

## **Job Satisfaction and it's Impact to Work Engagement of UT's Employees. Case Study at UT's Head Office, Pondok Cabe**

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ODL and human capacity building

### **Abstract**

The objective of this study is to asses the level of UT's employees job satisfaction, including satisfaction towards work and welfare facilities provided by UT, and it's impact to their work engagement. This study also aims to determine their level of work engagement. The result showed that at general the level of satisfaction of UT'employees are at medium level, and is affected their work engagement very significantly. The level of their work engagement are at medium level.

*Key words: job satisfaction, work engagement*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The organizational development could not be separated from human resources development, because human resources are the determinants of whether or not an institution develops. The most important aspect to be developed is the quality of human resources; the higher the quality of human resources of an organization the more likely the organization's success.

Universitas Terbuka (abbreviated UT), as the first higher distance education in Indonesia is continuously working to improve its quality to be a superior higher distance education, both nationally and internationally. UT is also constantly trying to improve the quality of its human resources by providing a good working facilities and salaries. Indication of the quality of human resources, among others, can be seen from his engagement to the jobs (Kahn, 1990; Demerouti et al, 2001, cited by Salanova, Agut, Peiró, 2005; Harter, Schmidt, Hayes, 2002). The involvement of an employee to the jobs commonly referred to as work engagement. Furthermore, work engagement is influenced by many variables, including perceived employee's job satisfaction; the higher satisfaction the higher work engagement will be (Harter, Schmidt, Hayes, 2002).

## WORK ENGAGEMENT

Since the beginning of this century appears that the greater attention to the scientific study of human strengths and optimal functioning that encourages the birth of positive psychology. This new study encouraged a growing interest in positive psychology, which instead of focusing on human weaknesses, lays emphasis on human strengths, optimal functioning and well being (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, cited by Chughtai, 2008). This new development is also increasing interest in industrial psychology with the emergence of a more positive view about the capacity and employee strength which can be measured, developed, and managed effectively to improve performance (Luthans, 2000, p.698, cited by Schaufeli & Bakker, 2006). One of them is the work of engagement as opposed to burn-out conditions.

In the literature, there are two approaches to work engagement. The first approach is advocated by Maslach and Leiter (1997, cited by Chughtai, 2008). They argue that engagement is characterized by energy, involvement and efficacy, the direct opposites of the three dimensions of burnout. They further contend that when individuals experience the feeling of burnout 'energy turns into exhaustion, involvement turns into cynicism and efficacy turns into ineffectiveness'. According to this conceptualisation, engagement is measured by the reverse pattern of scores on the Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey (MBI-GS) dimensions (Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter, 2001, cited by Chughtai, 2008). This means that low scores on exhaustion and cynicism and high scores on professional efficacy are indicators of engagement.

The second approach to work engagement has been put forward by Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, and Bakker (2002, cited by Chughtai, 2008). These researchers point out that Maslach and Leiter's conceptualisation of work engagement prohibits an examination of the relationship between burnout and engagement since both constructs are viewed as opposite poles of a continuum and are assessed with the same instrument (the MBI-GS). Schaufeli and his co-researchers (2002, cited by Chughtai, 2008) argue that burnout and work engagement are two distinct albeit negatively correlated states of mind as opposed to being two opposite ends of a single continuum. Therefore, they define work engagement in its own right as a 'positive, fulfilling work related state of mind that is characterised by vigor, dedication and absorption' (Schaufeli et. al., 2002, p. 74, cited by Chughtai, 2008).

*Vigor* reflects the readiness to devote effort in one's work, an exhibition of high levels of energy while working and the tendency to remain resolute in the face of task difficulty or failure. *Dedication* refers to a strong identification with one's work and encompasses feelings of enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. *Absorption* is characterised by being completely immersed in one's work, in a manner that time appears to pass rapidly and one finds it difficult to disengage oneself from work.

The reliability test conducted by many experts demonstrated internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of 0.80 – 0.90 which have empirically validated the three factors structure proposed by the questionnaire to measure

engagement, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (e.g. Schaufeli et. al., 2002; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli, Taris and Rhenen, 2008, cited by Chughtai, 2008).

In the present study we adopt the definition of work engagement advocated by Schaufeli and his colleagues (2002), and we used UWES as well because of the following three reasons.

*First*, this definition separates work engagement from the related concept of burnout and as a result establishes it as an independent construct which is important in its own right.

*Second*, this definition splits engagement into three dimensions:

(1) vigor; (2) dedication; and (3) absorption, which can be analyzed separately. This permits for a more accurate detection of where strengths and deficiencies exist in terms of each facet of work engagement (Freeney and Tieman, 2006).

*Third*, the questionnaire used to measure the three dimensions of work engagement, that is Utrecht Work Engagement Scale has empirically validated by many experts that demonstrated internal consistency of 0.8 – 0.9.

## **JOB SATISFACTION**

### ***The definition of Job Satisfaction***

In general, job satisfaction is defined as a positive emotional state that reflects the feeling concerned over the work situation (Locke, 1976). The focus is the task of job satisfaction and short-term nature, which could change depending on environmental conditions of employment (Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982)

Another definition promoted by While Wexley and Yukl (1977) who argued that job satisfaction is the difference of the many things that should have 'the many 'existing'; the greater the difference between what 'should be' with 'existing' the greater sense of job dissatisfaction will be. This argumentation is supported by Robbins (1993), which states that an employee's job satisfaction (employees, patients or customers) is the fulfillment of demands derived from experience doing any work, or obtain a certain treatment and as needed to obtain something desirable. The term satisfaction is used to analyze or evaluate the results, comparing a set of the demands of someone with the fulfillment that have been acquired.

Based on these definitions, job satisfaction could be define as an emotional condition of an employee over whether or not the requirements are met by his or her work environment.

### ***Study about Job Satisfaction***

There are four kind of approaches that used by the researcher.

*First*, task characteristics approach. According to this approach, the characteristics of jobs associated with employee attitudes. This approach divides the work (jobs) into five main dimensions, namely autonomy, job

feedback, job variety, job identity, and significance of the work (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). All five dimensions of the work will further affect the three psychological conditions which are variable between or mediate, that is the experience of meaningfulness, responsibility experience, and knowledge of the results achieved. Results of research conducted by Walsh, Taber, & Beehr, 1980; Seers & Graen, 1984; Hogan & Martell, 1987 (in Baker, 2004) showed a weak association between the five major dimensions of work with three variables between them. In contrast, a recent study conducted by Bhuian, Al-Shammari, & Jefri, 1996; Ting, 1996; Reiner & Zhao, 1999; Bhuian & Menguc, 2002, cited by Baker, 2004) showed the direct influence of job characteristics on job satisfaction.

*Second*, social information processing approach, which is an alternative approach to job characteristics proposed by Salancik & Pfeffer (1978, in Baker, 2004). This approach argues that attitudes are determined by the social signals that emerged from the work environment. The relationship between job characteristics with work attitude is a result of the consequences of normative and structural information from the work environment. Results of research carried out by using leadership as a normative sources indicate that leadership style affects job satisfaction (Landeweerd & Boumans, 1994; Dubinsky, Yammarino, Jolson, & Spangler, 1995; Jones, Katak, Futrell, & Johnston, 1996; de Vries, Roe, & Taillieu, 1998, cited by Baker, 2004).

*Third*, the dispositional approach. According to this approach, each individual has a mental condition that can not be observed stably, such as the needs or attitudes that will affect the perception and behavior, or work attitude (Staw & Ross, 1985, in Baker, 2004). The results of many researches carried out showed the influence of individual mental dispositions on job satisfaction, including intrinsic motivation (Savery, 1996; Lu, 1999; Schonfeld, 2000, in Baker, 2004), positive or negative effectiveness (Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000; Simmons, Nelson, & Neal, 2001, in Baker, 2004), and the need for achievement (Mannheim, Baruch, & Tal, 1997, in Baker, 2004).

*Fourth*, the combine or integrated approach. Griffin, Bateman, Wayne, and Head (1987, in Baker, 2004) combine the characteristic model with the model of social information processing. This approach argues that the job enrichment and the social requirements will influence perceptions and attitudes. The study about the relationship between job satisfaction and absenteeism, indicating a weak relationship between the two (Scott and Taylor, 1985, cited by Baker, 2004).

Another study of job satisfaction associated with job performance conducted by Iaffaldano and Muchinsky (1985, cited by Saari & Judge, 2004) showed a weak correlation, so called as an 'illusory' relationship and 'management fad'. According to Organ, the weak correlation was due to the performance is defined as a result of performance assessment. When performance is defined more comprehensively, including the 'organizational citizenship behaviors "(behaviors as citizens of an organization), the correlation was significant (Organ & Ryan, 1995, in Saari & Judge, 2004).

### ***Dimensions of Job Satisfaction***

Research results collected by Iaffaldano (1985, cited Steers & Portes, 1991) proves that dimensions of job satisfaction are shown to have influence remuneration (Cherrington, Reitz, & Scott, 1971), demands of the organization (Bhagat, 1982), and challenges in the work (Baird, 1976)

According to Schermerhorn, Hunt, and Osborn (1994:145), there are really five dimensions of job satisfaction, namely:

- 1) the work itself, which includes: interest, responsibility, and the work variations,
- 2) the quality of supervision, which includes guidance and technical assistance, and support from superiors,
- 3) the relationships with colleagues, namely the harmonization of relations and mutual respect among co-workers,
- 4) the chance of promotion, namely the opportunities available to develop a career,
- 5) the salary and the working facilities, that is the fit between the received with the expected.

The dimension of job satisfaction used in this study was the dimension of job satisfaction proposed by Schermerhorn, because it is more comprehensive.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Variables:**

#### **Independent Variable**

Independent variable in this study is job satisfaction that is a condition in which an employee has a positive or negative valuation (feeling) towards his work. There are 5 (five) factors of job satisfaction which will be revealed, namely satisfaction with the job itself, satisfaction with the quality of supervision, satisfaction with relationships with colleagues, satisfaction with promotion opportunities, and satisfaction with the salary, working facilities, and prestige of working at the institution he worked. Information on job satisfaction will be measured through a questionnaire developed specifically for that purpose.

#### **Dependent Variable**

Dependent variable in this study is the work engagement which is the sense of spirit, sticky or very engaging, fun and happy doing the work, willingness to devote all his thoughts, time, and energy without having to be asked or governed for advancement. Information on work engagement will be measured through UWES (Utrecht Woerk Engagement Scale).

#### **Population, Sampling, and Data Analysis**

Population of this research is the UT' employees who worked at head office, both educational personnel and administrative personnel. The research sample will be taken randomly (simpler random sampling). The data gathered will be

analysed statistically using descriptive analysis and followed by linear regression method.

## **RESULTS and DISCUSSION**

Data gathered was 51 questionnaires out of 200 questionnaires delivered was analysed statistically, and the results were as shown as below:

### **Test of validity and reliability of the research instruments**

Through a reliability test using SPSS program, the instrument of job satisfaction obtained the degree of internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) of 0.943. It means that this instrument is very reliable.

The validity of this instrument was measured through the correlation of items with total score, and there are 2 items out of 35 items (numbers 12 and 17) are invalid and should be aborted. Therefore, to further research using the instrument as many as 33 items of job satisfaction.

Through a reliability test using SPSS program, the UWES obtained the degree of internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) of 0.948, which means that it is a very reliable instrument. While the validity of this instrument was measured through the correlation of items with total score, and as the results all have very high validity.

### **Level of Job Satisfaction**

#### ***1. Level of job satisfaction at general***

The majority of UT employees at head office have a medium level of job satisfaction (43.1%). Only 2% of them have low level of job satisfaction. It showed in all five dimension of job satisfaction.

#### ***2. Level of satisfaction towards the job itself***

When viewed from the job dimension itself, the job satisfaction of the most employees was at high level (66.7%). It means that UT's employees have satisfied with the work distributed to them. .

#### ***3. Level of satisfaction toward the relationship with the colleagues***

When viewed from the dimension of the relationship with the colleagues, the satisfaction of the most employees was at high level (74.5%). It indicated that UT employees satisfied with working relationships. They have a pleasant working conditions and familiar with each other. .

#### ***4. Level of satisfaction towards supervision from superiors***

Most employees were satisfied with supervision from superiors (52.9%). When viewed from employee status, the satisfaction towards supervision from superiors of educational personnel was higher than administrative personnel. It

means that administrative staffs were felt less satisfied with the supervision and attention from superiors rather than educational staffs have. .

#### **5. Level of satisfaction towards salary and working facilities**

Generally, employees have a high level of satisfaction on salary, remuneration, and working facilities provided by UT (74.5%).

When viewed from the side of employee status, educational staff that has high satisfaction rates slightly more (80%) compared to administrative staff (77.8%). But when viewed from the job status, officials felt more satisfied than they who are not official. This indicates that the differences in salary, remuneration, and working facilities provided by UT encourage uncomfortable feelings among the staff that are not official.

#### **6. Level of satisfaction towards prestige in working at UT**

Generally, most employees feel proud to work at UT (62.7%). It is very encouraging, because as a relatively young university, having employees who are proud of their institution. The pride of the institution, or proud to be an employee of UT is a capital that is essential for the development of UT in the future. See detail in table 5.

### **Level of Work Engagement**

It turned out that the number of employees who are in medium level of work engagement and the number of employees who are in low level of work engagement is just the same (45.1%). When viewed from the side of employee status, educational staff has a low level of work engagement (53.3%). While the administrative staff has a moderate level of work engagement (56.3%). When viewed from the job status point of view, the officials have a low level of work engagement (53.8%). This result indicates that almost half of UT employees who work at head office are still not showing high spirits, less diligent, and not daring to innovate. This condition primarily experienced by officials.

#### **1. Level of vigor**

Vigor is an important part of one's working conditions. Among UT employees who work at head office, vigor was generally low (54.9%). Lowest level of vigor is actually owned by employees who are official. It seems likely to be used as indications of the workload is too heavy or too much, so that they became less enthusiastic.

#### **2. Level of dedication**

Dedication which has the connotation of a willingness to become deeply involved in the work and feel the significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, and pride. Most UT employees who worked at head office remain low level of dedication (56.9%). It indicates that UT employees are more likely to "just work" without any feelings involved in its work. Under these conditions, the quality of work is going to be something that is difficult to achieve.

### 3. Level of absorption

Most of UT employees who worked at head office remain medium level of absorption (52.0%). Absorption is a condition where the worker could show that full concentration, fun, and difficult to break away from the job, as to not feel the time pass quickly. This condition is difficult to reach by all people working, so if there are 52% of employees have medium level of absorption. It seems is not something that is worrying.

#### The impact of job satisfaction to work engagement

By using linear regression method, obtained results that there is a very significant impact on overall job satisfaction to work engagement ( $R^2 = 0.288$ ,  $F = 13.778$ ,  $\alpha = 0.001$ ). It means that the contribution of job satisfaction on work engagement amounted to 28.8%. When analyzed its impact to the dimensions of work engagement, job satisfaction was overall a very significant impact to the vigor ( $R^2 = .338$ ,  $F = 17.372$ ,  $\alpha = 0.00$ ). It means that UT employee job satisfaction significantly impact the vigor of 33.8%.

Further analysis to determine the dimensions of job satisfaction whichever impact to work engagement, obtained results that:

- a) Satisfaction towards the job itself has little effect but a very significant impact to vigor ( $R^2 = 0.308$ ,  $F = 19.622$ ,  $\alpha = 0.00$ ). It means that satisfaction toward the job itself gives effect to the emergence of UT employee vigor by 30.8%. So, although UT employees who worked at head office faces high job satisfaction, but vigor is not as high as it creates a perceived satisfaction.
- b) Satisfaction with the relationship with the working relationship it has no significant impact to work engagement ( $R^2 = 0.095$ ,  $F = 4.641$ ,  $\alpha = 0.37$ ).
- c) Satisfaction with supervision from superiors turns to a small but significant impact to vigor ( $R^2 = 0.205$ ,  $F = 11.07$ ,  $\alpha = 0.02$ ). So, although the UT employees were satisfied with the relationship with the working relationship, but it does not bring satisfaction commensurate impact to vigor.
- d) Satisfaction with the prestige as an employee of UT was a very significant impact to work engagement ( $R^2 = 0.288$ ,  $F = 17.400$ ,  $\alpha = 0.000$ ). It means that the pride of being an employee of UT was able to grow the work engagement.

#### LIMITATIONS and FUTURE RESEARCH

As with all research there are limitations to this research. The main limitation of this research is the number of sample slightly. There is a possibility that the impact developed in this study may not materialize. Thus future research in this area should attempt to empirically test to see whether a significant



impact of job satisfaction to work engagement of UT employee. Similar research is also recommended to be implemented in the regional offices in order to obtain a comprehensive profile of job satisfaction and work engagement of UT employees.

### CONCLUSION

The impact of job satisfaction to work engagement of UT employees who worked at head office was very significant. The most impact of job satisfaction was to the vigor. The pride of being UT employee was impact to their work engagement. The level of job satisfaction of UT employees who worked at head office in general was at medium level, while the level of work engagement was at medium level among administratives and at low level among officials.

The level of work engagement, especially on the vigor among official remain low. It seems likely to be used as indications of the workload is too heavy or too much, so that they became less enthusiastic. It is advisable to make the work arrangement by re-job analysis.

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