

# *Moderation Effect Of Meaningful Work On The Relationship Between Transformational Leadership And Work Engagement*

Marssel Michael Sengkey  
*dept of Psychology*  
 Universitas Negeri Manado  
 Minahasa, Indonesia  
 mmsengkey@unima.ac.id

Dewo Agung Nugroho Naro Saputra  
*dept of Psychology*  
 Universitas Negeri Manado  
 Minahasa, Indonesia  
 dewo.agung@unima.ac.id

Stevi Becher Sengkey  
*dept of Psychology*  
 Universitas Negeri Manado  
 Minahasa, Indonesia  
 stevisengkey@unima.ac.id

**Abstract-** *Work engagement is crucial to an organization because if employee with a high work engagement will make the organization become a healthy organization. A healthy organization will affect the productivity and performance of its employee and their tendencies to out from their work. This study use 78 members of the North Sulawesi police force as the subject (96% men, 4% women). The instrument in this paper are Utretch Work Engagement Scale (UWES), Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and The Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI). The result showed that there was significant positive relationship between Transformational Leadership and Work engagement. And then meaningful work's moderation model significantly explain in the amount of thirty one percent (R<sup>2</sup>= 31%). A high perception in meaningful work can strengthen the relation between transformational leadership with work engagement but in low level of meaningful work can weaken these relations.*

**Keyword:** *work engagement, transformational leadership, meaningful work, police*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Positive psychology is a trend in psychology study. It is due to the fact that positive psychology looks more into symptoms or individual behavior in a positive side. The term positive in this study meaning to focus on all the things that can be develop from an individual. Positive psychology applies in the work fields now. Many experiments in industrial fields and organization are researching for positive psychology. This work fields are now focus not on the issues of their employee but on how to improve their employee's performance and to focus on their own development.

Work engagement is a form of positive feeling in work field which is marked by passion, dedication and absorption. Passion are means into a higher energy level, mental endurance, desire to work more and diligent when faced with a problem. A higher dedication in the involvement of their work, having the sense of importance, inspiration, sense of proud and challenge. Lastly, absorption is a form of a happy or satisfied feeling and also a full concentration to their work and having difficulty to let go of their works (1).

Work engagement is crucial to an organization because if an employee with a high work engagement will result in a healthy organization. A healthy organization will affect the productivity and performance of their employee and while decreasing the level of their tendencies to drop out of their work (2). While their tendencies to drop out of their work decreased will make their organization much more positive. This is crucial to the employee to any organization to stay involved, because all of the positive result from the employee's involvement and organization (3).

Individual with a high work engagement have the ability and mental endurance facing every problems and not easily giving up and also have the sense of involvement in their organization, such individual will try their maximum effort to advance their organization. In a study done found that work engagement is an important mediator between the fear of losing job and their tendencies to drop out form organization (4). It can be concluded that an individual with a higher work engagement will make the organization much more positive and in turn could raise the achievement of that organization.

Employees are much more dedicated to their work, when their leader are able to raise their optimism through the transformation leadership style. This result show that own personal resource and work's involvement maybe crucial in explaining transformational leadership, considering there is a strong positive relationship between work's involvement and performance (2). Transformational leadership happened when a leader expanded and raised employee's concern, gave self-awareness and group's goals acceptance and vision, and pushed employees to see far beyond their own personal agenda for the better good of their groups (5). A leader with a charisma to their employee and it could inspire in turn the employee could meet their emotional need and or could stimulate intellectually to their peers (5).

Committed and non-committed employee are affect by three conditions which is available resources, meaningful work, and psychological safe. Meaningful work means into if an employee could view their job as positive and

actually give them the sense of meaning to themselves, so in turn the employee could expand all of their potency (6). In an study conducted employees who viewed their job as something meaningful feels a strong bound and commitment to their company (7). Meaningful work resource are affected by other people, whether inside or outside the work field, including co-workers, manager and employer, employee's community and family (6). Transformational leadership grows workers bound and it will be strength if the individual viewed their job important to them (8). However, in the study conducted found that an employee feel bound and a meaning to their work are not affected by a relationship to their employer or their leader except for the work development and the type of works that is suitable (9). Relationship with their employer will enhance a bound in their works by a psychological safe.

Base on their findings, there are opinions and findings that are slightly different and there is still a few study which highlight the meaningful work variable as a moderator variable between transformational leadership and work engagement, researchers are interested to know the relationship between transformational leadership to work engagement which are moderated by a meaningful work in police member in a police force in North Sulawesi territorial community.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *Effects of Transformational Leadership to Work Engagement*

The leader role in encouraging employee's commitment to their work having a less concern for the researcher (10). Leadership style are divided into 3 groups which is transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire style. The last two leadership style contributed to employee's work substantially, because they did not have comparable motivational and inspirational strength.

Transformational leadership could means as a leadership style which change the norms and value of employee, motivate them to surpass their own expectation (5). Employee who obtained the support personally, inspiration and leadership quality from their employee will cause a more challenging work experience, work's involvement and feels satisfied. These things will have a consequence to their bound in their work (10).

Hypothesis 1: Transformational leadership positively and significantly as predictor of work engagement

### B. *Effects of Transformational Leadership to Meaningful Work*

Meaningful work is a part of the meaning of life, which could define as a 'meaningful experience' for the workers, including meaning, value and benefit of their works (11). transformational leaders aspire to raise followers' levels of morality to "more principled levels of judgment" and also activate higher order needs in followers based on Maslow's hierarchy (5). One of the resource for meaningful work is a social relationship. A leader in an organization could affect workers to feel a meaning in their works. Researchers found that a successful leader are able to push their worker to focus on how the work is done and

their purpose and in turn it could bring meaning in their work (12).

Hypothesis 2: Transformational leadership positively and significantly acts as a meaningful work's predictor

### C. *Moderation effects of meaningful work and transformational leadership to work engagement*

Of all the exposure mentioned before, a leader or employer in creating a meaning is different from one another. Specifically, transformational leadership style will be able to motivate their employee or worker to do more each day. A leader does not only provide an impressive future for their motivation but also able to direct their employee to the future of their current works. The past study was showed that meaningful work as source of individuals' and organizational outcomes such as well-being (13). In addition, a gap between this concept and so it can be concluded that meaningful works acts as a moderator which will strengthen the relationship between transformational leadership and work engagement.

Hypothesis 3: Meaningful work significantly moderate the effects of transformational leadership to work engagement

## III. STUDY METHODS

### A. *Subjects of the study*

Subjects in this study is police force members of the North Sulawesi police force on Criminal Investigation Division. From 100 questionnaire handed out, 78 of those return to the researcher. Sampling method using quota sampling. Subjects age are within 21-52 years old range (M=32,20 years old SD = 6,91). The amount of men as a subject is 96% and 4% for women. Subjects level of education range between high school graduate 68%, S1 23%, D1 1% and no response 8%. Instrument Researcher using three instrument to measure each variable. First, to measure work engagement using Utrecht work engagement scale (UWES) with 17 items consist of 3 sub-scale which is vigor, dedication, and adsorption (14). The statement's example such as "At my work, I feel bursting with energy", "I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose". This measurement using likert scale with 5 choice of answer consist of very agree, agree, neutral, disagree and very disagree. With reliability coefficient of 0.92. Second, to measure transformational leadership using Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) which are design for the employee to view their employer with 12 items which the divide into 4 sub-scale such as idealized nfluence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration (15). The statement's example such as "My supervisor make others feel good to be around me", "Others have complete faith in my supervisor". This measurement instrument using likert scale with five choice of answers consist of very agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and very disagree. With reliability coefficient of 0.87. The last, to measure the Meaningful Work using The Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI) with 10 items divided into 3 subscale consist of positive meaning, meaning making through work and greater good motivation (15). With the statement's example such as "I have found a meaningful career", "i understand how my work's contributes to my life's meaning". This measurement instrument using likert scale with five choice

of answers which is very agree, agree, neutral, disagree and very disagree. With reliability coefficient of 0.69.

B. Data Analyses

Data analyses using SPSS 21. With simple regression analysis to measure the effect of transformational leadership to work engagement. And then using Moderation Regression Analysis (MRA) to know the function of meaningful work as a moderator variable whether to strengthen or weaken or even does not effect the relationship between transformational leadership to work engagement.

IV. RESULT

The result of statistical study, table 1 explained mean, deviation standard and the relationship between variable.

Table 1. Descriptive of mean, deviation standard and relationship between variable

No	Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1	Work Engagement	3,94	0,51	-			
2	Transformational Leadership	4,12	0,49	0,55**	-		
3	Meaningful work	3,98	0,35	0,38**	0,52*	-	
4	Age	32,20	6,91	0,31**	0,06	0,20	-

\*p ≤ 0,05, \*\*p ≤ 0,01, \*\*\*p ≤ 0,001

Based on descriptive data the level of work engagement through all subjects are high (M = 3,94). Relevant to the leadership style, the police force members view their leader as the type of transformational leader (M = 4,12). While, the level of meaningful work the police force member of the North Sulawesi police units are sufficiently high (M = 3,98). Hypothesis 1-2 are test using simple regression and hypothesis 3 including moderation variable. Table 2 show the result of this study or experiment. Those hypothesis proved that there was a sufficient relationship between transformational leadership to work engagement (Hypothesis 1), the effect of transformational leadership to meaningful work (Hypothesis 2). Transformational leadership have the effect as high as 30% to work engagement ( $\Delta R^2 = 0,30$ ,  $\Delta F = 32,54$ ,  $p \leq 0,000$ ), 27,4 % effects the relationship between transformational leadership to meaningful work ( $\Delta R^2 = 0,274$ ,  $\Delta F = 28,63$ ,  $p \leq 0,000$ ).

In table 2, transformational leadership could be the predictor for work engagement in a company ( $\beta = 0,55$ ,  $p \leq 0,0000$ ). Transformational leadership could be a predictor for meaningful work ( $\beta = 0,52$ ,  $p \leq 0,0000$ ). This result indicated that transformational leadership positively and significantly have an effects in meaningful work and work engagement.

In table 2 show the result of hypothesis 3 test which observe the relationship between transformational

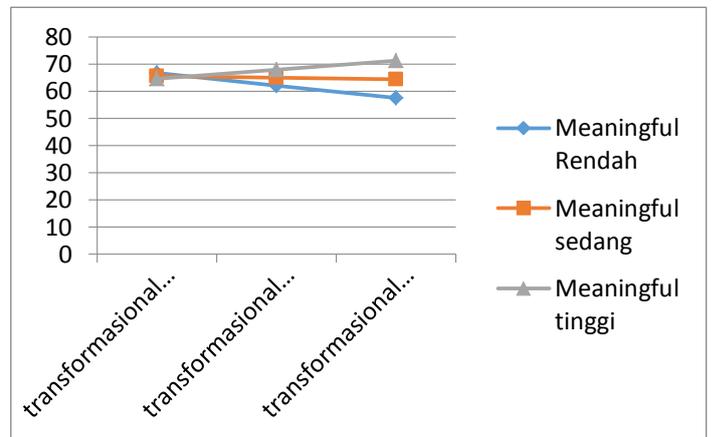
leadership to work engagement with moderation effects by meaningful work. Result obtained that meaningful work moderate by strengthening the relationship between transformational leadership to work engagement. However, the effect of high meaningful work which strengthen the effects of transformational leadership to work engagement. The significant effects of meaningful work in the relationship between transformational leadership to work engagement ( $\beta = 8,26$ ,  $p \leq 0,0000$ ). For further explanation refer to Graphic 1.

Table 2. Regression Result

	R	R <sup>2</sup>	β	Sig
Direct Effect X-Y	0,55	0,30	0,55	0,00***
Moderation	0,72	0,31	-	-
Transformational Leadership (X)	-	-	-4,89	0,00***
Meaningful Work (M)	-	-	-3,94	0,00***
X*M	-	-	8,26	0,00***

\*p ≤ 0,05, \*\*p ≤ 0,01, \*\*\*p ≤

0,001



Graphic 1. Moderation effects in meaningful work and effect to transformational leadership and work engagement

V. DISCUSSION

Based on the result of the study, transformational leadership was found to positively and significantly effects work engagement. This study was supported by previous research conducted that proved there was a direct relationship which effects the transformational leadership to work engagement (16). Furthermore, this research are supported by previous research that there was a positive relationship between transformational leadership to work engagement (17). Employees are mentally bound to their work, when their leader or employer could give an optimistic feeling and motivate their employee or workers. Such things could happen because work engagement's source are leadership style, to mention one of the factors. Transformational leader could create a feeling of appreciation, inspiration and also quality mentorship to their employees or workers. Such things could effect their employees to feel more committed to their works.

Furthermore, the result of this research proved that transformational leadership positively affects meaningful work. The result was supported that meaningful works are affected by transformational leadership which also affects the employees' psychological well-being (11). Employees or workers view their works with meaning, as the result is an increase in employees' psychological well-being. Transformational leadership has one of these characteristics that could give motivation by inspiring the employee. Such matter could affect the workers to feel that their works have more meaning because their leader figure has the ability to internalize their positive attitude in the work place.

In this research, meaningful work significantly moderated the effects between transformational leadership and work engagement. Submitted hypothesis are accepted based on regression test which put meaningful work as a moderation variable. This matter is in line with previous research done that states transformational leadership as a predictor to work engagement which are mediated by meaningful work (8). The idea related to work engagement, its source and what are the effects of work engagement has been widely studied. This research found a few things, first transformational leader could be the significant predictor to employees' work engagement that can be stated that the source of employees' work engagement are based on their leader with transformational leadership style.

Second, the effects of transformational leadership to work engagement are strengthened by how the employee views whether their works have meaning or not. An employee will feel committed to their works if they have a leader with transformational leadership style and strengthened by how the employee views that whether their job has meaning or not.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

Based on the research conducted by the researcher it can be concluded that if transformational leadership style could be the work engagement predictor in an individual. While, when a meaningful work's variable was placed as a moderation variable it can strengthen the relationship between two variables. In this matter, ability to significantly view their works as significant affects the effect of transformational leadership to employee's work engagement.

This research implication explained if meaningful works are placed as a moderation variable will strengthen the effects of transformational leadership to work engagement. By the findings of this research are hope for the future researcher to expand other variables in the future such as related to themselves such as personal concept, personal efficacy as a moderation variable by using the source from work engagement as a mediation variable in the effects of transformational leadership to work engagement.

Meaningful work can strengthen the relationship between transformational leadership with work engagement. This findings could be the reference for Human Resource Development (HRD) to increase any other resource as a commitment to their worker. Just like other development

about work meaning, what are the effects of work to everyday life and balance strategy between work and real life (work-life balance).

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