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# Perceived organizational support, employee work engagement and work life balance: Social exchange theory perspective

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#### **Info Artikel**

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Abstract

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#### Keywords:

Perceived Organizational Support; Employee Work Engagement; Work Life Balance; Social Exchange Theory

This study aimed to determine the effect of the Employee Work Engagement variable as a mediating variable between Perceived Organizational Support and Work-Life Balance. This type of quantitative descriptive research with Structural Equation Modeling as a data processing approach. The sampling technique is purposive sampling. They collected data by distributing questionnaires to 200 security unit employees working at State and Private Universities in Semarang City. The results showed a significant positive effect between the variables perceived organisational support, employee work engagement and work-life balance. The significant positive effect of the relationship between the three variables indicates that the employee work engagement variable can mediate the relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Work-Life Balance. The triadic process between organisational support, work involvement and work-life balance is an implementation of social exchange theory. Employees give their time, energy, thoughts and enthusiasm for the organisation's benefit. Organisations provide remuneration in the form of compensation and welfare for the persistence of employee work for the advancement of the organisation. It gives a sense of satisfaction and happiness and can be used for yourself and your family.

# Dukungan organisasi yang dirasakan, keterlibatan kerja karyawan, dan keseimbangan kehidupan kerja: Perspektif teori pertukaran sosial

#### **Abstrak**

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui pengaruh variabel Employee Work Engagement sebagai variabel mediasi antara Perceived Organizational Support dan Work-life Balance. Jenis penelitian deskriptif kuantitatif dengan Structural Equation Modeling sebagai pendekatan pengolahan data. Teknik pengambilan sampel adalah purposive sampling. Metode pengumpulan data dengan menyebarkan kuesioner kepada 200 pegawai satpam yang bekerja di Perguruan Tinggi Negeri dan Swasta di Kota Semarang. Hasil menunjukkan ada pengaruh positif signifikan antara variabel persepsi dukungan organisasi, employee work engagement dan work-life balance. Pengaruh positif signifikan pada hubungan ketiga variabel tersebut menunjukkan bahwa variabel employee work engagement mampu memediasi hubungan Perceived Organizational Support dan Work-life Balance. Proses triadik antara dukungan organisasi, keterlibatan kerja dan keseimbangan kehidupan kerja merupakan implementasi dari teori pertukaran sosial. Karyawan memberikan waktu, tenaga, pikiran dan semangat untuk kepentingan organisasi. Organisasi memberikan remunerasi berupa kompensasi dan kesejahteraan pada karyawan serta memberikan rasa kepuasan dan kebahagiaan yang dapat digunakan untuk diri sendiri dan keluarga.

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a tremendous impact on the people of Indonesia, including employees in various agencies. The government imposes restrictions on community activities that require some employees to work from home. Many employees who start small and large-scale businesses have closed their businesses because their customers do not do activities outside the home. Activity restrictions mean that not many employees come to the office to work. In general, instantly implement a work shift system to reduce crowds. Thus, agencies need tight security because many assets and infrastructure must be kept safe during activity restrictions. This is the main task for agency security units that do not recognize activity restrictions.

In the modern era, the existence of a security unit or security guard is a crucial element in supporting the performance of a company. Security guards, whom many people generally refer to as security, have significant duties and responsibilities. Security guards are responsible for maintaining assets and protecting the security and safety of the company and its employees. Especially in the pandemic era, not all companies or agencies have implemented offline learning or work from the office. However, security guards have job exceptions; because of their duties and responsibilities, they must always come to the company to ensure assets are safe. Likewise, with working hours different from other operational employees, security guards work 12 hours per day divided into several shifts.

The security guard is a partner of the National Police who carries out the function of the Limited Police Authority following Law No. 2 of 2002 concerning the Indonesian National Police Article 3c, considering that the security guard's responsibilities are no less important than other jobs. One of them is maintaining order, providing security and comfort and providing services to employees, guests, visitors and the community in their work environment. Security guards, as part of the company's human resources, have special duties, including maintaining security and order in the workplace and its environment, which includes aspects of physical security, personnel, information and other technical security, as well as protecting and nurturing residents in the workplace and their environment (Indonesia, 2021).

The need for security services that continues to increase occurs in the midst of the public's view that until now still looks down on the security profession. The image of a security guard in the midst of society as a lowly job, does not have a career path or some even call it unemployment which is given the solution to become a security officer. Some companies and users of security services still regard security as a burden and consider it a profession that does not need to be trained, and does not need to be increased in competence (Rumahorbo, 2016). Whereas on the other hand the existence of security guards is the front line in serving organizational stakeholders. The dilemma of the security guard profession on the one hand, they spend their daily time carrying out their duties and responsibilities for the security and comfort of the organization's assets. On the other hand, their profession is considered inferior by some people, lacking organizational

support for career development and welfare. On the other hand, security guards have families who are waiting for the results of their work to survive.

The inability of employees to balance work, personal and family life causes work stress and decreased work motivation (Junça Silva & Lopes, 2021). This of course has an effect on the decline in work performance and productivity. The workplace is where employees spend most of their time, so it is important to feel safe, comfortable, able to share various hobbies with the facilities provided by the organization. Thus, the role of the organization's management team is very important in providing a good physical and non-physical work environment as well as the required human resource practices (Luturlean, Prasetio, & Saragih, 2019).

Work and family are different but closely related. An employee needs a balance in completing work responsibilities, but has quality time for personal and family. Work-life balance is primarily concerned with maintaining a balance between personal life and professional life. Studies show that individuals must be able to manage time, find priorities by balancing time for work, family, vacation, and health (Irfan, Khalid, Kaka Khel, Maqsoom, & Sherani, 2021). Work-life balance (WLB) is a condition in which a person achieves a balance in work and life, by one way of dividing time between personal and work matters (Wheatley, 2012). Bradley and McDonald, (2005) defines WLB as a condition when there is little or no conflict or disruption between work and family roles, so employees will be able to enjoy life more and feel happier. Human resource practices and a work environment that supports WLB can help employees focus on their work (Mondy & Martocchio, 2016). Organizations must support employees to achieve WLB for better performance, lower retention rates, and always be motivated to be loyal to the organization (Kaur & Randhawa, 2020).

Several studies that link the perception of organizational support to work-life balance produce a significant positive effect (Thakur & Kumar, 2015; Khoiriyah, Sari, & Widiana, 2020; Kaur & Randhawa, 2020). However, other researchers have found that there is no relationship between organizational support and work-life balance(Luturlean et al., 2019). There are contradictions in the findings of this study, this study will further examine the relationship between perceived organizational support and WLB by placing the work engagement variable as a mediating variable. There are not many studies that raise the balance of work and family life of the security forces profession.

In the operational function of human resource management, work-life balance (WLB) is included in the employee maintenance function(M. Peeters & Demerouti, 2014). WLB is the level of satisfaction obtained by employees both at home/family and at work(Clarck, 2000). The work environment can affect family life, the influence of both can be positive or negative in supporting employee welfare. According to(Kinnunen, Rantanen, Mauno, & Peeters, 2014), over the last two decades the professional life of workers in various organizations and the non-work-life has become less and less clear. This is largely due to changes in family structure, increased female labor participation and changes in technology, such as mobile phones, portable computers, tablets, and the development of the nature of work done online. Given such an environment, employees

are now placing more value on free time or social interactions with friends, family, and communities of interest (M. C. W. Peeters, Montgomery, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2005). Work-life balance is an important aspect of a harmonious, healthy work environment and a sense of mutual concern between the organization and loyal employees for demands for task completion at work and at home to meet employee welfare, job satisfaction and performance (Permarupan, Mamun, Hayat, Saufi, & Samy, 2020). In light of these results, researchers and practitioners are increasingly looking for pathways through which work-life balance can be improved. Related practices (e.g., flexible working hours, parental leave, and childcare provisions) aim to increase employee autonomy and flexibility so that individuals can better cope with multiple demands and the organization increases employee productivity, profitability, and retention.(Rodriguez-Sanchez, Gonzalez-Torres, Montero-Navarro, & Gallego-Losada, 2020).

Work engagement was first initiated by Kahn (1990) by defining the selfutilization of organizational members for job roles. During job roles, employees perform and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally. Work engagement is a positive and satisfying motivational state related to job well-being (Blanch & Aluja, 2009). Employees who are committed to work voluntarily devote themselves to achieving the best for their performance. These employees have a deep level of enthusiasm, dedication, and concern to pursue, study and properly complete their duties and responsibilities so as to contribute to optimal organizational functions and performance. Dimensions of work involvement, including full concentration and focus, being happy and comfortable doing work so that time does not seem to pass quickly, and finding it difficult to get away from the job because it is fun and according to their passion. The employee likes challenges, devotes time, energy, thought to find solutions to his work difficulties(Timms et al., 2015). These employees are always adaptive, innovative and creative to complete their tasks(Wilmar B. Schaufeli, Marisa Salanova, Alez-Roma, & Bakker, 2002). Previous research found that high employee engagement leads to reduced absenteeism, fewer accidents and reduced turnover intention(Hewitt, 2013). Thus, employee engagement has become an important aspect in improving individual as well as overall organizational performance.

Rhoades (2002) stated that the perception of organizational support refers to the employee's perception of the extent to which the organization values the contribution, supports, and cares about the welfare that has been given to employees. Employees who have high loyalty, those who always get support, motivation and attention from company management, such employees will certainly not seek or accept offers from other companies. Company support is felt by employees when they receive intrinsic and extrinsic motivation fairly, opinions, suggestions and suggestions of employees are listened to and considered by superiors and supervisors are also supportive. Support in the form of intrinsic motivation in the form of praise and recognition, workplace comfort, a sense of security at work and good relations with colleagues. Extrinsic rewards in the form of salary payments based on performance.

In organizational science, it is important to consider how organizations can make a positive contribution to the daily work-life of employees and remove the barriers and problems that employees face while working. This can be called a mutualistic symbiosis, a mutually beneficial relationship. Employees provide physical and non-physical abilities for the benefit of the company, on the other hand the company provides employee rights and provides the best place to work(Bukhari & Kamal, 2017).

## Perceived Organizational Supportand Work Engagement

Organizational support theoryassumes employees form general beliefs about how and how much the organization values contributions and cares about their well-being. POS is an experience-based attribution of policies, norms, procedures and actions that have been implemented by the organization so that it affects employee behavior(Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001). POS can reflect employees' perceptions of the organization, willingness to provide assistance when employees have difficulty completing tasks and responsibilities and willingness to meet socio-emotional needs. Organizational support in the form of safe and comfortable functional and social interactions, makes employees voluntarily dedicate their abilities to the benefit of the organization. Employees interpret organizational support as a manifestation of the organization's commitment to them and will return it by increasing their commitment to the organization by devoting time to completing their tasks well (Aube et al. 2007). The proposed hypothesis is:

H1: Perceived Organizational Support has a positive effect on Work Engagement

#### Work Engagement and Work-life Balance

role enrichment and conservation of resources (COR) theory is used to explain the positive relationship of job involvement on WLB Role enrichment perspective(Rothbard, 2001), assumes that positive role-related experiences or emotional responses to one role can increase one's involvement in another. Furthermore, when individuals have positive feelings for one's job role in the workplace, it can encourage one to perceive positive WLB Aspects and vice versa (Marais et al., 2014). Similarly, COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 1998) assumes that existing resources can bring additional resources, so that individuals with more resources are better able to initiate proactive behavior and solve problems. Having a good WLB provides energy, self-efficacy, and a positive attitude for oneself, which can intrinsically motivate and energize employees to engage in their work (Niessendkk., 2018). Work role involvement also has a positive effect on the benefits of role resources, consequently leading to work-family enrichment. The proposed hypothesis is:

H2: Work Engagement has a positive effect on Work-life Balance

#### Perceived Organizational Supportand Work-life Balance

Employees who get the company's attention about welfare, they feel happy and bring financial compensation for the benefit of the family. Organizational support can

encourage employees to act proactively (Wang et al., 2008). Through these behaviors, employees can generate sufficient resources to handle demanding work and feel more positive meaning, so that they are able to balance work and family roles. Organizational support theory states that employees develop positive social exchanges with organizational support, employees work for the organization and the organization provides remuneration(Eisenberger et al., 2001). As individuals in the organization, employees who pay attention to compensation, both financial and non-financial compensation, they are psychologically comfortable working and reduce stress that can have an impact on work conflict and carried in the family. The proposed hypothesis is: H3: Perceived Organizational Support has a positive effect on Work-life Balance

#### **METHODS**

Respondents of this research are security employees who work in state and private higher education institutions in the city of Semarang totaling 200 people. The sampling method used was purposive sampling and snowball sampling. The sample criteria used in this study are respondents who have worked for more than 3 years and have a minimum education of high school. Respondents forward the questionnaire to friends they know or the community they follow. Methods of data collection by interview methods, literature study and questionnaires. The questionnaire distributed to the respondents contained statements about the perceived variables of organizational support, work engagement and work-life balance as reflected by each variable indicator (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990). Job engagement is measured from statements made by(Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). Work-life balance is evaluated with statements from(Hayman, 2005). The data analysis technique uses Equation Modeling (SEM) with version 22 of the AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structure) program.

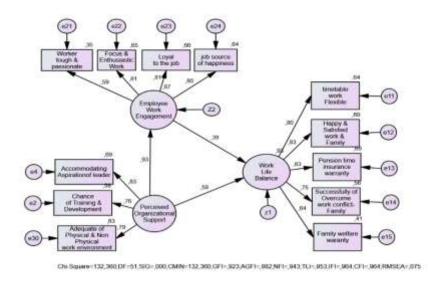


Figure 1. Full Structural Model

Based on the results of the goodness of fit test, there are several proposed estimation models that meet the required conformity index. The resulting structural fit model is RMSEA=0.075 with a cut off of 0.05 - 0.08; GFI=0.923 with cut off values between 0.6 - 0.9, NFI = 0.943, TLI = 0.953; IFI = 0.964; CFI=0.964 with cutoff > 0.9. The results of the validity and reliability test of the indicator variables are shown from the loading factor value, all values of above 0.50 (Ghozali, 2012).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Employee Work Engagement variable in this study as a mediating variable between Perceived Organizational Support and Work-life Balance. The role of the mediating variable was tested using the Sobel test method. The Sobel test method is used to see the significance value of the indirect or intervening variables on the structural equation model. The Sobel test results provide information that the statistical Sobel test value is 2.94442256 with a P-value of 0.00323558 this value is below the 5% cut-off significance. The Sobel test statistic value is above the cut-off value of 1.96, so it can be concluded that the Employee Work Engagement variable mediates the relationship between the Perceived Organizational Support and Work-life Balance variables.

Table 1. Estimation Test Results Between Variables

			Estimate	SE	CR	P	Result
Perceived	$\rightarrow$	Employee					
Organizational		Work	0.682	0.071	9.609	0.000*)	Supported
Support		Engagement					
Perceived	$\rightarrow$	Work-life Balance	0.464	0.150	3.099	0.002	Supported
Organizational							
Support							
Employee	$\rightarrow$	Work-life Balance	0.416	0.200	2.086	0,037	Supported
Work							
Engagement							

<sup>\*)</sup>significance level of  $\leq 1\%$ 

The test results of the estimation of employee work engagement on the perception of organizational support give a value of 0.682 with a significance level of 0.000, meaning that there is a significant positive effect between the two. These results indicate the most dominant influence among the relationships between other variables. Organizational support that comes from group leaders, section heads and the organization's management team such as aspirations, criticisms, ideas are considered and accommodated. The respondent's working hours use a shift system, uniforms are always provided and change every year. The training and development of security guards is carried out regularly and trained by experienced instructors from the police. This shows that the leader pays attention to direct and indirect compensation, a comfortable work environment, and adequate work infrastructure. This increases enthusiasm, enthusiasm and loyalty as well

as attachment to work. In accordance with social exchange theory which explains the principle of reciprocity, when commanders or leaders provide continuous support to subordinates, they reciprocate by showing involvement in the task (Ram and Prabhakar, 2011). Engaged employees are full of positive energy, so they are passionately engaged in their work, leaving no time and space to think about leaving the organization (Kaur & Randhawa, 2020).

The test results of the estimation of employee work engagement on work-life balance give a value of 0.464 with a significance level of 0.002, meaning that there is a significant positive effect between the two. Happiness in doing tasks and responsibilities reduces work stress and fatigue, so that conflicts in the family, if any, can be resolved with a cool head. Work enthusiasm and focus on carrying out tasks and supported by adequate welfare, increase loyalty to the organization, thus avoiding jobs offered by other companies. Organizational support has a positive effect on happiness. When organizations provide support to security forces by meeting their needs, security guards will tend to feel more appreciated. The support provided by the organization will make nurses have resilience in the face of pressure at work (Khoiriyah et al., 2020)

The result of the estimation test of perceived organizational support on work-life balance gives a value of 0.416 with a significance level of 0.037 which means that there is a significant positive effect between the two. Positive leadership support, providing job satisfaction and happiness to employees, so that happiness is brought to a family atmosphere (Lamprinou, Konstantinos, Tasoulis, & Kravariti, 2021). In the end, there is a harmonious work and family atmosphere. The security guard profession that tends to be masculine and the duties and responsibilities to always secure assets, ensure that all members of the organization are safe and secure, make the security guard profession oriented to work and family in a balanced way. This is because the profession's duty to maintain and provide protection to members of the organization will be carried over and balanced with the protection given to the family.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Following the statistical results with the path analysis model, the influence between variables of all exogenous variables on endogenous variables shows significant positive results. The exogenous variable of organizational support perception is dominant in influencing work engagement. Organizational support increases motivation, enthusiasm, energy and readiness to continue working for the organization. Organizational support in the form of human resource practices, including the provision of financial and non-financial compensation, increases a sense of loyalty and a sense of belonging so that there is a desire to perform challenging tasks and learn new things. The welfare provided by the organization impacts reducing family conflicts because the family is part of the employees who are waiting for the results of their work to continue their lives. The triadic process between organizational support, work engagement and work-life balance is an implementation of social exchange theory. Social exchange theory suggests that in a

social relationship, there are elements of rewards, sacrifices, and benefits that are mutually beneficial.

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