The impact of meaningful work and work engagement on bank employees’ performance

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ABSTRACT

The pandemic caused by the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus had a significant impact on the nursing profession. It is known that nurses are one of the professions that are required to be ready to work, even to be at the forefront. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a more in-depth analysis of the factors related to the performance of nurses, with the pandemic not causing the performance of nurses to decrease. This study aims to analyze the effect of meaningful work and work engagement on work performance, either partially or simultaneously. This research is a quantitative study using primary data from distributing questionnaires to 326 nurses on duty at hospitals that are referrals for patients exposed to Covid-19, in Malang Raya, East Java, Indonesia. Furthermore, the data in this study were analyzed using the regression method with Minitab software. The results of this study indicate that both partially and simultaneously meaningful work and work engagement affect the work performance of nurses.

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Introduction

Work performance is defined as work results that contribute to the economy and have a strong relationship with strategic goals and customer satisfaction (Alkassch & Kweik, 2019). Work performance is behavior or action that is relevant to organizational goals (Allan, Duffy, & Collisson, 2016). In this study, to measure the performance of nurses, which is a profession that has become increasingly difficult after the Covid-19 pandemic. Over the past two years, nurses should be getting stronger and more resilient in their duties (Clari, et al., 2021). They are ready and respond quickly to the health care system with different settings to prevent the spread of Covid-19 transmission. They are supposed to protect themselves while they treat patients who are exposed to the virus (Zhang, et al., 2020). The performance of nurses is increasingly at stake.

In this study, we tried to analyze the performance of nurses by involving meaningful work and work engagement. A person feels that his work is meaningful when the job provides a guarantee of welfare for himself, there is a clear performance measurement, and the work is felt to be able to provide benefits to other parties (Allan, Duffy, & Collisson, 2016). Each individual strives to fulfill the need for goals, values, and self-esteem. Although the motives are different for each individual (making money, family factors, social work), but the basic principle remains the same, individuals need to find ways to interpret the deeper purpose or meaning of what they do. Work engagement refers to a positive, satisfying work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006). High work engagement has an energetic and affective sense of connection with work activities, in other words, individuals who feel attached to their work will work hard, are dedicated and feel absorbed in their work.
(Gorgievski, Moriano, & Bakker, 2014). Based on the explanation of meaningful work and work engagement, it can be said that it is appropriate if these two variables are used as a measure of individual performance.

There have been many studies that explain the relationship between meaningful work and work performance. Martela & Pessi (2018); Zeglat & Janbeik (2019); Wingerden & Van der Stoep (2017), analyzing the relationship between work engagement and work performance, Lisboa et al (2018); Shmailan (2016); Wingerden & Van der Stoep (2017); Laguna & Razmus (2019); Gorgievski, Moriano, & Bakker (2014), but no one has tested it in the nursing community and in this study an experiment was attempted.

This study aims to analyze the effect of meaningful work and work engagement on work performance, either partially or simultaneously. This research is a quantitative study using primary data from distributing questionnaires to 326 nurses on duty at hospitals that are referrals for patients exposed to Covid-19, in Malang Raya, East Java, Indonesia.

**Literature Review**

**Theoretical and Conceptual Background**

Meaningful work is the concept of meaningfulness as a basic psychological need that strengthens individual self-esteem (Albrecht, Green, & Marty, 2021). Work can increase the meaning of life (Kim et al., 2018). Organizations should have the capability to encourage meaningful work by implementing a variety of work practices that create a meaningful workplace for their employees (Albrecht, Green, & Marty, 2021).

Organizations provide a stimulus to create a perception in employees that their work is meaningful, in accordance with their ideals and life goals (Aguinis & Glavas, 2017). Organizations that are able to convey the meaning of work to their employees will get several benefits, such as: employees are more committed to their organization (Geldenhuys, 2014), are more productive (Kim et al., 2018), and employees are less willing to leave their jobs (Wingerden & Van der Stop, 2018).

If this meaningfulness can be raised, the organization will benefit because meaningfulness is correlated with organizational citizenship behaviors, where employee emotions are shown positively such as high involvement in the organization because the organization is related to the future and self-actualization (Aguinis & Glavas, 2017) which all exceed engagement. Next comes actions that are influenced by intrinsic motivation, one of which is manifested by innovative behavior (Bawuro et al., 2019).

Work engagement is a positive feeling, motivation and psychological condition characterized by enthusiasm, dedication and appreciation (Ha, Luan, & Tam, 2021). Work engagement is a state of well-being or job-related satisfaction that is indicated by a high level of energy (John & Raj, 2020). Job engagement is not a burnout but rather a feeling of being energetic in getting work done. Work engagement is a commitment to achieving goals, enthusiastically mobilizing all of his energy for a job (Lisboa., 2018), showing a positive view of working conditions which is manifested by vigor, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006). Vigor is characterized by high levels of energy, resilience, willingness to strive, and not giving up in the face of challenges. Dedication is characterized by feeling valued, enthusiastic, inspiring, valuable and challenging, and absorption is characterized by full concentration on a task. Work engagement is a motivating force to be able to improve performance at a higher level, this energy is in the form of commitment to work, a sense of job ownership and pride, hard work (time and energy), enthusiasm and interest, commitment to work (Haider & Akbar, 2017).

Performance in the form of action or implementation of a task completed by a person within a certain period of time and can be measured. Performance can be measured in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, and organizational health. Shmailan (2016) argues that performance is a specific target which is a management commitment that can be achieved by employees or organizations. Agree with Allan, Duffy, & Colisson (2016) that the term performance comes from the word job performance or actual performance, namely work performance or achievements to be achieved.

Fung et al (2017) divide employee performance into: (1) In-role Behaviors, as measured by job knowledge, work accuracy, productivity, ability to manage work and (2) Extra-role Behaviors, as measured by dependence, following policies and procedures, initiatives and teamwork. Based on the research results of Ximenes et al (2019), employee performance can also be measured through employee creativity.

**Empirical Review and Hypotheses Development**

**Meaningful Work and Work Performance**

Several aspects are given by a person when assessing the meaningfulness of work such as the intrinsic value felt by oneself (Martela & Steger, 2016), the contribution or importance of the individual's role in creating value in an organization or a job (Ji, 2019), the feeling that the organization or a job is a self-realization, namely how work reflects one's identity (Martela & Steger, 2016). Thus, if someone feels the meaning of work, then the organization or work is one of his life goals, so that he will show his best performance (Wingerden & Van der Stoep, 2017).

The meaning of work reflects the deep personal relationship between the individual and his job and motivates the individual to be loyal and perform well, because they are satisfied with the income, security, career image, and working hours that are appropriate...
Several previous studies have discussed the relationship between job meaningfulness and individual performance, such as Martela & Pessi (2018); Zeglat & Janbeik (2019); Wingerden & Van der Stoep (2017), so the hypothesis in this study is:

H1: Meaningful work has a significant effect on work performance.

**Work Engagement and Work Performance**

To achieve success, an individual strives diligently and has engagement as an effort to get his best performance (Laguna & Razmus, 2019); (Zeglat & Janbeik, 2019), according to the intent of work engagement is a positive mind, satisfied, feeling engaged with work which is characterized by passion, dedication, and understanding/permeating (Wingerden & Van der Stoep, 2017), also feeling health and well-being (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006).

There have been many studies that discuss the relationship between work engagement and work performance, such as the study from Lisbona et al (2018); Shmailan (2016); Wingerden & Van der Stoep (2017); Laguna & Razmus (2019); Gorgievski, Moriano, & Bakker (2014), then this study considered the following hypotheses:

H2 = Work engagement has a significant effect on work performance.

H3 = Meaningful work dan work engagement have a significant effect on work performance.

**Research and Methodology**

The subjects in this study were nurses who served in hospitals who became referrals for patients affected by Covid-19 in Malang Raya, East Java, Indonesia. Malang Raya is a city with a dense population because there are many public and private universities, as a tourist destination, and a business center. The population in this study was taken from existing data at the East Java Health Office and found 360 nurses. Data were obtained through questionnaires distributed online, and 326 questionnaires were declared eligible to be used as research materials.

Data were analyzed using a quantitative approach with multiple linear regression using the Minitab software. The statements on the questionnaire are arranged on a Likert scale, with a range of five choices and refer to previous research. Meaningful work from Kim et al (2018) with four statements, 17 statements from Hasan et al (2021)) for work engagement, and individual performance with statements from Zeglat & Janbeik (2019), with 15 statements.

**Result and Discussion**

**Parameter Significance Test**

This parameter significance test was conducted to determine whether the estimated parameter had a significant effect on the model or not, and to find out how much influence each of these parameters had. The parameter significance test in this study was completed by two methods:

**Partial Parameter Significance Test**

Partial parameter significance test shows how far the influence of one independent variable individually in explaining the variation of the dependent variable. The test is carried out using a significance level of 0.05 (a = 5%). Acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis is done with the following criteria:

i. If the significant of t- table < t-value then H0 is rejected, meaning that there is a significant effect between one independent variable on the dependent variable.

ii. If the significant value of t- table > t-value then H0 is accepted, meaning that there is no significant influence between one independent variable on dependent variable.

By using a significance level of 0.05, a t- table is obtained: $T(α/2; n-k-1)$ or $T(0.05;264) = 0.049985$. With the value of n is the amount of data and k is the number of independent variables. The results of the partial parameter significance test in this study are in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Coef</th>
<th>SE Coef</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>VIF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>15.765</td>
<td>7.061</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X1 (Meaningful Work)</td>
<td>0.6268</td>
<td>0.1811</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>1.090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X2 (Work Engagement)</td>
<td>0.5816</td>
<td>0.2567</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>1.090</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Shown in table 1, the value of t > t-table = 3.46 > 0.049985 (for meaningful work) and 2.27 > 0.049985 (for supply work engagement), so H1 and H2 are accepted. The regression equation obtained from the above results is:

\[
Y \text{ (work performance)} = 15.76 + 0.6268 \times X_1 \text{ (meaningful work)} + 0.5816 \times X_2 \text{ (work engagement)}
\]

The equation above shows that meaningful work contributes 62% and work engagement supports 58% of work performance. This support value is described in a stable condition.

**Simultaneous Parameter Significance Test**

Simultaneous parameter significance test model shows the effect of independent variables simultaneously on the dependent variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>942.28</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>13.19</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual Error</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>785.96</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>1728.24</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a simultaneous positive and significant effect of meaningful work and work engagement on individual performance, seen from the calculated F value shown in table 2. The resulting F-value is 13.19, with a significance level of 5%, obtained Ftable: F(0.05) = 0.000104. Where the value of n is the amount of data and k is the number of independent variables. Because F-value > Ftable => 13.19 > 0.000104, H3 is accepted, in accordance with the criteria that the hypothesis is accepted if F-value > Ftable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>R-Sq</th>
<th>R-Sq(adj)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.97709</td>
<td>54.50%</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the test results, the coefficient of determination or R squared is 0.545, which means the ability of the independent variable to explain the variance of the dependent variable is 54.5% (see table 3).

**Classical Assumption Test**

The next step is testing the classical assumption of residuals. At this stage the residual test displays the regression results with all predictors. The purpose of this test is to ensure the truth of the previous hypothesis test. Visually, the classic assumption test is shown as follows:

![Classical Assumption Test](image)

The classical assumption test is completed by a series of tests. The residual test shows a normal distribution which can be seen in the normal probability plot image. The Normal Probability Plot image shows the residual points that follow the normal line, it can be concluded that the residuals are normally distributed. This residual test was followed by a suitability test. Figure Versus Fits proves
the truth of the previous residual test. In the Versus Fits figure, it can be seen that the residual points do not form a certain pattern, so it can be concluded that there is no heteroscedasticity in the residuals. The independent residual test is shown by the image Versus Order. In the figure, it can be seen that the residual points do not show a certain pattern and appear random, so it can be concluded that the residuals are independent, and the histogram is strengthened by the existence of a balance form that is not skewed to the extreme left and right.

Meaningful work and work engagement partially or simultaneously support the performance of nurses. Nursing is a job that requires dedication and appreciation. Everyone doesn't necessarily have a passion for this profession. Stimuli are born from oneself and are strong wills. There is a feeling of pride and a sense of meaning when devoting oneself to this profession. Considering it a noble, meaningful profession, with humanitarian goals (Haugan, et al., 2020). Everyone with this profession, has a sense of meaningfulness, is sincere, sometimes family interests are defeated by their work (Mula & Estrada, 2019). Not knowing time, ready to stand whenever needed, to the exclusion of personal interests. Profession This is bound by a professional oath, that patient safety is paramount. So if someone chooses this profession, it can be said that he has understood all the risks and consequences that must be faced. It is certain for them that this job is very meaningful. It is not only a career ambition but there is an emotional attachment to patients because of the generosity of the soul to help. This study supports several previous studies, although not using the same sample. Zeglat & Janbeik (2019) explained by Goal Setting Theory that meaningfully a worker is easier to understand the purpose of his work and further leads to better performance. Referring to Wingerden & Van der Stoep (2017), when they consider their work to be meaningful, they really appreciate the results of their work. It triggers motivation and desire then determines positively their performance.

After a sense of meaning, there is a feeling of engagement with work. If a person feels that a job is meaningful to him, then it is not difficult to feel engaged. Meaningful and engagement are two variables that are often juxtaposed. Many studies demonstrated that meaningful work is related to performance in several ways and in interrelated ways such as work engagement (Wingerden & Van der Stoep, 2017); Employees who experience meaningfulness in their work will be more comfortable cognitively connect themselves to work, thereby increasing their dedication, absorption and enthusiasm in work. Furthermore, driven to optimize performance (Ahmed, Abdul Majid, & Mohd Zin, 2016). It is undeniable that engagement will be easy if someone can interpret their work well. There is no feeling of tiredness, complaining, despair when faced with problems or having to work more than normal working hours. It's all as a form of their dedication to their work, that this has become their choice.

The conditions described make it easy to conclude that meaningful work and work engagement have a strong influence on work performance. There is no need for strict supervision from superiors, every nurse has been able to achieve optimal performance consciously without waiting for orders. The highest performance for them is to be able to help patients in the treatment process, as doctors' colleagues, and all of this is done with full awareness as a calling from the heart, not only to pursue optimal performance.

Conclusion

This study conveys empirical findings of work performance which is supported by meaningful work and work engagement. Meaningful work and work engagement partially have an influence on work performance. The results showed an increase in meaningful work and work engagement correlated with increasing work performance. Another finding in this study is that meaningful work and work engagement simultaneously have an effect on work performance and the effect is greater. Meaningful work and work engagement are inner drives that are stimulated by the work environment and create a response called work performance. For further research, there are many other factors that encourage the achievement of better work performance. These other factors can be combined with the two factors in this study to broaden the scope of research and suit the development of the field of human resources in the future.

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References


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