

Analysis of Determinants of Employee Engagement in the Creative Industries Sector of North Sumatra

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Received Date : 13.08.2024

Revised Date : 14.10.2024

Accepted Date : 15.10.2024

ABSTRACT

The main aim of this research is to analyze the influence of ethical leadership, self-efficacy, work-life balance, and perceived organizational support on employee engagement in the creative industries sector of North Sumatra. This research uses quantitative design with a causal associative approach. In this research, researchers used a sampling technique using purposive sampling. The sample characteristics lead to more than one year of work experience in the same position, then those who actually work in creative industry operations are not outsourced workers or third parties who work for the creative industry with a total of 210 employees. The research results confirm that ethical leadership, self-efficacy, work life balance, and perceived organizational support have a positive and significant effect on employee engagement. The results of this research can be used by companies to identify and strengthen key factors that influence employee engagement, such as a supportive work environment, effective leadership, and opportunities for professional development. By understanding and applying these research findings, companies can increase employee engagement, which in turn can increase productivity, creativity, and job satisfaction. Apart from that, these implications are also important for policy makers in creating strategies and policies that support the growth and competitiveness of the creative industry sector in this region.

Keywords : **Ethical Leadership; Self-Efficacy; Work-Life Balance; Perceived Organizational Support; Employee Engagement**

ABSTRAK

Tujuan utama penelitian ini untuk menganalisis kepemimpinan etis, efikasi diri, keseimbangan kehidupan-kerja, dan dukungan organisasi yang dirasakan terhadap keterlibatan karyawan di sektor industri kreatif Sumatera Utara. Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti menggunakan teknik pengambilan sampel menggunakan purposive sampling. Karakteristik sampel mengarah pada pengalaman bekerja lebih dari satu tahun pada posisi yang sama, kemudian yang memang bekerja dalam operasional industri kreatif bukan pekerja alih daya atau pihak ketiga yang bekerja untuk industri kreatif dengan jumlah 210 karyawan. Hasil penelitian mengkonfirmasi kepemimpinan etis, efikasi diri, keseimbangan kehidupan-kerja, dan dukungan organisasi yang dirasakan berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap keterlibatan karyawan. Hasil penelitian ini dapat digunakan oleh perusahaan untuk mengidentifikasi dan memperkuat faktor-faktor kunci yang mempengaruhi keterlibatan karyawan, seperti lingkungan kerja yang mendukung, kepemimpinan yang efektif, dan kesempatan untuk pengembangan profesional. Dengan memahami dan menerapkan temuan penelitian ini, perusahaan dapat meningkatkan keterlibatan karyawan, yang pada gilirannya dapat meningkatkan produktivitas, kreativitas, dan kepuasan kerja. Selain itu, implikasi ini juga penting bagi pengambil kebijakan dalam menciptakan strategi dan kebijakan yang mendukung pertumbuhan dan daya saing sektor industri kreatif di wilayah ini.

Kata Kunci : **Kepemimpinan Etis; Efikasi Diri; Keseimbangan Kehidupan-Kerja; Dukungan Organisasi yang Dirasakan; Keterlibatan Karyawan**

INTRODUCTION

The creative industry is becoming an increasingly important sector in the regional economy, but challenges related to employee engagement are still a major concern (Ozsungur, 2020; Goodwin, 2019). Actively engaged employees tend to have higher motivation, better productivity, and stronger attachment to the organization (Stanislavov & Ivanov, 2014; Fragouli & Louka, 2022). Therefore, understanding the role of ethical leadership, self-efficacy, perceived organizational support, and work-life balance is crucial in increasing employee engagement in the creative industries (Nasser et al., 2022; Indajang et al., 2023; Li et al., 2022; Pathak & Lawande, 2021). The relationship between ethical leadership and employee engagement has become an important topic in management and leadership literature, especially in the creative industry sector. Ethical leadership, which includes fair, transparent and moral leader behavior, is believed to have a significant impact on employee motivation and engagement. Ethical leaders not only adhere to high moral standards, but also behave as role models for their employees. Thus, ethical leadership plays a crucial role in increasing employee engagement, which in turn can have a positive impact on the performance and sustainability of organizations in the creative industry sector (Ozsungur, 2020; Lie, Dharma, et al., 2021).

In North Sumatra, the dynamic creative industry requires employees to continue to innovate and adapt quickly to change. High self-confidence allows employees to face challenges with optimism and perseverance, which increases their engagement in work. Employees with high self-efficacy tend to be more proactive, willing to take risks, and committed to their tasks, all of which contribute to increased work engagement (Lisbona et al., 2018; Tian et al., 2019). Further, research (Carter et al., 2018; Azim & Halawani, 2020; Caesens & Stinglhamber, 2014), shows that self-efficacy not only influences employee engagement directly, but also through increasing intrinsic motivation and sense of autonomy. Employees who believe in their abilities are more likely to enjoy their work, feel more satisfied, and have lower stress levels, all of which increase their engagement (Chan et al., 2017; Silalahi et al., 2022). Thus, increasing employee self-efficacy becomes an important strategy for increasing engagement and performance in an industry that relies heavily on creativity and innovation. Furthermore, high self-efficacy can help employees to be more confident in exploring new ideas and collaborating with colleagues, creating a productive and innovative work environment (Orgambidez et al., 2020).

Apart from ethical leadership and self-efficacy factors, other factors such as work-life balance and perceived organizational support are also important to increase employee engagement. Balance between work and personal life is an important factor in increasing employee engagement (Pathak & Lawande, 2021; Hartini et al., 2021). In an industry that often demands flexible working hours and constant innovative ideas, maintaining a balance between work and personal life can be a challenge. When employees feel able to manage work responsibilities without sacrificing their personal lives, they tend to have lower stress levels, and ultimately, greater engagement in their work (Butarbutar et al., 2022; Jannata & Perdhana, 2022). Conversely, an imbalance between work and personal life can lead to burnout, decreased productivity, and high turnover rates (Mulang, 2022; Soelton et al., 2021; Efendi et al., 2021). Some companies in the creative industry sector do not provide flexibility in terms of working hours, workers in the creative industry sector often have to work outside normal working hours, making it difficult for employees to arrange time for

activities outside of work.

Perceived organizational support (POS), or employees' perceptions of the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being, plays an important role in increasing employee engagement (Dai & Qin, 2016; Tang et al., 2023). When employees feel supported by the organization, they tend to have higher levels of job satisfaction, a stronger sense of belonging, and greater commitment to organizational goals (Li et al., 2022; Firnanda & Wijayati, 2021; Sudirman et al., 2022). In creative industries, where the demand for innovation and flexibility is high (Sinaga et al., 2022), POS can provide a sense of security and stability that encourages employees to be more involved and contribute to their full potential (Dai & Qin, 2016; Wu et al., 2023; Silalahi et al., 2022). The next problem is that the lack of recognition of good employee performance results in low employee engagement. By paying attention to employee needs and providing adequate support, organizations can increase employee engagement, which in turn will have a positive impact on productivity, innovation and long-term success in the creative industries sector (Prastyo & Frianto, 2020; Kao et al., 2023; Hartini et al., 2021).

The state of the art in research regarding the analysis of the determinants of employee engagement in the North Sumatra creative industry sector highlights the important role of leadership ethics, self-efficacy, work-life balance, and perceived organizational support. Previous studies show that high ethical leadership can increase employees' intrinsic motivation, while strong self-efficacy is associated with higher levels of engagement in creative tasks. A good work-life balance has also been shown to contribute to employee productivity and engagement in the context of the creative industries. The urgency of research to analyze the determinants of employee engagement in the North Sumatra creative industry sector through ethical leadership, self-efficacy, work-life balance, and perceived organizational support reflects the important essence of understanding workforce dynamics in the context of the creative industry. Ethical leadership plays a key role in establishing a work culture that promotes ethical values and integrity, which in turn can increase employee engagement and the quality of work results. Meanwhile, individual self-efficacy influences the level of motivation and engagement in pursuing organizational goals, with strong self-efficacy increasing their performance and engagement. Perceived organizational support and work-life balance are also significant factors, because employee perceptions and balance in working in an organization can influence their loyalty, motivation and involvement in achieving common goals. Through an in-depth understanding of the interactions between these factors, this research will not only provide valuable insight into how to maximize employee potential in the creative industries, but will also provide a foundation for effective management strategies in strengthening employee engagement and improving overall organizational performance.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses quantitative design with a causal associative approach, namely to see the relationship between several uncertain variables. (Turner, 2020), mentions that causal design is useful for analyzing how one variable influences other variables, and is also useful in experimental research where the independent variable is treated in a controlled manner by the researcher to see its impact on the dependent variable directly. The

population in this study are creative sector industry workers, and the population size in this study is unknown. In this research, researchers used a sampling technique using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling technique is used when researchers have the aim of targeting individuals with certain characteristics of interest (Turner, 2020). Apart from that, they have more than one year of experience working in the same position, and those who actually work in creative industry operations are not outsourced workers or third parties who work for the creative industry. According to (Hair, 2014), if the population size is unknown then the sample size can be determined from 5-10 times the number of indicators used in a single construct. This research used 21 indicators from 5 existing variable dimensions, so the number of research samples obtained was $21 \times 10 = 210$ samples.

The data source used in this research is primary data, which includes the results of interviews and filling out questionnaires obtained from small and micro business actors, as well as the results of observations through field observations. Furthermore, secondary data is data sourced from reports, literature studies, or documentation of related documents. The data collection stage will be carried out by research members who come from lecturers and will be assisted by other research members who come from students. The data analysis technique uses the SEM method with Partial Least Squares Modeling (PLS-SEM). Each hypothesis proposed in this research will be tested using SmartPLS Version 3.0 software. A Structural Equation Model (SEM) approach based on Partial Least Square was carried out for hypothesis testing. SEM is a multivariate data analysis method consisting of factor analysis and regression analysis, which aims to evaluate the relationship between variables in a model, which in this case is the relationship between indicators (manifest variables) and constructs (latent variables) known as model assessment measurement, also between latent variables only or usually referred to as structural model assessment (Ghozali, 2014). The analysis in this research using the PLS technique will be carried out in two stages, namely the Validity and Reliability Test of the construction of each indicator, or the Measurement model test (Outer Model). Then, build a structural model (Inner Model), to determine the influence between variables, in other words, find correlations between constructs. Furthermore, the measurement of research variable indicators is summarized in the variable operational definition Table which can be explained in Table 1:

Table 1. Operational Definition of Research Variables

Variable	Code	Items	Reference Source
<i>Ethical Leadership</i>	EL1	Ethical Standards	(Ozsungur, 2020;Fragouli &Louka, 2022)
	EL2	Ethical Manners	
	EL3	Balanced Decisions	
	EL4	Business Ethics	
	EL5	Terms of Ethics	
<i>Self-Efficacy</i>	SE1	Past Performance	(Carter et al., 2018;Azim & Halawani, 2020)
	SE2	Vicarious Experience	
	SE3	Verbal Persuasion	
	SE4	Emotional Cues	
<i>Work Life Balance</i>	WLB1	Time Balance	(Pathak & Lawande, 2021;Soelton et al., 2021)
	WLB2	The Balance of Engagement	
	WLB3	Satisfaction Balance	
<i>Perceived Organizational</i>	POS1	Fairness	(Dai & Qin, 2016;Tang et al.,
	POS2	Supervisor Support	

Support	POS3	Organizational Rewards	2023)
	POS4	Favorable Job Conditions	
	EE1	Vigor	
Employee Engagement	EE2	Dedication	(Soelton et al., 2021;Fragouli & Louka, 2022)
	EE3	Absorption	
	EE4	Fair Compensation Policy	
	EE5	Rewards and Recognition	

Source: Processed Data, 2024

This research uses operational definitions of variables to explain the dimensions used. The ethical leadership variable can be explained using the dimensions of ethical standards, ethical behavior, balanced decisions, business ethics, ethical aspects. The self-efficacy variable can be explained by the dimensions of past performance, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional cues. The work life balance variable can be explained using the dimensions of time balance, balance of engagement, and balance satisfaction. The variable perceived organizational support can be explained by the dimensions of justice, supervisor support, organizational rewards, and favorable working conditions. Furthermore, the employee engagement variable can be explained by the dimensions of enthusiasm, dedication, absorption, fair compensation policies, and rewards and recognition.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2. Descriptions of Research Respondents

Categories	Details	Amount	Percentage (%)
Gender	Men	65	38.23
	Woman	105	61.77
Age (years)	20-29	45	26.47
	30-39	55	32.35
	40-49	53	31.18
	50-59	17	10
Level of education	High school	122	71.77
	Bachelor	40	23.53
	Masters	8	4.70
	Culinary	63	37.05
	Fashion	22	12.95
Type of business	Automotive	16	9.42
	Agribusiness	9	5.29
	Event Organizer	6	3.53
	Other Types of Business	14	8.24

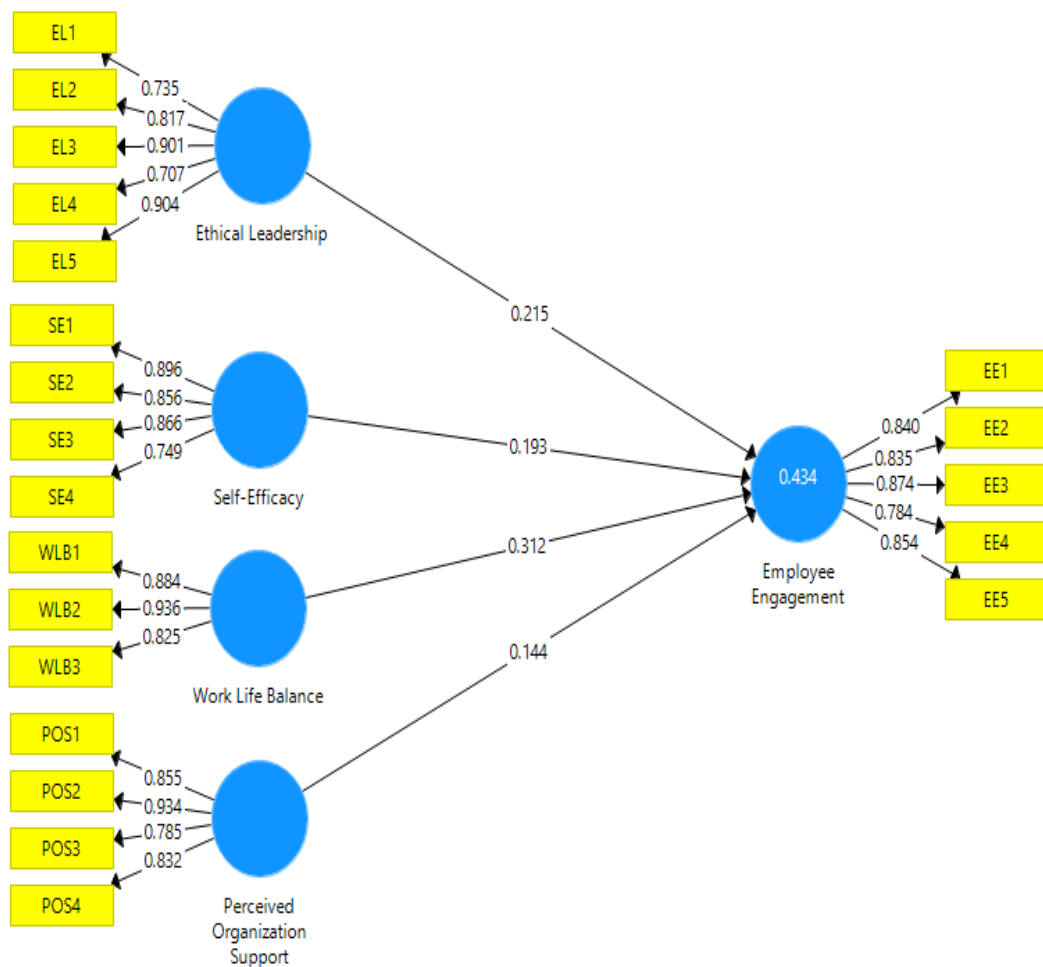
Source: Processed Data, 2024

Respondent demographics show that in terms of gender, the majority of respondents were women, amounting to 105 people (61.77%), while men were 65 people (38.23%). Based on the age range, the largest group was in the 30-39 year range with 55 respondents (32.35%), followed by the 20-29 year age group with 45 people (26.47%), 40-49 year olds with 53 people (31.18%), and the fewest were aged 50-59 years with 17 respondents (10%). In terms of educational level, the majority of respondents had a high school level educational background, 122 people (71.77%), while 40 respondents

(23.53%) had a bachelor's degree, and only 8 people (4.70%) had a master's degree. . Based on the type of business they are engaged in, the majority of respondents are engaged in the culinary sector with 63 people (37.05%), followed by the fashion sector with 22 respondents (12.95%), automotive with 16 respondents (9.42%), agribusiness with 9 respondents (5.29%), event organizers with 6 respondents (3.53%), and other types of business with 14 people (8.24%).

Outer Model Measurement

The results of the data obtained from the research questionnaire were processed using the SmartPLS version 3.2.9 application with processing guidelines. In measuring the outer model, the tests conducted were the validity test and reliability test. A convergent validity test is determined by the loading factor and AVE with the condition that the loading factor is above 0.7 and the AVE value is 0.5. The model reliability test according to(Ghozali, 2014)is seen from the value of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) which has a value higher than 0.7. The following will show an explanation of the measurements of the outlier model, which is presented in Figure 1 and Table 3:



Source: Processed Data, 2024

Figure 1. Outer Model Display

Table 3. Outer Model Measurement Results

Construct/item	Code	Outler Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Ethical Leadership			0.872	0.909	0.667
Ethical Standards	EL1	0.840			
Ethical Manners	EL2	0.835			
Balanced Decisions	EL3	0.874			
Business Ethics	EL4	0.784			
Terms of Ethics	EL5	0.854			
Self-Efficacy			0.863	0.908	0.712
Past Performance	SE1	0.896			
Vicarious Experience	SE2	0.856			
Verbal Persuasion	SE3	0.866			
Emotional Cues	SE4	0.749			
Work Life Balance			0.858	0.914	0.780
Time Balance	WLB1	0.884			
The Balance of Engagement	WLB2	0.936			
Satisfaction Balance	WLB3	0.825			
Perceived Organizational Support			0.874	0.914	0.728
Fairness	POS1	0.855			
Supervisor Support	POS2	0.934			
Organizational Rewards	POS3	0.785			
Favorable Job Conditions	POS4	0.832			
Employee Engagement			0.894	0.922	0.702
Vigor	EE1	0.840			
Dedication	EE2	0.835			
Absorption	EE3	0.874			
Fair Compensation Policy	EE4	0.784			
Rewards and Recognition	EE5	0.854			

Source: Processed Data, 2024

In the validity test presented in Table 3, it was obtained that the value of each loading factor on the indicators of the variables of ethical, self-efficacy, work life balance, perceived organizational support, and leadership employee engagement was above 0.7 and above 0.5 for the average variance extracted (AVE) value. Furthermore, for the Cronbach's alpha value and composite reliability, the value for each variable was above 0.7, which shows that all research variables had good reliability values. With these good values, it can be used as an overview that the condition of the relationship between variables was also good so that further tests can be carried out.

Inner Model Measurement

Inner model measurement was carried out by bootstrapping research data using SmartPLS 3.2.9. There were two results obtained from bootstrapping, the first was the significance of the two related variables, and also the R-square of the study. The value of the R-square is the value that shows the ability of exogenous variables to build endogenous variables. According to (Chin et al., 2008), there are three categories of R-square values, in which if the R-square value is 0.19, the relationship between exogenous variables forming endogenous variables is weak, if it is 0.33, it means that the relationship is moderate, and if the value is 0.67, it means that the relationship is strong. Meanwhile, (Ghozali, 2014) stated

that if the R-square value is more than 0.67, the relationship between endogenous and exogenous variables is very strong.

Table 4. Calculation results of the R-Square value

Notes	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Employee Engagement	0.434	0.423

Source: Processed Data, 2024

Judging from the R-square value for the endogenous employee engagement variable, the value obtained is 0.588, the value of which ranges from 0.33-0.67, this shows that overall the ability of the exogenous variables to explain endogenous variables is moderate. Next, to prove the hypothesis testing, a significance test is carried out which is used to determine the relationship between the exogenous variables and the endogenous variables. The significant criterion is seen from the p-value. With a significance level of 5%, if the p-value between exogenous and endogenous variables is less than 0.05, it means that the exogenous variable has a significant effect on the endogenous variable, conversely if the value is greater than 0.05, it means that the exogenous variable does not have a significant effect on building the endogenous variable. The following are the results of the hypothesis test explained in Table 5:

Table 5. Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis	Coefficient	t-count	P-Value	Conclusion
Ethical Leadership>>Employee Engagement	0.215	3,207	0.001	Accepted
Self-Efficacy>>Employee Engagement	0.193	3,503	0.001	Accepted
Work Life Balance>>Employee Engagement	0.312	4,172	0,000	Accepted
Perceived Organizational Support>>Employee Engagement	0.144	3,673	0,000	Accepted

Source: Processed Data, 2024

Based on the results of the processed data presented in Table 5, it is known that the influence of ethical leadership on employee engagement has obtained positive and significant results with a p-value of 0.001, which is below 0.05. Furthermore, the influence of self-efficacy on employee engagement obtained positive and significant results with a p-value of 0.001, which is below 0.05. Furthermore, for the influence of work life balance on employee engagement, positive and significant results were obtained with a p-value of 0.000, which was below 0.05. Likewise, for the influence of perceived organizational support on employee engagement, positive and significant results were obtained with a p-value of 0.000, which was below 0.05. Overall, from the 4 hypotheses that were built to test the direct influence between variables, the conclusion was that all hypotheses were declared accepted.

The Relationship between Ethical Leadership and Employee Engagement

Based on the results of data analysis, it is confirmed that ethical leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement. In accordance with the results of the recapitulation of respondents' answers, employees in the creative industry often face

pressure to produce innovative and original ideas. With an ethical leader, employees feel more comfortable expressing their ideas without fear of negative reactions or adverse consequences. This safe and trusted environment allows employees to be more emotionally and intellectually involved in their work, thereby increasing levels of employee engagement. Ethical leaders also set good examples in behavior and decision making, which become role models for employees. When leaders demonstrate integrity, transparency, and honesty in their actions, employees are more likely to emulate those behaviors. In the creative industries, where collaboration and teamwork are essential, ethical values demonstrated by leaders can strengthen a positive and harmonious organizational culture. This, in turn, increases employee engagement because they feel part of a team that shares the same goals and values. Apart from that, ethical leadership supports the creation of a fair and inclusive work environment. The results of this research are in line with (Stanislavov & Ivanov, 2014; Fragouli & Louka, 2022), who stated that ethical leadership has a significant effect on employee engagement. Fairness in the distribution of tasks, recognition of achievements, and opportunities for development are very important in maintaining employee morale and motivation. In creative industries, where work outcomes are often subjective and difficult to measure, fair leadership can provide clarity and fairness in performance evaluations. Employees who feel they are treated fairly will be more committed and motivated to make their best contribution.

The Relationship between Self-Efficacy and Employee Engagement

Based on the results of data analysis, it is confirmed that self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement. In accordance with the results of the recapitulation of respondents' answers, employees with high self-efficacy feel more confident in facing challenges and overcoming obstacles that may arise in the creative process. This confidence helps them to be more engaged in their work, take initiative, and make meaningful contributions to their projects and teams. In creative industries, where tasks are often complex and require innovative solutions, strong self-efficacy allows employees to be more proactive in exploring new ideas and taking the risks necessary to achieve extraordinary results. Employees who believe in their ability to create and implement these ideas tend to be more enthusiastic and motivated. They do not give up easily when faced with difficulties, which in turn increases their involvement in the work process and achievement of organizational goals. The results of this research are in line with (Lisbona et al., 2018; Tian et al., 2019), who stated that self-efficacy has a significant effect on employee engagement. Self-efficacy also encourages employees to continue learning and developing their skills. In a creative industry that is always changing and developing, the ability to adapt and continue learning is very important. Employees with high self-efficacy will be more open to self-development and training opportunities, and will more actively seek ways to improve their competence. This continuous learning process not only improves individual skills but also adds value to the team and organization, thereby increasing overall engagement.

The Relationship between Work Life Balance and Employee Engagement

Based on the results of data analysis, it is confirmed that work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement. In accordance with the results of the recapitulation of respondents' answers, in creative industries which often require long working hours and high intensity, employees who are able to balance their time between

work and personal life tend to have lower stress levels. Well-maintained mental and physical health allows employees to be more focused, energetic and motivated at work, thereby increasing their level of involvement in work. The ability to balance work and personal life also contributes to higher job satisfaction. Employees who feel that they have enough time to relax, spend time with family, and pursue hobbies outside of work tend to feel more satisfied with their jobs. This satisfaction increases their enthusiasm and commitment to the tasks assigned. The results of this research are in line with (Pathak & Lawande, 2021; Hartini et al., 2021), who stated that work-life balance has a significant effect on employee engagement. In the creative industries, where satisfaction and intrinsic motivation are critical to producing quality work, a good work-life balance can encourage deeper and more consistent engagement from employees. Apart from that, a good work-life balance can increase employee productivity and creativity. When employees do not feel burdened by excessive work, they can devote sufficient time and energy to the exploration of new ideas and creative problem solving. The creative industry relies heavily on innovation and originality, so the ability of employees to work in optimal conditions is very important. With sufficient rest time and good balance, employees are better able to generate fresh and innovative ideas, which contributes to their increased involvement in creative projects.

The Relationship between Perceived Organization Support and Employee Engagement

Based on the results of data analysis, it is confirmed that perceived organizational support has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement. In accordance with the results of the recapitulation of respondents' answers, in creative industries where tasks often require innovation and new ideas, support from the organization gives employees a sense of security to experiment and take risks. When employees feel that the organization values their contributions and is ready to provide assistance when needed, they will be more emotionally and cognitively engaged in their work. The results of this research are in line with (Dai & Qin, 2016; Tang et al., 2023), who stated that perceived organizational support has a significant effect on employee engagement. Perceived organizational support also increases employee well-being, which in turn influences their level of engagement. Employees who feel supported tend to have lower stress levels and a better work-life balance. In the often stressful creative industries, employee well-being is a key factor in maintaining creativity and productivity. By feeling supported by the organization, employees can focus more on their creative tasks without being distracted by concerns about stability or the support they receive. Additionally, POS strengthens the emotional bond between employees and the organization. When employees feel that the organization cares about their needs and well-being, they will develop a stronger sense of belonging and loyalty to the organization. This sense of belonging is especially important in the creative industries, where collaboration and teamwork are essential. Employees who have strong emotional ties to the organization tend to be more passionate and enthusiastic about contributing to projects and achieving shared goals.

CONCLUSION

The main conclusion of the research contains several important findings, namely that strategic leadership is proven to have a significant influence on employee engagement. Ethical leadership creates a transparent and fair work environment, which encourages employees to be more involved and contribute optimally in their work. Leaders who demonstrate integrity and concern for employee welfare can increase feelings of security and job satisfaction. Furthermore, self-efficacy or employees' belief in their own abilities was also found to be a key factor in increasing employee engagement. Employees with high self-efficacy tend to be more proactive in facing challenges and are more motivated to achieve their goals. This is especially important in the creative industries, where innovation and creative problem solving are highly valued. Strong self-confidence allows employees to explore new ideas and take risks necessary for project success.

Work-life balance also plays an important role in employee engagement. A good balance between work and personal life allows employees to manage stress more effectively and maintain their well-being. In the creative industries, which often have high demands and long working hours, the ability to balance work and personal life is essential to maintaining work enthusiasm and motivation. Employees who feel that they have enough time for rest and personal activities tend to be happier and more engaged in their work. Furthermore, perceived organizational support, or employee perceptions of the support provided by the organization, has also been proven to have a significant effect on employee engagement. Employees who feel supported by their organization, whether through recognition of achievements, career development opportunities, or welfare support, will be more motivated to make their best contribution. Organizational support creates a sense of belonging and loyalty, which is critical to retaining talent in the competitive creative industries.

Theoretically, this research can help confirm or reject existing theories about employee engagement by introducing specific variables such as ethical leadership and perceived organizational support in the context of the creative industry. Research results can support or challenge existing theories regarding the role of ethical leadership and organizational support in increasing employee engagement. Thus, this research can contribute to the development of theories that are more comprehensive and relevant to various industrial contexts. The practical implication of this research is that companies in the creative industry sector can use these findings to design effective strategies to increase employee engagement. For example, companies can adopt ethical leadership practices to create a more trustworthy and supportive work environment. Through leadership training and development, managers can be trained to demonstrate integrity, transparency, and concern for employee well-being, which in turn can increase employee engagement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Research regarding the analysis of the determinants of employee engagement in the creative industries sector of North Sumatra with a focus on aspects of ethical leadership, self-efficacy, work-life balance, and perceived organizational support may face several weaknesses that need to be considered. Limitations in research methodology, such as unrepresentative sample selection, may affect the validity and reliability of the findings. If

the sample taken does not reflect the diversity in the creative industries sector in North Sumatra, the research results may not be generalizable to the wider population. Second, measuring variables such as ethical leadership, self-efficacy, work-life balance, and perceived organizational support may face challenges in obtaining accurate data. Employee perceptions of these aspects are very subjective and can be influenced by various personal and situational factors. Additionally, the use of questionnaires or surveys as data collection tools can result in response bias, where respondents may provide answers that are considered more socially acceptable than those that truly reflect their experiences. To increase the validity of the results, it is recommended that future research use a longitudinal approach to track changes in employee engagement over time. This approach allows researchers to observe how interventions or changes in ethical leadership, self-efficacy, work-life balance, and perceived organizational support influence ongoing employee engagement. Longitudinal data can also help identify trends and patterns that may not be visible in cross-sectional studies. Future research should also consider additional variables that may influence employee engagement, such as organizational culture, transformational leadership, and work climate. Integrating these variables can provide a more holistic picture of the factors that influence employee engagement in the creative industries. Additionally, examining interactions between these primary and additional variables can reveal more complex and interplaying relationships.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On this occasion, the writing team would like to express their deepest gratitude to the DRTPM Kemdikbudristek for the funding budget provided for the National Competitive Research Fundamental Research Scheme implementation year 2024 with main contract number 103/E5/PG.02.00.PL/2024 dated 10 June 2024 and derivative contract 071/LL1/AL.04.03/2024 dated 20 June 2024. The writing team would also like to express their deepest thanks to all parties involved in the process of completing the research and writing the article, as well as to the entire academic community of the Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Sultan Agung who have provided support to our team.

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