

The Influence of Perceived Organizational Support and Internal Communication toward Work Engagement

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Abstract–Human resources become the main capital for labor-intensive industries. Further, work engagement has emerged as one of the most critical factors to create a competitive advantage on human resource. Developing work engagement needs a reciprocal relationship between organization and employee. The present study aimed to explore the influence of perceived organizational support and internal communication toward work engagement. Using quantitative approach with convenience sampling method, this study involves 201 permanent employees in a labor-intensive industry engaged in manufacturing. Data collection technique used was survey method by distributing the scale consisting of work engagement scale, perceived organizational support scale and internal communication scale. Multiple regression was utilized to analyze these research data. The result revealed that perceived organizational support and internal communication significant and positively influenced work engagement. It meant the higher level of work engagement the stronger organizational support perceived by the employee and the more effective internal communication. The implication of this study will help the organization in enhancing work engagement level on an employee by optimizing perceived organizational support and internal communication effectiveness.

Keywords: *Work Engagement, Perceived Organizational Support, Internal Communication, Labor-Intensive Industry*

INTRODUCTION

In this era of globalization, organizations are faced with various challenges in running their business. These challenges could come from various aspects, whether internal or external, from economic, socio-cultural, political, legal, technological and infrastructure aspects. About the goals and objectives of the organization, this condition requires the organization to be able to demonstrate its best performance to remain competitive and even growing (Adeoye & Elegunde, 2012).

To remain competitive, an organization must have some resources. The resources include physical resources, finance, marketing ability and human resources. Of the total resources, human resources are one of the most potential factors to provide a competitive advantage for the organization (Fisher, Schoenfeldt & Shaw, 2006). To develop a strategy that places human resources as a competitive advantage, the ultimate goal must be to create engaged employees (Dale Carnegie & Associates, 2012). Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) argue that organizations that have human resources with high work engagement can maintain and improve performance even though conditions around it are less conducive.

PT. X is a labor-intensive company engaged in manufacturing of rubber processing with the results of tires for various motor vehicles. According to the internal state of the company, it still encountered several problems that hinder the achievement of optimal company performance. One is illustrated by the complaints submitted by the customer, among others are product defects, packaging errors, and delivery.

Customer complaints related to product defects, product delivery errors and packaging indicate a lack of optimum performance. This is certainly closely related to the human resources owned by PT. X where the company is a labor-intensive company that hangs its business process journey on the company's human resources.

According to Markos and Sridevi (2010), human resources with a disengaged employee will result in low commitment, low customer orientation, a high percentage of absenteeism and a tendency to make mistakes in work which then affect performance achievement organization (Markos & Sridevi, 2010).

Meanwhile, Kular, Gatenby, Rees, Soane, and Truss (2008) argue that a high level of work engagement will produce positive results on the success of an organization where an organization with employees with high levels of job

attachment is predicted to experience improvement in customer satisfaction, productivity and profitability. Even in less conducive conditions, employees with high work engagement can maintain and improve their performance (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004).

Thus, it is important for PT. X to find out the extent to which employees' work engagement level where human resources are one of the most potential factors to provide a competitive advantage for the organization to survive in global market competition. (Fisher, Schoenfeldt & Shaw, 2006).

Eisenberger, Malone, and Presson (2016) argue that the perceived organizational support is an important factor in the effort to develop work engagement within a company. This construct is important because of the increasingly competitive environment that makes employees more worried about the extent to which organizations pay attention to their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 2016).

Organizational treatment has a great impact on employee perceptions, and it will again redirect how the employee's treatment of the organization. This situation can ultimately affect the commitment and work engagement (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001).

In addition to the perceived organizational support, internal communication is also touted as one of the key drivers in building work engagement (Yates, 2006). Communication is one of the main factors of sustainability of an organization where almost all activities within the organization involve communication. In this case, organizations that have effective communication with their employees will have a higher level of work engagement (Baumruk & Gorman, 2006; Yates, 2006).

Some other studies have also found that internal communication is found to have a positive relationship with work engagement and organizational commitment (Carriere & Bourque, 2009; Taylor & Elsey 2005; Sopow, 2008; Sudhakar & Patil, 2006). In line with research by White, Vanc, and Stafford (2010) who also found that effective internal communication can enhance employees' sense of ownership and give employees a greater sense of responsibility to support organizations on a personal level.

Based on the above explanation, the researcher is interested to examine the influence of perceived organizational support and internal communication to work engagement in PT X. Considering that this company is a labor-

intensive company that relies on its business process to human resources, it is important to see the work engagement level in order to ensure the company's success in facing global market competition.

THEORY

A. Work Engagement

The concept used in this study is work engagement. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) define work engagement as a condition in which a person feels satisfied and has a positive mind in his work which is characterized by high vigor, dedication, and absorption in doing the work. Vigor is characterized by a work climate that is full of energy and mental resilience and a willingness to work more in working and surviving despite many difficulties. Dedication is characterized by full engagement in its work and feels its interests, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenges in its work. Absorption is characterized by a climate of concentration and preoccupation with the work, time passes quickly, and it is difficult to get away from the job.

There are several things that become factors of the emergence of work attachment within an organization. Robinson, Perryman & Hayday (2004) indicate some factors below as an important factor affecting the level of work engagement, including a. Quality management, characterized by the attitude of managers who care about their employees, informative, give fair treatment, encourage employees to show their best performance, and give attention related to the career development of its employees; b. Two-Way and open communication within the organization; c. Effective cooperation between different departments and functions, as well as between management and trade unions; d. Focus on employee development; e. organizational commitment to employee well-being; and f. justice regarding salaries and benefits that include comparisons both inside and outside the organization's environment.

B. Perceived Organizational Support

According to Eisenberger et al. (1986), perceived organizational support are defined as employees' perceptions of the extent to which organizations value their contributions and care about their well-being. Furthermore, Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) define the perceived organizational support as an overall employee belief about the extent to which organizations value their contribution and care about their well-being. According to Rhoades and

Eisenberger (2002), there are three pleasant treatments from organizations that could improve the perceived organizational support, namely rewards from the organization and conditions of work, support from supervisors and fairness.

The perceived organizational support has a direct impact on employee behavior within the organization. The ideology of exchange (exchange theory) and reciprocity (norms) inherent in the concept of organizational support, make employees feel obliged to repay the organization's treatment (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Eisenberger et al., 2001). Numerous studies have found a positive impact on the perceived organizational support towards employee satisfaction (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, Lynch, 1997, Hussami, 2008; Asegale & Eisenberger, 2003), organizational citizenship behavior (Asgari & Samah, 2008; Miao & Kim, 2010; Ali, 2009) and work engagement (Rich, Lepine and Crawford, 2010; Ram and Prahbkar, 2011; Dabke and Patole, 2014; Burns, 2016; Eisenberger, Malone and Presson, 2016).

C. Internal Communication

Goldhaber (1986) defines organizational communication as a process of creating and exchanging messages in a network of interdependent relationships to address an uncertain or ever-changing environment. In organizational communication, there are internal and external communications. Within the limits of this study, researchers used internal communications.

According to Goldhaber (1986), internal communication is the process of exchanging information between people within the organization, either horizontally or vertically to complete the work. Based on the concepts of some other experts, internal communication is a communication function specifically designed by the organization to build and foster relationships with internal stakeholders, resulting in emotional closeness embodied through useful engagement for the achievement of organizational goals (Woodruffe 1995, Doorley & Garcia, 2007; Thereof, Welch & Jackson, 2007).

Dennis (1975) developed a study of communication practices within an organization that describes the quality of objective experience of the internal environment of an organization. This study includes the perception of organizational members of the message and the relationship of messages to events that occur within the organization. In his research, Dennis

(1975) found four dimensions in the internal communication practice of an organization, namely: superior-subordinate communication, quality of information, opportunities for upward communication and reliability of information.

The effectiveness of communication that takes place within an organization gives a good impact to the organization such as enhancing the reputation and credibility of the organization (Dawkins, 2004; Hannegan, 2004; Tucker, Meyer & Westerman, 1996), increasing employee confidence (Ragusa, 2010); improve the behavior of supporting organizations (De Ridder and Human, 2004, Allen & Meyer, 1996) and improve work engagement (Hardaker & Fill, 2005; Sopot, 2008; Sudhaker & Patil, 2006; White et al, 2010; Carriere & Bourque, 2009; Thomson and Hecker, 2000).

D. Hypotheses

From the previous description, this study has three hypotheses, namely:

H1: There is a positive effect of perceived organizational support towards work engagement.

H2: There is a positive effect of internal communication towards work engagement.

H3: There is a positive effect of perceived organizational support and internal communication toward work engagement.

METHOD

This research used the quantitative approach to convenience sampling technique for research sampling. A total of 201 permanent employees at PT. X was included as a participant in the study. Methods of data retrieval conducted in this study is a survey method by spreading the scale that consists of the work engagement scale, perceived organizational support scale and internal communication scale of each consist of 7 point scale.

The researcher used 7 point scale at each research scale with the aim to overcome the midpoint limitations on the Likert usage in the answer choices. Cummins & Gullone (2000) suggest that midpoint limitations can be reduced by increasing the scale sensitivity. Increasing the scale sensitivity means increasing the number of scale options. Some researchers suggest that increased scale sensitivity may decrease the tendency to choose the midpoint (Matell & Jacoby, 1972; Cummins & Gullone, 2000; Tsang, 2012). It is further said that midpoint choice tends to be more common on a 3 point scale and

a 5 point scale, but is reduced on a scale of 7 points.

Work engagement scale consists of 14 items with 7 choices of answers ranging from never to always. The reliability of the scale of work attachment obtained from the test using Cronbach's Alpha method is 0.847 with a construct validity value of 0.50 to 0.80.

Perceived organizational support consists of 13 items with 7 choices ranging from strongly disagree to agree strongly. Reliability of organizational support perception scale obtained from a test using Cronbach's Alpha method is 0.839 with construct validity value from 0.570 to 0.889.

Internal communication scale consists of 14 items with 7 choices of answers ranging from strongly disagree to agree strongly. Internal communication scale reliability obtained from the test using Cronbach's Alpha method is 0.873 with construct validity value from 0.503 to 0.847.

Data analysis method used to test the hypothesis in this research is a statistical analysis that is multiple regression by using SPSS version 16 for windows. Before the hypothesis testing is done first test assumptions that also use the help program SPSS version 16 for windows. The assumption test is the normality test, linearity test, heteroscedasticity test, autocorrelation test and multicollinearity test.

RESULT

In scoring norms at each study scale, researchers used three categories. The scale of work engagement has an average score of 57.94, where the score is classified as a high category which means that most research subjects have a high level of work engagement. The scale of perceived organizational support has an average of 57.11 where the score is classified as moderate, which means that most of the research subjects perceive the support provided by the company is in the medium category. Finally, the internal communication scale has an average of 68 where this score belongs to the medium category which means that most subjects judge that internal communication is quite effective.

The first hypothesis in this study is that there is a positive effect of perceived organizational support toward work engagement. Hypothesis testing is done using simple regression analysis. From the result of simple regression statistical test between the effect of perceived organizational support (X1) toward work engagement (Y) is obtained a result that perceived organizational support has a significant positive effect on work

engagement. Furthermore, the second hypothesis in this study is that there is a positive effect of internal communication toward work engagement. Hypothesis testing is also done using simple regression analysis. From the results of simple regression statistical test between the effect of internal communication (X2) toward work engagement (Y) obtained the result that internal communication has a significant positive effect on work engagement. Finally, the third hypothesis in this study is that there is a positive effect of perceived organizational support and internal communication toward work engagement. Hypothesis testing is done using multiple regression analysis. From the result of multiple regression statistical tests between the effect of perceived organizational support (X1) and internal communication (X2) toward work engagement (Y), it is obtained that the perceived organizational support and internal communication have a significant positive effect on work engagement.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that the perceived organizational support has a positive and significant effect on work engagement. This means that the stronger the organization's support perceived by the employees at PT.X, the higher the level of work engagement.

Perceived organizational support is employees' beliefs about the extent to which organizations value their contributions and care about their well-being. This perception reflects the belief that the organization intends to reward its employees, the organization values employees' contribution to the achievement of organizational goals and concerns the welfare of their employees (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) argue that the relationship formed between employees and organizations is a reciprocal relationship. In this case, organizations that create favorable conditions for their employees will benefit through the positive attitudes that will be provided by their employees. Employees who perceive the support provided by a strong organization will feel obliged to help the company achieve its goals.

In line with this research, PT. X which has rewarded employee contributions and paid attention to the welfare of its employees, building employee perceptions about the treatment that the company has provided. It is this that then foster obligations on employees to reply to the

treatment they have received by growing a positive attitude towards his work which then called for work engagement.

Other studies also confirm that work engagement is a significant impact generated by the perceived organizational support. When employees feel that their welfare is noticed and their contributions are respected by the organization, they will try to show the spirit, dedication, and appreciation of work (Biswas & Bhatnagar, 2013; Saks, 2006). In line with Rubel and Kee (2013) who found a positive and significant influence on the perceived organizational support on work engagement. In this case, the perceived organizational support can stimulate employees to be more attached to their role in work. These conditions make employees strive to achieve organizational goals by showing high levels of work engagement.

Subsequent findings indicate that internal communication has a positive and significant impact on work attachment. This means that the more effective internal communication that takes place in PT. X, the higher the level of work engagement. Similarly, on the contrary, ineffective internal communication will decrease the level of work engagement.

The results of this study are in line with Thomson and Hecker (2000) who found that the level of effectiveness of internal communication will positively affect employee engagement levels. The more effective internal communication perceived by employees, the higher the level of employee engagement. In this case, the quality of good internal communication will encourage an organizational supportive behavior that refers to a positive attitude toward the organization's strategic goals.

The results showed that the existence of two-way communication that runs effectively between superiors and subordinates. Some studies have also shown that effective communication between management and employees creates a higher work attachment. For example, a survey conducted by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2006) suggests that workers appreciate the opportunity given to them to share their opinions and opinions on management. This is a very important factor in encouraging work engagement. Furthermore, when management receives what employees are told about what is going on in the organization, then it can build a higher work engagement.

Furthermore, Alfes, Truss, Soane, Rees, and Gatenby (2010) argue that positive

communication, especially the opportunities given to employees to voice their opinions is an important factor that affects the attachment of work. Opportunity to voice an opinion makes employees feel strongly involved in the organization and wants to participate more towards the organization (Budd, Gollan & Wilkinson, 2010). Employees who experience a positive communication experience will see themselves as one with the organization (De Ridder & Human, 2004). This is then manifested through his work where the employee who is satisfied with the opportunity given to him will be positive and show the work engagement (Ruck, 2012).

Truss, Soane, Edwards, Wisdom, Croll, and Burnett (2006) identified three factors that influence work engagement, namely the opportunity to express an opinion or views to superiors, obtain reliable information related to the company and have a manager who is committed to the organization. In line with this study where internal communication affects work engagement. The aspects of internal communication used in this study in line with the above invention that includes communication from superiors to subordinates, quality, and reliability of information and opportunities given to subordinates to communicate to superiors.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results obtained in this study, it can be concluded that (1) Perceived organizational support positively and significantly affect the work engagement on permanent employees at PT. X. This means the stronger support from PT. X perceived employee the higher the level of employee engagement; (2) Internal communication has a positive and significant impact on the employee's work engagement. This means the more effective internal communication that takes place in PT. X then the higher level of work engagement. Moreover, (3) Perceived organizational support and internal communication together have a positive and significant effect toward work engagement on permanent staff at PT. X. This means the stronger support from PT. X perceived by employees and the more effective internal communication that took place at PT. X then the higher level of work engagement.

RECOMMENDATION

In this study, the average research's subjects still perceive the organizational support they receive in the medium category, and there are

still some employees who perceive it weak. This shows that PT. X still has a chance to create strong perceived organizational support by increasing employees' support. Types of rewards such as salary, promotion, job enrichment, and the effect on organizational policies provided fairly will reinforce the perceived organizational support, which indicates a positive evaluation of the organization to employees.

Furthermore, based on the results of research, also known that the average research's subjects consider that the communication at PT. X is quite effective and there are still some who consider it less effective. This shows that PT. X still has a gap to improve the effectiveness of ongoing communication within the company to increase employee engagement levels. To improve the effectiveness of internal communication at PT. X can be realized by building an open communication between superiors and subordinates, the existence of transparency and reliability regarding information exchange related issues within the company as well as the opportunity given by the management to employees to voice their opinions.

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