.290
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	.253	.274	.283
<b>R<sup>2</sup> change</b>	.208	.096	.054
<b>F</b>	.324*	.217*	15.033*
<b>Dependent Variable: Absorption</b>			
<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Step 2</b>	<b>Step 3</b>
<b>Organizational identification</b>	.376*	.307*	.196
<b>Supervisor Support</b>		.325*	.287*
<b>Org. Identification*Supervisor support</b>			.507*
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.195	.207	.223
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	.183	.192	.201
<b>R<sup>2</sup> change</b>	.072	.055	.032
<b>F</b>	2.196*	2.383*	12.808*

\*p<0.05

Results of the regression analysis showed that organizational identification explains both factors of work engagement. It explains the variance in dedication & vigor factor ( $\beta = .450$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and absorption factors of work engagement ( $\beta = .376$ ;  $p < .05$ ).

Support from the supervisor was found to moderate the relationship between organizational identification and work engagement. Supervisor support had a significant influence as a single factor on both dedication and vigor ( $\beta = .428$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and absorption ( $\beta = .325$   $p < .05$ ) factors of work engagement. Beta coefficient of organizational identification decreased in each step. When the interaction term entered into the analysis, the significance of organizational identification on dedication & vigor and absorption disappeared. As a result of the finding, Hypothesis 2 stating “Supervisor support moderates the relationship between organizational identification and work engagement” supported.

Following the procedure recommended by Aiken and West (1991), the regression analysis was taken further. The sample was split at the median into two groups of high and low supervisor support and additional regression analyses were conducted for both absorption and dedication & vigor factors of work engagement. Additional analyses showed that for when the supervisor support is low, there is a negative significant relationship between organizational identification and both dedication & vigor ( $\beta = -.368$ ;  $p = .000$ ) and absorption ( $\beta = -.332$ ;  $p = .001$ ) factors of work engagement. When supervisor support is high, there is a positive relationship between organizational identification and both dedication & vigor ( $\beta = .406$ ;  $p = .000$ ) and absorption ( $\beta = .391$ ;  $p = .000$ ).

## **DISCUSSION**

Organizational identification is a very important issue in understanding the link between employee and his/her organization. It has benefits both for employees and organizations. From the organization standpoint, organizations with high levels of organizational identification have more commitment, citizenship behavior, greater support, and high levels of cooperation. From the employee standpoint, employees with high levels of organizational identification thought to internalize organization’s goals and feel motivated to achieve those goals. Employees can also satisfy one of their basic human needs which is affiliation (Ashforth and Mael, 1989:21). Employees also differ with regard to their dedication to their job and the amount of attention and energy that they spend at their work (Babcock-Roberson and Strickland, 2010:315). Their energy, dedication and attention can be influenced by the level of their identification to their organization.

Moreover, it is known that quality of the supervision have important effects on several employee outcomes. Some studies found the buffering effect of supervisor support as well (Etzion, 1984:619). Based on this, the purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between organizational identification and work engagement and the moderating role of supervisor support.

Results show that organizational identification explains both dedication & vigor and absorption dimensions of work engagement. The more employees identify themselves with their organizations, the more they are engaged to work. In other words, when employees are attracted to organization's values and goals and when they feel a sense of oneness with the organization, they find their job meaningful, purposeful and challenging, feel energy to go to work, and feel themselves happy, strong and mentally resilient. This attachment with the organization also triggers absorption and they forget everything around them and even they don't realize how time passes while working. This means they mentally immerse in their work. There is no direct support for this finding in the literature because there is no other study that examines the relationship between organizational identification and work engagement. However, this finding can be supported by similar study findings. According to Mael and Ashforth (1992:104), identification elicits a sense of oneness with the organization, which leads individuals to internalize the organization's aims and goals as their own. This increases work motivation and ultimately work performance (Van Dick et. al., 2007:137). This would also influence employees' willingness to invest effort in their work, a sense of enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge and full concentration in their work. Knippenberg and Van Schie (2000:145) also found a significant relationship between organizational identification and employees' involvement in their work. Although job involvement and work engagement are treated as distinct concepts, engagement includes some kind of involvement in one's work mentally. Thus, this finding would also support the results of this study.

Supervisor support is found to moderate the relationship between organizational identification and dedication & vigor factor of work engagement. Support from the supervisor also has a moderating role between organizational identification and absorption. When employees feel that they

are supported and valued by their supervisor, their identification with the organization increases their engagement to work. Social support at work may be critically important because of its potential for moderating or weakening the negative effects. Social support is information that leads a person to believe that he/she is cared for, esteemed, and valued (Cobb, 1976:300). One way that this support comes from is the supervisor. Supervisor support has important implications on employees' attitudes and behaviors because employees see their supervisors as the representatives of the organization and they interact quite often at the workplace. When employees are cared and valued by their supervisor, their sense of oneness with the organization gets stronger and this in turn influences employees' energy, strength, and happiness at work and he/she immerses himself/herself into work and cannot detach. Supervisor support serves as an important buffer at the workplace for employees.

#### **A) Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research**

One of the limitations of the study is the sample. Sample in this study consists of working people from different sectors and companies. Instead, future research would conduct such a study in a specific sector or company. Second limitation may be that data is collected from the same source and the results are based on self-reported surveys. This may create common method variance. However, it is thought that the variables in the study would be measured mostly by self reported measures. Identification with the organization, support received from the supervisor and work engagement cannot be evaluated by another person as good as the target person. The study is also cross-sectional. This restrains us to build cause and effect relationship between the variables of the study. According to Podsakoff, Mc Kenzie, Lee and Podsakoff (2003:886), variables measured at different points in time are less likely to suffer from common method bias. Future research would collect the data from multiple resources and use longitudinal design to overcome this limitation.

Future research would develop a better understanding of organizational identification including the underlying reasons for individuals' psychological attachment to the organization because research show that it is important for the well being and productivity of the organization.

Work engagement is a relatively new developed concept. There is a need for comprehensive models that will examine the antecedents, consequences and correlates of work engagement. Very few causal inferences can be made about the concept because the majority of studies are cross-sectional in nature. Additionally, most of the research on work engagement focuses on the individual level variables and work related issues. Variables at the organizational level need to be focused in order to broaden our view. Although, the concept is kept in the shadow of burnout and job involvement, there is evidence that work engagement is a distinct concept. More research is needed to develop the theory and measurement of work engagement.

### **B) Managerial Implications**

It flows directly from the findings of the present study that management should support organizational identification in order to increase work engagement of employees. Human resources policies and practices fostering organizational identification should be integrated. For example, they can foster identification by implementing programs that strengthen feelings of corporate identity and that create a positive image of the organization as a whole (Van Knippenberg, 2003:390). When management ensures that employees have a feeling of oneness with or belongingness to their organization, they will also ensure the engagement of employees to their work. This will provide positive outcomes both for the organization and the employee such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and low turnover intention (Demerouti, Bakker, Janssen and Schaufeli, 2001:279; Salanova, Grau, Llorens and Schaufeli, 200:69).

One important point that management should not forget is the support of the supervisor. This has important applications for many aspects such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, low levels of turnover and absenteeism. These outcomes should not be underestimated by managers. Supervisors or managers should be able to give the feelings of care and value in order to provide these positive outcomes. Moreover, supervisor should focus on improving the quality of their relationship with their subordinates.

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