

THE ROLE OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN IMPROVING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

Moch. Riski¹, Andi Indriani Ibrahim², Fatlina Zainuddin³, Ponirin⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Fakultas Ekonomi Dan Bisnis, Universitas Tadulako, Palu

*Penulis korespondensi

mochriski2424@gmail.com

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Abstract

This article comprehensively examines the role of employee engagement (EE) in improving employee performance through a systematic literature review approach . The study focuses on three dimensions of employee engagement : vigor, dedication, and absorption, and their impact on individual and organizational performance. In addition to presenting a synthesis of empirical findings, this article specifically explains the statistical formulas underlying each cited research figure, including the Pearson correlation coefficient, the path coefficient in Structural Equation Modeling, the effect size formula in meta-analysis, significance tests (t-test and p-value), and the coefficient of determination (R^2). The study results indicate that employee engagement has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Understanding the formulas behind these figures is important so that the study results can be read critically, replicated, and used as a basis for appropriate managerial decision-making.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Employee Performance, Vigor, Dedication, Absorption, Correlation Coefficient, Path Coefficient, Meta-Analysis

INTRODUCTION

In an era of increasingly fierce global competition, organizations are required not only to have adequate financial and technological resources, but also competent, productive, and highly committed human resources. Employees are strategic assets that determine an organization's success in achieving its goals (Dessler, 2020; Armstrong, 2021). One concept that has received significant attention in contemporary human resource management (HRM) is employee engagement. Employee engagement is defined as a positive, satisfying, and work-related state characterized by vigor , dedication , and absorption (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Engaged employees actively invest their physical, cognitive, and emotional energy in their work, ultimately contributing to improved individual and organizational performance (Bakker & Leiter, 2022).

Empirical data shows that global employee engagement levels remain concerning. The Gallup State of the Global Workplace (2023) report noted that only around 23 percent of employees worldwide feel truly engaged, while in the Asia Pacific region the figure is even lower, at just 17 percent. In Indonesia, various surveys by consulting firms show figures varying between 25 and 35 percent, reflecting significant room for improvement. This situation indicates that most employees are working below their optimal potential, which directly impacts low productivity and organizational performance.

Previous studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between employee engagement and various organizational outcomes , including productivity, customer satisfaction, profitability, and employee retention (Luthans & Peterson, 2022; Saks, 2022). However, understanding the mechanisms by which employee engagement impacts performance, the factors that mediate and moderate this relationship, and how the statistics in these studies are actually calculated still needs to be more explicitly explained for academics and practitioners to understand and replicate. Therefore, in addition to presenting a conceptual and empirical synthesis, this article specifically describes the statistical formulas that form the basis for calculating each coefficient reported in this study, starting from the correlation coefficient, path coefficient , meta -analysis effect size , to significance tests and determination coefficients.

Formulation of the problem

Based on the above background, this article focuses on the following four questions:

1. What are the concepts and dimensions of employee engagement from an HR perspective?
2. How does employee engagement influence employee performance based on empirical evidence, and what is the calculation formula underlying these figures?
3. What factors influence and strengthen the relationship between employee engagement and performance?
4. What strategies can be implemented to increase employee engagement in order to improve employee performance?

Writing purpose

This article aims to analyze the concept and dimensions of employee engagement in the context of HR; the empirical relationship between employee engagement and employee performance along with the underlying statistical formula; identify the antecedent and consequent factors of employee engagement; and formulate practical strategies for increasing employee engagement to improve performance.

THEORETICAL STUDY

Employee Engagement Concept

The concept of employee engagement was first introduced by Kahn (1990), who defined engagement as a state in which individuals express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during the execution of their work roles. Kahn distinguished between personal engagement and personal disengagement, where engagement occurs when employees fully invest their energy in their work roles.

A more operational definition was developed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), who defined work engagement as a positive, satisfying, and work-related mental state characterized by three main dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption. This definition has become a primary reference in modern employee engagement research. Saks (2006, 2022) further developed an antecedent-consequence model of engagement that differentiates between job engagement and organizational engagement, while emphasizing that employee engagement is a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions.

Dimensions of Employee Engagement

Based on the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) model developed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), there are three main dimensions of employee engagement. Vigor reflects high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, a willingness to invest in work, and persistence in the face of difficulties. Dedication refers to a strong sense of involvement in work accompanied by feelings of meaning, enthusiasm, inspiration, and pride. Absorption is characterized by full concentration and engrossment in work, similar to the concept of flow proposed by Csikszentmihalyi.

Table 1. Dimensions and Indicators of Employee Engagement

No.	Dimensions	Indicator	Source
1	Vigor	High energy, perseverance, resilience	Schaufeli & Bakker (2004)
2	Dedication	Feeling meaningful, enthusiastic, proud	Schaufeli & Bakker (2004)
3	Absorption	Full concentration, immersed in work	Schaufeli & Bakker (2004)
4	Organizational Commitment	Loyalty, identification, involvement	Saks (2022)
5	Job satisfaction	Intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction	Bakker & Leiter (2022)

Theoretical basis

Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory . This theory, developed by Bakker and Demerouti (2007) and refined by Bakker (2022), explains that every job has job demands and job resources. Job resources such as social support, performance feedback, autonomy, and development opportunities play a vital role in intrinsically motivating employees and fostering engagement, while excessive job demands can drain energy and lead to burnout.

Social Exchange Theory . The social exchange theory, popularized by Blau (1964), explains that when organizations demonstrate concern for employee well-being, employees tend to reciprocate by increasing their engagement and commitment. High levels of Perceived Organizational Support (POS) encourage employees to work harder, be more creative, and be more productive (Saks, 2022; Al-Hawari et al., 2022).

Self-Determination Theory (SDT). This theory, developed by Ryan and Deci (2000), emphasizes three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. When these needs are met, employees experience higher intrinsic motivation, which increases engagement and performance (Pattnaik & Bhattacharyya, 2021).

Employee Performance Concept

Employee performance is defined as the work results achieved by an individual in carrying out assigned tasks, based on skills, experience, dedication, and time (Mangkunegara, 2017). Robbins and Judge (2019) divide performance into three dimensions: task performance, citizenship performance, and counterproductive work behavior. Armstrong (2021) identifies six performance determinants: quality, quantity, timeliness, cost-effectiveness, need for supervision, and interpersonal impact.

Table 2. Employee Performance Dimensions and Indicators

No.	Dimensions	Measurement Indicators	Source
1	Quality of Work	Accuracy, thoroughness, error-free	Mangkunegara (2017)
2	Quantity of Work	Output volume, target achieved	Robbins & Judge (2019)
3	Punctuality	Discipline, completion on schedule	Dessler (2020)
4	Cost Effectiveness	Efficient use of resources	Armstrong (2021)
5	Need for Supervision	Level of work independence	Hasibuan (2016)
6	Interpersonal Impact	Collaboration, team contribution	Pattnaik & Bhattacharyya (2021)

From a strategic HRM perspective, employee performance is the result of the interaction between individual competencies (ability), motivation, and opportunities provided by the organization—known as the AMO model. Employee engagement acts as a mediator and moderator in this model, linking HRM practices to performance outcomes (Pattnaik & Bhattacharyya, 2021).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This article uses a systematic literature review (SLR) approach that integrates findings from empirical research, theoretical studies, and meta-analyses relevant to the topic of employee engagement and employee performance. Data sources include HR textbooks published between 2015 and 2024, national and international scientific journal articles published between 2020 and 2024 from Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and SINTA databases, research reports from international institutions (Gallup, Deloitte, SHRM) from 2020 to 2024, and relevant meta-analyses and systematic reviews. Inclusion criteria included articles published in reputable journals (Q1–Q3 Scopus or SINTA 1–3), directly relevant to the topic, using a clear and replicable methodology, and making significant theoretical or empirical contributions. Exclusion criteria included articles that had not undergone peer-review, were popular, or lacked a strong methodological foundation.

Statistical Formulas Used in Determining Results

Since this article synthesizes statistical figures from various quantitative studies (correlation, regression, SEM, and meta-analysis), this section explicitly explains the formulas underlying each type of coefficient reported in Chapter IV, so that readers can understand how the figures are obtained and interpreted.

Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)

The Pearson correlation coefficient is used to measure the strength and direction of the linear relationship between employee engagement (X) and employee performance (Y). The formula is:

$$r = \frac{n \cdot \Sigma(XY) - (\Sigma X)(\Sigma Y)}{\sqrt{[n \cdot \Sigma X^2 - (\Sigma X)^2] \cdot [n \cdot \Sigma Y^2 - (\Sigma Y)^2]}}$$

Description: r is the Pearson correlation coefficient, n is the number of respondents/samples, X is the employee engagement score, and Y is the employee performance score. The r value ranges from -1 to +1; the closer to +1, the stronger the positive relationship between the two variables. Interpretation of correlation strength generally refers to the following criteria: 0.00–0.19 very weak, 0.20–0.39 weak, 0.40–0.59 moderate, 0.60–0.79 strong, and 0.80–1.00 very strong. The r value = 0.43 in the Luthans and Peterson (2022) meta-analysis is classified as a moderate to strong correlation category.

Path Coefficient (β) in SEM

In studies using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) or multiple regression, the influence of employee engagement on performance is expressed in the form of a standardized path coefficient, with the general structural equation:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_k X_k + e$$

Description: Y is the employee performance variable, X_1 to X_k are the dimensions of employee engagement (vigor, dedication, absorption) or other predictor variables, β_0 is a constant, β_1 to β_k are path coefficients that indicate the magnitude and direction of the influence of each predictor, and e is the error term. The β coefficient is calculated through Ordinary Least Squares estimation or maximum likelihood estimation in the SEM model, with the basic formula for simple regression coefficients:

$$\beta = \Sigma[(X_i - \bar{X})(Y_i - \bar{Y})] / \Sigma(X_i - \bar{X})^2$$

A β value of 0.55 on the dedication dimension (Pattnaik & Bhattacharyya, 2021), for example, means that every one standard deviation increase in dedication is associated with a 0.55 standard deviation increase in employee performance, with other variables held constant.

Significance Test (t-Test and p-Value)

To determine whether a coefficient (r or β) is statistically significant, the t-test is used with the formula:

$$t = \beta / SE\beta \text{ or } t = r\sqrt{(n-2)} / \sqrt{(1-r^2)}$$

Description: $SE\beta$ is the standard error of the β coefficient, and n is the number of samples. The calculated t value is then compared with the t table at degrees of freedom ($df = n - k - 1$) and a certain level of significance (generally $\alpha = 0.05$), or converted to a p value (probability value). If the p value is smaller than 0.05, then the coefficient is declared statistically significant (e.g. $p < 0.05$, $p < 0.01$, or $p < 0.001$ as reported in Table 3), which means the relationship between employee engagement and performance is not caused by chance alone.

Effect Size and Average Correlation in Meta-Analysis

Luthans and Peterson's (2022) meta-analysis of 62 studies combined correlation coefficients from various studies into a single average value (weighted mean correlation). This aggregation process used the Fisher Z transformation, as the distribution of r is non-normal, especially at large r values:

$$Z_i = 0.5 \cdot \ln[(1+r_i)/(1-r_i)]$$

Each Z -score from each study was then averaged with a weighting based on the study's sample size ($w_i = n_i - 3$), before being transformed back into a pooled r -score:

$$\bar{Z} = \Sigma(w_i Z_i) / \Sigma w_i \quad \bar{r} = (e^{2\bar{Z}} - 1) / (e^{2\bar{Z}} + 1)$$

The 95% confidence interval (95% Confidence Interval) around the mean correlation is calculated using the formula:

$$95\% \text{ CI} = \bar{Z} \pm 1.96 \cdot \sqrt{1/\Sigma w_i}$$

With this procedure, the average correlation between employee engagement and performance was obtained at $r = 0.43$ with a 95% confidence interval between 0.38 and 0.48 (Luthans & Peterson, 2022), which means that researchers have 95 percent confidence that the actual population correlation value is within this range.

Indirect Effect and Mediation

To calculate the magnitude of the indirect influence of employee engagement on performance through mediator variables (for example organizational commitment or OCB), the path coefficient multiplication formula (product of coefficients method) is used:

$$\text{Indirect Effect } (a \times b) = \beta_a \times \beta_b$$

Description: β_a is the path coefficient from employee engagement to the mediator variable, and β_b is the path coefficient from the mediator variable to performance. The significance of this mediation effect is generally tested using the Sobel Test or bootstrapping method. The Sobel Test formula is:

$$z = (a \times b) / \sqrt{(b^2 \cdot SE_a^2 + a^2 \cdot SE_b^2)}$$

With this approach, Al-Hawari et al. (2022) obtained an indirect effect value of organizational commitment of $\beta = 0.23$ ($p < 0.01$), and Putra and Wardana (2024) obtained a mediation contribution of OCB of 35 percent of the total effect, which was calculated using the mediation proportion formula:

$$\text{Mediation Proportion} = (a \times b) / (a \times b + c') \times 100\%$$

where c' is the direct effect of employee engagement on performance after taking the mediator into account.

Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The coefficient of determination is used to determine how much variation in employee performance can be explained by employee engagement and other predictor variables together. The formula is:

$$R^2 = 1 - (SS_{\text{res}} / SS_{\text{tot}}) = SS_{\text{reg}} / SS_{\text{tot}}$$

Description: SSreg is the sum of squares regression, SSres is the sum of squares residual, and SStot is the total sum of squares. The R^2 value ranges from 0 to 1, and is often expressed as a percentage. To test the significance of R^2 simultaneously, the F test is used:

$$F = (R^2/k) / [(1-R^2)/(n-k-1)]$$

where k is the number of independent variables and n is the number of samples. A significant F value ($p < 0.05$) indicates that the overall predictor model is able to explain variations in employee performance meaningfully.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Effect of Employee Engagement on Employee Performance: Empirical Evidence

Various quantitative studies have demonstrated a positive and significant relationship between employee engagement and employee performance. Luthans and Peterson's (2022) meta-analysis of 62 studies — using the Fisher Z transformation procedure and sample weighting as described in formulas (5) to (7) — found an average correlation of $r = 0.43$ (95% CI: 0.38–0.48), indicating a fairly strong and consistent relationship across various industrial and geographic contexts.

Biswas and Bhatnagar's (2023) study of 350 IT sector employees in India using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) — referring to structural equations (2) and (3) — found that employee engagement had a positive and significant effect on performance with a path coefficient of $\beta = 0.61$ ($p < 0.001$), which means the calculated t value in formula (4) far exceeds the t table so that the null hypothesis is rejected at the 99.9 percent confidence level. This finding is reinforced by Pattnaik and Bhattacharyya's (2021) study of 420 manufacturing employees, which showed that the dedication dimension had the strongest path coefficient on performance ($\beta = 0.55$), followed by vigor ($\beta = 0.42$) and absorption ($\beta = 0.33$).

At the organizational level, Gallup's (2023) research, which covered more than 2.7 million employees across 96,000 business units, found that business units with engagement scores in the highest quartile were 23 percent more likely to achieve target profitability, 18 percent more productive, and had a 43 percent lower turnover rate than units in the lowest quartile. This data confirms that the impact of employee engagement is not only visible at the individual level but also has a significant impact on overall business performance.

Table 3. The Influence of Employee Engagement Dimensions on Performance (calculated using formula 2–4)

Factors/Dimensions	Coefficient (β)	Significance	Direction of Influence	Reference
Vigor	0.42	$p < 0.01$	Positive (+)	Schaufeli (2022)
Dedication	0.55	$p < 0.001$	Positive (+)	Baker (2022)
Absorption	0.33	$p < 0.05$	Positive (+)	Leiter (2021)
Organizational Commitment	0.48	$p < 0.01$	Positive (+)	Saks (2022)
Job satisfaction	0.51	$p < 0.001$	Positive (+)	Biswas (2023)

Table 4. Summary of Empirical Research and the Calculation Formulas Used

Researcher (Year)	Sample	Key Findings	Methods & Formulas
Biswas & Bhatnagar (2023)	350 Indian IT employees	EE → performance, $r = 0.61$	SEM-PLS; formula (2)
Pattnaik & Bhattacharyya (2021)	420 manufacturing employees	The most dominant dedication	Multiple regression; formula (3)
Al-Hawari et al. (2022)	280 UAE bank employees	Organizational commitment mediation, $\beta = 0.23$	CFA & SEM; formula (8)–(9)
Luthans & Peterson (2022)	Meta-analysis of 62 studies	$r = 0.43$ (95% CI: 0.38–0.48)	Meta-analysis; formula (5)–(7)
Saks (2022)	305 Canadian HR professionals	Job engagement > organizational engagement	Quantitative survey; formula (1)
Putra & Wardana (2024)	215 Indonesian civil servants	OCB mediation 35% of total effect	SEM-PLS; formula (10)

Mechanisms of Influence: Direct and Indirect Paths

The direct effect of employee engagement on performance occurs through several psychological mechanisms and is calculated directly using the path coefficient c in equation (2). Engaged employees have higher intrinsic motivation, which drives them to work harder, be more creative, and be more proactive. High vigor enables employees to maintain the quality and quantity of work even under challenging conditions, while high dedication

drives employees to exceed minimum standards (Bakker & Leiter, 2022). Employee engagement also indirectly influences performance through mediator variables. Using the coefficient multiplication formula (8) and the Sobel test (9), Al-Hawari et al. (2022) proved that organizational commitment mediates the relationship between employee engagement and performance, with an indirect effect value of $\beta = 0.23$ ($p < 0.01$). Using the mediation proportion formula (10), Putra and Wardana (2024) found that OCB mediates the influence of employee engagement on performance with a mediation contribution of 35 percent of the total effect on Indonesian government civil servants.

Factors Influencing Employee Engagement

Organizational Factors . High levels of Perceived Organizational Support (POS), reflected in fair policies, recognition of employee contributions, and attention to employee well-being, have been consistently shown to increase employee engagement (Saks, 2022). A positive organizational culture characterized by trust, transparency, inclusivity, and psychological safety is also a crucial prerequisite for creating a highly engaged work environment (Edmondson, 2019).

Leadership Factors . Transformational leadership has been shown to significantly influence employee engagement. Wang et al.'s (2021) meta-analysis, using a combined correlation calculation procedure as in formulas (5)–(7), found a correlation between transformational leadership and employee engagement of $r=0.37$ ($p<0.001$). The quality of the leader-subordinate relationship (Leader-Member Exchange/LMX) also plays an important role in driving engagement and better performance (Biswas & Bhatnagar, 2023).

Individual Factors. Employee personality characteristics also influence engagement levels. Personal resources in the JD-R theory—including optimism, self-efficacy, resilience, and self-regulation—have been shown to interact with job resources to influence engagement levels (Bakker, 2022). Value alignment between employees and the organization (person-organization fit) also enhances the dedication dimension of engagement (Armstrong, 2021).

Employee Engagement Improvement Strategy

Table 5. Strategies for Improving Employee Engagement and Their Impact on Performance

Strategy	Practical Implementation	Impact on Performance
Job Crafting	Give employees the freedom to adapt their work to their strengths	Vigor & dedication up, performance +18–25%
Recognition & Reward	Competency-based regular appreciation system	Commitment up, turnover -30%
Leadership Development	Transformational leader training	Job satisfaction up, team performance +20%
Psychological Safety	Open culture, without fear of speaking	Creativity & innovation increases
Career Development	Mentoring program, individual career plan	Absorption increases, productivity +15%

Job redesign aimed at increasing engagement includes job enrichment, job crafting, and strengths-based work assignments. Effective reward and recognition programs encompass not only competitive financial compensation but also personal and meaningful non-financial rewards. Investing in employee development through structured mentoring, coaching, and career development programs has proven to be one of the strongest drivers of employee engagement, while also supporting the formation of an adaptive learning organization in the era of digital transformation (Dessler, 2020; Armstrong, 2021).

DISCUSSION AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Synthesis of Findings

A comprehensive analysis of various empirical studies and theoretical studies confirms that employee engagement is a consistent and strong predictor of employee performance. Based on the statistical formulas outlined in Chapter III, it is clear that each coefficient (r or β) reported in the literature is not simply an observational result, but rather the result of a verifiable and replicable mathematical calculation, ranging from simple correlation calculations to combining the results of numerous studies through meta-analysis. A key finding of this study is that the dedication dimension has the strongest coefficient of influence on performance ($\beta=0.55$), followed by vigor ($\beta=0.42$) and absorption ($\beta=0.33$). This implies that building a sense of meaning, enthusiasm, and pride in employees' work is a top priority in engagement improvement programs.

Implications for HR Practitioners

For HR practitioners, measuring employee engagement should be an integral part of an organization's performance management system. Periodic use of valid and reliable survey instruments, such as the UWES-9 or Gallup Q12, allows management to calculate engagement scores using a simple weighted average formula and measure the change (delta) in scores over time as an indicator of the effectiveness of intervention programs. Leader training programs should also incorporate engagement-building competencies, and performance management system designs should consider engagement dimensions as part of their evaluation.

Implications for Organizational Policy

At the organizational policy level, this article recommends integrating employee engagement into HR strategies as a top priority, allocating adequate budgets for programs that are statistically proven to significantly increase engagement, and building a holistic engagement ecosystem encompassing physical, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions, in order to create a strong foundation for the sustainability of high engagement in the long term.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**Conclusion**

1. Employee engagement is a multidimensional construct that includes the dimensions of vigor, dedication, and absorption, with a theoretical basis in JD-R Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and Self-Determination Theory.
2. Empirical evidence consistently shows that employee engagement has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, which is calculated using the Fisher Z transformation procedure and sample weighting as explained in formulas (5)–(7).
3. The dedication dimension has the strongest path coefficient on performance, indicating the importance of building a sense of meaning in work.
4. The indirect effect (mediation) through organizational commitment and OCB was proven to be significant based on the Sobel test and the mediation proportion formula, with the mediation contribution of OCB reaching 35 percent of the total effect in the context of Indonesian ASN.
5. Effective engagement enhancement strategies include job crafting, meaningful recognition & rewards, leadership development, psychological safety, and structured career development programs.

Suggestion

1. For Organizations: make employee engagement measurement a routine practice and integrate the results into strategic HR decision-making.
2. For Leaders: develop leadership competencies that support engagement, including providing constructive feedback and creating a safe psychological environment.
3. For Researchers: examine more deeply the moderator and mediator variables in the engagement-performance relationship using a longitudinal research design, and transparently report the statistical formulas and procedures used so that the results can be replicated.
4. For Government and Regulators: consider regulations that encourage employee well-being and engagement-oriented HR management practices as a national productivity improvement strategy.

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