

Pursuit of Well-being: Testing the Role of Empowerment, Transformational leadership, Work Engagement, and Work Environment

Abdul Latif

Institut Teknologi dan Bisnis Nasional

**email correspondence: latifharis1958@gmail.com*

Abstract

This study aims to determine the effect of Empowerment, Transformational Leadership, Work Engagement, Work Environment. Employee well-being is an important topic in human resource management studies because it is believed to be able to produce a positive effect on company achievements. The population in this study were all employees in North Sumatra who had at least 3 years of work experience. The sample in this study was 265 employees, sampling was carried out using a saturated sampling technique or census sampling, where all members of the population were sampled. The data analysis technique used is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) partial least square. Data processing in this study was assisted by using the Smart PLS3 application. The results showed that: Empowerment has a positive and significant effect on employee well-being.

Keywords: *Transformational Leadership, Work Engagement, Work Environment.*

1. Introduction

In a highly competitive work environment, organizations have realized that employees are important and the key to success (Farndale et al., 2011). Employee welfare is a very interesting topic to be researched at this time, considering the emergence of several conditions such as mental health, burnout and so on in human resource management studies. In an era where subordinates and superiors are demanding and workplace aggression is a common phenomenon (Patterson et al., 2015), the importance of psychological fulfillment and well-being cannot be ignored (Guests, 2017). Poor perceptions of employee well-being have a negative impact on service performance in the workplace (Anderson et al., 2013). On the other hand, positive perceptions of well-being increase performance (Magnier-Watanabe et al., 2020). Employee well-being is a core agenda among policy makers and human resource researchers (Guests, 2017). Well-being is conceptualized as an emotional state in which individuals feel accomplished, happy and strong in social relationships (Diener & Seligman, 2002). When the psychological needs of employees are met, the organization can retain talent (Rathi & Lee, 2017). We conceptualize perceived well-being as a set of positive feelings that arise when employees feel they are contributing to job development (Ryff, 1989). Psychological well-being consists of positive emotions of happiness and meaning (Diener & Seligman, 2002) and is considered a source of pleasure and joy for individuals (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Previous research has expressed the important role of why employee welfare needs to be obtained by employees and facilitated by the company, because with prosperous employees it can improve employee performance and keep employees working at the company. In this study the authors will analyze the factors that can affect the emergence of employee welfare.

Empirically, empowerment was found to increase self-confidence among employees, resulting in positive results (Frazier & Fainshmidt, 2012) where sound is no exception. Recently, stronger bonds between leaders and subordinates were found to trigger positive voices among employees (Carnevale et al., 2020). Empirically, empowerment was found to increase self-

confidence among employees, resulting in positive results (Frazier & Fainshmidt, 2012) where sound is no exception. Recently, stronger bonds between leaders and subordinates were found to trigger positive voices among employees (Carnevale et al., 2020). Employees with a high sense of psychological empowerment actively perform formal job duties and are also found to engage in positive work behaviors (Chiang & Hsieh, 2012). This is because employees feel empowered and feel confident that they can make decisions for the betterment of the organization. Empowerment and positive role sharing make employees happy at work (van der Meer, 2018).

Leadership is one of the important factors that drive employee welfare (Kuoppala et al., 2008). Different leader behaviors are associated with different indicators of employee well-being such as job satisfaction, job involvement, job stress, burnout, etc. (Inceoglu et al., 2018). Transformational leaders stimulate employees to be creative, achieve high-level goals beyond self-interest (Bass & Avolio, 1994), and help meet employees' psychological needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competence (Nyakundi, 2020). Transformational leaders encourage autonomy through intellectual stimulation of employees to design their approach to their work (Barling et al., 2011). Transformational leaders are concerned with individuals, meeting the connectedness needs of their employees, where leaders develop strong relationships with employees that are built on respect, support, and compassion. Transformational leaders also promote connectedness, ideologically influence employees through shared vision and foster a sense of belonging. Finally, to help meet the competency needs of employees, transformational leaders, through inspirational motivation, encourage them to achieve higher goals and overcome barriers to high performance. Therefore, based on the theory of self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 2012), it can be said that transformational leaders improve the psychological and physical well-being of employees (Arnold et al., 2015) by meeting their basic psychological needs.

Employee well-being can be interpreted as a multidimensional construct that includes positive and negative experiences of people in the workplace, with job satisfaction, employee engagement reflects various aspects of well-being (Danna & Griffin, 1999). Employee engagement is a positive emotional experience related to one's work, which is characterized by a distinct combination of pleasure and passion. Several studies have shown that leaders use employee job involvement as a cue to infer good performance and, therefore, rate employees as better suited for promotion and have more career growth opportunities e.g., Shore et al., (1995); Weer & Greenhaus, (2017). Similarly, leaders can adjust their performance expectations based on employee signals. As a result, leaders use signs of engagement and "work harder" (Schaufeli et al., 2008). When positivity builds resources through expanded cognition and behavior, it leads to better performance (Wright & Cropanzano, 2007). It is reasonable to expect work engagement to yield the same benefits. Because engaged employees are highly motivated and experience positive emotions such as pride, joy, interest, and inspiration at work, they have the resources and willingness needed to show effort at work. (Bakker & Costa, 2014). In other words, work engagement allows employees to move from thought to action, and thus achieve better performance (Demerouti & Cropanzano, 2010).

This modern era causes an organization to face challenges because of the dynamic environment. A good work environment will increase job satisfaction which will affect performance (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). A conducive physical work environment predicts nurse involvement because the environment will affect a person's cognitive, emotional, and physical well-being (Kataria et al., 2013). A better work environment will have an effect on increasing work attitudes, higher job satisfaction, increasing welfare and decreasing intention to leave either directly or indirectly. (Wu et al., 2019). The work environment will also affect work attitudes towards the job (Yoo & Kim, 2017). The suitability and orientation of the work

environment has a positive impact on nurses' work attitudes and increases job satisfaction (Westerman & Yamamura, 2007).

Based on the study on the literature above, it can be seen that the predictor variables used in this study, namely empowerment, leadership transformation, work involvement, and work environment have an effect on employee well-being and employee well-being is important in the literature.

2. Literatur Review

2.1. Empowerment

Several studies have shown that empowerment, in its different manifestations, can affect the health and well-being of employees (Cicolini et al., 2014). However, Spreitzer Spreitzer, (2008) stated that most research on the impact of empowerment is primarily concerned with studying its influence on organizational performance and other individual outcomes, and that future research should explore broader impacts, including well-being outcomes, as there is still little direct research linking empowerment and health. Laschinger and Read (Laschinger, HS; Read, 2017) reinforces this notion, arguing that, although research has been conducted to date, relatively few studies have examined the direct impact of empowerment on the mental and physical health of employees. Therefore, we aimed to investigate the relationship between structural and psychological empowerment, on the one hand, and their effect on psychological, physical, and social well-being, on the other hand, in organizations. This study contributes to explaining how empowerment can ultimately affect employee well-being.

2.2. Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is the method of a leader in applying an approach to his subordinates that aims to create positive change for individuals and social systems (Ichsan et al., 2020). Transformational leaders will have the characteristics of being confident, adaptable, having ideas, always loyal, and rational which have implications for increasing organizational efficiency. (Daragmeh et al., 2021). The components of transformational leadership are charismatic, intellectual influence, and individual consideration. Transformational leaders influence employees to commit to the organization at work to improve organizational performance (Inceoglu et al., 2018). Hongyun et al., (2021) explained that there is a positive and significant relationship between transformational leadership and employee well-being. Among other behaviors, leaders can delegate more power to their subordinates, increase their responsibilities, encourage independent decision making, share information and knowledge with them, develop their skills, or encourage them to take risks or propose new ideas. (Konczak et al., 2000). However, supervisors can also behave otherwise, which will affect the health and well-being of their employees at work (Yoo & Kim, 2017). Therefore, it is not surprising that after transformational leadership, empowerment leadership is the type of behavior that appears more often in scientific reviews conducted to determine the process through which leadership behavior affects the psychological and physical well-being of employees, thus becoming one of the most important mediating variables in this relationship (Inceoglu et al., 2018).

It is assumed that, on the one hand, organizations and their managers should give employees more power, share more information with them, and delegate more responsibilities (in the literature, this approach is called the relational or mechanistic perspective and would coincide with structural empowerment).

2.3 Work Engagement

Job engagement, as a state of mind characterized by positive emotions, encourages employee task and adaptive performance. According to the theory, positive affective states and psychological well-being in general broaden people's thought-action repertoire, that is, the way people think and behave. (Visnjic et al., 2017). Eldor & Harpaz, (2016) found that job involvement was positively related to general adaptation. Schaufeli et al., (2008) conceptualize job involvement as the positive antithesis of resignation intention. Work engagement has three dimensions, namely vigor, dedication, and absorption. Each dimension has its own characteristics. Vigor is characterized by the presence of mental strength and high levels of energy during work, perseverance in difficult situations, and a willingness to put effort into the work of others. Dedication is characterized by high levels of enthusiasm, pride, and inspiration. Absorption is characterized by having good concentration and interest in one's work, and it is difficult to leave one's work.

Schutte et al., (2000) described the definition of work engagement as an energetic state in which employees dedicate themselves to producing their best job performance and have the confidence to work effectively. When employees are engaged with their work, they will feel confident about their ability to deal with any demands of the job and have high energy levels to do their work, thus increasing their effectiveness at work. (Schaufeli et al., 2008). Someone who experiences work engagement will experience a lower probability of burnout because work engagement helps employees to deal with stressful work demands (Pohan, 2022).

2.4 Work Environment

Having a comfortable work environment will form its own empathy for employee attitudes (Ghaedi et al., 2020). Research that examines the influence of the work environment on performance obtained by several researchers. A good work environment will increase job satisfaction which will have an effect on increasing work motivation in achieving organizational goals and objectives (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). A conducive physical workplace environment predicts nurse involvement, especially because one's environment affects one's cognitive, emotional, and physical well-being which will lead to the success of an organization. (Kataria et al., 2013). Almeida et al., (2019) found that the work environment can improve the performance of nurses. A good work environment will improve the health of nurses which will improve the performance of nurses themselves in their organizations (Hafee et al., 2019).

2.5 Well-being

Employee well-being is an important and current topic for organizations. It can be defined as the overall quality of the way an employee experiences work and functions in the workplace (Guests, 2017). To improve the well-being of workers, it is necessary to offer learning opportunities to employees, share more information with them, and provide them with support and resources. At the same time, the desired effect will be greater if employees feel empowered (Marin-Garcia & Bonavia, 2021).

In other words, managers can offer workers participation in workshops to improve products or services; this will allow workers to learn new things and access information. Therefore it will increase structural empowerment. This action will allow workers to feel that their work is important and that they can do their job well. That is, increase their psychological empowerment. These or other strategies that may be implemented to effectively improve worker well-being (Marin-Garcia & Bonavia, 2021).

3 Research Methods

This research is a quantitative research by examining the causal relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables. The questionnaire was created based on previous research and tested in various ways to ensure that the questionnaire provides a valid measurement of the concepts surveyed. Data were collected in 2022 on a questionnaire administered using Google forms for a random sample of employees and self-employed persons representing the working population. The sample collected in this study totaled 276 samples in total, but after passing the selection stage, the researcher determined a valid sample of 265 samples. The cause of the sample being declared invalid for several reasons,

There are four variables studied in this study, namely Empowerment, Transformational Leadership, Work Involvement and Work Environment. The empowerment measurement indicator uses a questionnaire developed from the research concept Conger & Kanungo, (1988). Measurement of the work environment through a questionnaire developed from research results Raziq & Maulabakhsh, (2015). The transformational leadership measurement indicator uses a questionnaire developed by (Inceoglu, 2018) and work engagement adopts a questionnaire item from Schaufeli et al., (2008).

To test the research hypothesis, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach was used. SEM-PLS was chosen because it can work with small sample sizes, and is also capable of handling complex constructions (Hair et al., 2019). The consideration of using SEM to test hypotheses is because SEM is suitable for analyzing the hypothesized latent variables. For software, we use Warp PLS software (Version 3.0).

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Convergent Validity

We tested convergent and discriminant validity to assess construct validity. Convergent validity is assessed by considering two indicators based on (Hair et al., 2010) namely factor loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). A loading value higher than 0.5, or higher than an ideal value of 0.7 is a good rule of thumb (Hair et al., 2010). Research has adequate convergence when it has an AVE of 0.5 or higher (Hair et al., 2010). The results can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. Convergent Validity Test Result

	Employee Well-being	Empowerment	Transformational Leadership	Work Environment	Working Engagement
EMP1	0.311	0.736	0.456	0.421	0.416
EMP2	0.165	0.633	0.412	0.268	0.342
EMP3	0.275	0.749	0.487	0.397	0.481
EMP4	0.329	0.811	0.396	0.425	0.479
EMP5	0.250	0.700	0.313	0.241	0.356
EMP6	0.249	0.742	0.351	0.352	0.420
EWB1	0.793	0.273	0.231	0.642	0.367
EWB2	0.746	0.178	0.145	0.280	0.251
EWB3	0.775	0.331	0.277	0.407	0.289
EWB4	0.637	0.296	0.259	0.234	0.327
TL1	0.290	0.466	0.916	0.404	0.546
TL2	0.262	0.509	0.909	0.413	0.549
TL3	0.276	0.499	0.910	0.396	0.524

TL4	0.313	0.528	0.913	0.431	0.565
WE1	0.366	0.577	0.738	0.525	0.822
WE2	0.357	0.505	0.496	0.601	0.884
WE3	0.333	0.380	0.301	0.510	0.784
WE4	0.327	0.396	0.392	0.468	0.766
WEN1	0.359	0.492	0.457	0.678	0.399
WEN2	0.331	0.459	0.428	0.766	0.562
WEN3	0.272	0.359	0.328	0.672	0.462
WEN4	0.557	0.199	0.177	0.746	0.261

Source: primary data processed by researchers (2022).

The results in Table 1 show that all the extracted mean values of variance exceed the standard value of 0.5. Some item constructs were removed for providing a loading factor of less than 0.4, although loadings of 0.4 - 0.7 should still be considered for retention. (Hair et al., 2019). In summary, all of the above evidence shows that the convergent validity of the measurement model has met the requirements.

4.2. Discriminant Validity

In assessing discriminant validity, we compared the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) with the correlation between constructs. The study will be considered to have adequate discriminant validity if the square root value of the AVE is higher than the correlation between latent variables in the same column. (Hair et al., (2010). Thus, it provides sufficient evidence of discriminant validity.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity Test Result

	Employee Well-being	Empowerment	Transformational Leadership	Work Environment	Working Engagement
Employee Well-being	0.74				
Empowerment	0.371	0.73			
Transformational Leadership	0.314	0.549	0.912		
Work Environment	0.569	0.491	0.451	0.717	
Working Engagement	0.425	0.574	0.599	0.647	0.815

Source: primary data processed by researchers (2022).

Overall, the results presented in Table 2 show that the discriminant validity is adequate because all the square roots of the AVE (on the diagonal and brackets) are higher than the correlations between constructs (outside the diagonal).

4.3. Reliability Test Result

4.4.

Table 3. Reliability Test Result

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Employee Well-being	0.728	0.828	0.548
Empowerment	0.825	0.872	0.533
Transformational Leadership	0.933	0.952	0.832
Work Environment	0.702	0.808	0.514
Working Engagement	0.83	0.888	0.665

Source: primary data processed by researchers (2022).

To measure reliability, we use two measurements for instrument reliability, namely composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha (Hair et al., 2019). The value of composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha must be higher than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2019). As shown in Table 3, the composite reliability value of each variable is higher than the accepted value of 0.7. (Hair et al., 2010) argues that the reliability value which ranges between 0.6 and 0.7 is still acceptable as long as other indicators of the construct validity of the model are good.

4.5. Path Coefficients

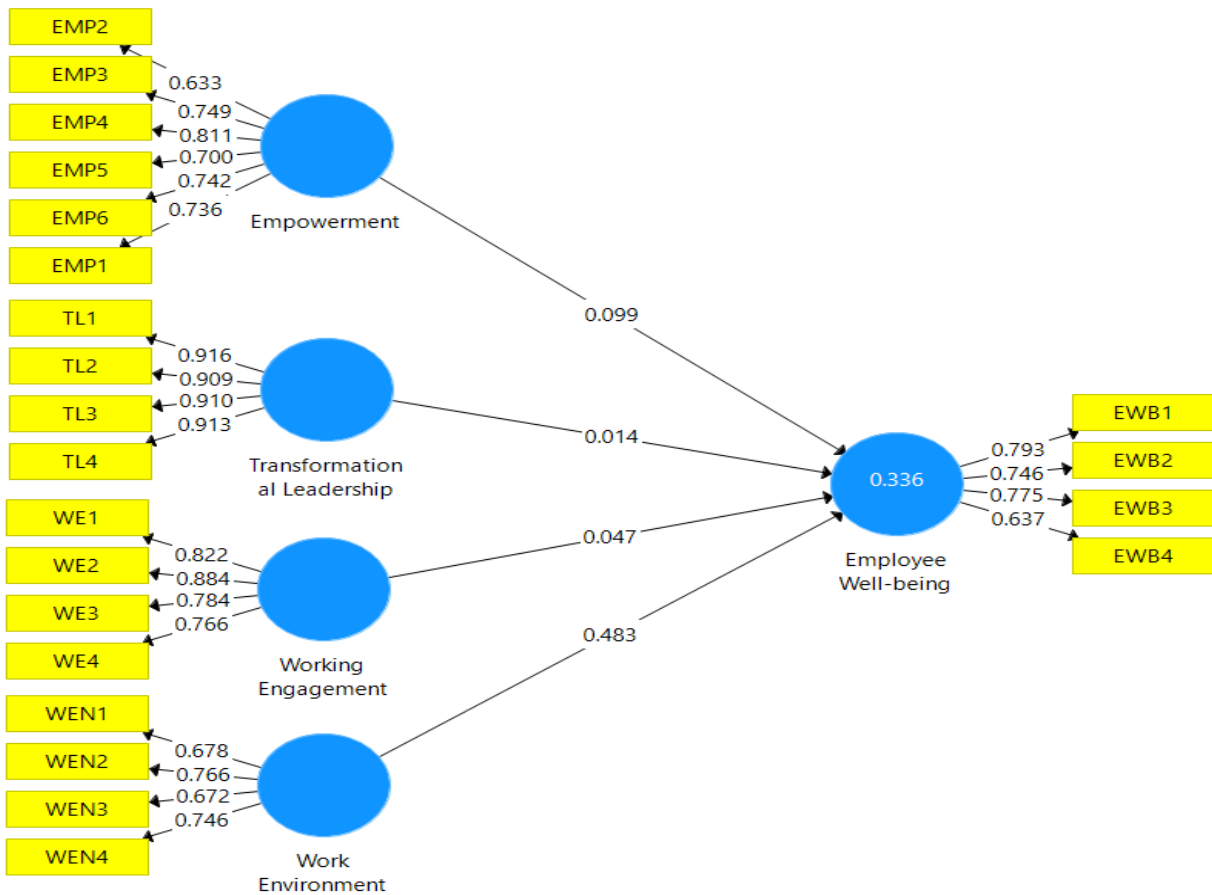


Figure 1. Hypothesis Test Results with Structural Model

Table 2. Path Coefficients and P-value

Construct	Path	
	Coefficients	P Values
Empowerment -> Employee Well-being	0.099	0.004
Transformational Leadership -> Employee Well-being	0.014	0.002
Work Environment -> Employee Well-being	0.047	0.000
Working Engagement -> Employee Well-being	0.483	0.000

Source: primary data processed by researchers (2022).

4.6. Discussion

The effect of empowerment on employee well-being

Based on the results of the path coefficient test of 0.099 and the P-value of 0.004 it states that the predictor variable in this study, namely empowerment, has a positive and significant influence on employee well-being, which means that the higher the empowerment applied by the leader, such as giving more responsibility and giving freedom to employees. employees to complete their work, then this can improve employee well-being. This is in line with previous research which states that). Employees with a high sense of psychological empowerment actively perform formal job duties and are also found to engage in positive work behaviors (Chiang & Hsieh, 2012). This is because employees feel empowered and feel confident that they can make decisions for the betterment of the organization. Empowerment and positive role sharing make employees happy at work (van der Meer, 2018).

The effect of transformational leadership on employee well-being.

Based on the results of the path coefficient test with a value of 0.014 and a P-value of 0.002, it shows that the predictor variable transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence on employee well-being, which means the higher the perception that the leader is a charismatic, intellectual and rational person, then it is can improve employee well-being and increase efficiency within the organization. Transformational leaders influence employees to commit to the organization at work to improve organizational performance (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Effect of work environment on employee well-being.

The results of testing the path relationship coefficient value of 0.047 and P-value of 0.000 indicate that the work environment predictor variable has a positive and significant influence on employee well-being. This means that the better the work atmosphere, the higher the well-being of employees. This is in line with previous research which states that a conducive physical workplace environment predicts nurse involvement, especially because one's environment affects one's cognitive, emotional, and physical well-being which will lead to the success of an organization (Kataria et al., 2013).

The effect of working engagement on employee well-being

The results of the path coefficient test in table 4 above, we can see that the path coefficient value is 0.483 and the P-value is 0.000. it means that the predictor variable of working engagement has a positive and significant influence on employee well-being. Engaged employees are highly motivated and experience positive emotions such as pride, joy, interest and inspiration at work,

they have the resources and willingness needed to show effort at work (Bakker & Costa, 2014). In other words, work engagement allows employees to move from thought to action, and thus achieve better performance (Demerouti & Cropanzano, 2010).

5. Conclusion

Based on previous literature studies that are relevant to this research, and with the results of tests conducted by researchers, the researcher concludes: Empowerment has a positive and significant effect on employee well-being. Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee well-being, work engagement has a positive and significant impact on employee well-being and the work environment has a positive and significant impact on employee well-being. the importance of psychological fulfillment and well-being cannot be ignored (Guests, 2017). Poor perceptions of employee well-being have a negative impact on service performance in the workplace (Anderson et al., 2013). On the other hand, positive perceptions of well-being increase performance (Magnier-Watanabe et al., 2020).

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