PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT AND WORK ENGAGEMENT AMONG EDUCATORS: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT IN PROMOTING INFORMATION LITERACY CULTURE

Hasby Asshidiq
Universitas Medan Area, Indonesia
E-mail: hasshidiq4@gmail.com*

Hasanuddin
Universitas Medan Area, Indonesia
E-mail: hasanuddin@staff.uma.ac.id

Suryani Hardjo
Universitas Medan Area, Indonesia
E-Mail: suryani@staff.uma.ac.id

Abstract

In the context of law enforcement education, sustaining the engagement of educators is essential for institutional transformation and the cultivation of information literacy culture. This study investigates the influence of psychological empowerment on work engagement among educators (GADIK) at Sekolah Polisi Negara (SPN) Hinai, with perceived organizational support (POS) as a mediating variable. Using a quantitative method, data were collected from 177 educators through total sampling and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The findings reveal that psychological empowerment significantly influences POS (β = 0.337) and work engagement (β = 0.256). Additionally, POS demonstrates a significant mediating effect in the relationship between psychological empowerment and work engagement, as confirmed by the Sobel test (Z = 2.148; p < 0.05). The dimensions of "meaning" and "competence" emerged as the strongest contributors to empowerment, while "organizational rewards" and "working conditions" were the most influential indicators of POS. These results affirm that a supportive organizational climate amplifies the effect of empowerment on engagement and highlight the importance of aligning individual psychological resources with systemic support mechanisms. Theoretically, the findings are grounded in Social Exchange Theory, and practically, they underscore the need for integrated leadership strategies that foster both autonomy and recognition. This study contributes to the development of a holistic framework for enhancing educator engagement within police education settings, ultimately strengthening the institution's capacity to produce ethically grounded and information-literate law enforcement officers.

Keywords*: psychological empowerment, work engagement, perceived organizational support, educators, SPN Hinai, information literacy*

INTRODUCTION

In the dynamic landscape of the 21st-century workplace, the role of human resources has become increasingly strategic, especially within organizations that aim to maintain competitive advantage in a globalized era. One such critical organization is the police institution,

which, beyond ensuring public order and legal enforcement, now faces demands to enhance internal capacity, especially through human capital development. Within this context, the Sekolah Polisi Negara (SPN) in Indonesia serves as a central institution for shaping police cadets (Bintara) by equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and ethical values essential for law enforcement duties. However, the sustainability of this education system hinges heavily on the performance and engagement of its educators (Tenaga Pendidik or Gadik) (Barron & Chou, 2020).

Educators are not merely conveyors of knowledge they are cultural agents and emotional laborers who require psychological resources to function optimally. The concept of work engagement has emerged as a crucial psychological construct that captures employees' enthusiasm, dedication, and absorption in their job roles (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006). High work engagement among educators is not only associated with improved teaching outcomes but also with the successful cultivation of strategic goals such as fostering an information literacy culture within institutions (Bakker & Leiter, 2010; Ritonga et al., 2024). However, empirical observations from SPN Hinai indicate that several educators lack motivation and display low teaching commitment, which may be linked to diminished levels of engagement. This highlights a vital need to identify the psychological antecedents that drive work engagement among educators in law enforcement training settings.

Psychological empowerment, defined as a form of intrinsic motivation that reflects a sense of autonomy, competence, meaning, and impact in one's job, has been found to be a strong predictor of work engagement (Spreitzer, 1995; Qian, Meng et al., 2019). When educators feel that their roles are meaningful, that they possess the skills to perform effectively, and that they can make impactful decisions, they are more likely to invest energy, enthusiasm, and commitment into their educational responsibilities. In SPN environments, where educators shape future police officers, psychological empowerment is not just beneficial but essential.

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) the extent to which employees believe that their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being acts as a crucial mediating variable in this dynamic. According to Eisenberger et al. (2019), POS operates within the framework of social exchange theory, where positive organizational treatment fosters reciprocal employee behavior in the form of increased loyalty and engagement. This reciprocal relationship creates a conducive environment for educators to feel not only empowered but also committed to their instructional roles.

Recent studies affirm the significance of this relationship. For instance, Haq et al. (2024) demonstrated that POS significantly mediates the relationship between psychological empowerment and work engagement, accounting for 38% of the variance in engagement levels. These findings underscore the necessity of organizational strategies that simultaneously promote both individual empowerment and systemic support mechanisms (Harianto et al., 2023).

These insights are not merely statistical artifacts but have far-reaching implications for organizational development strategies. They highlight the dual necessity for fostering both intrapersonal agency (through empowerment) and environmental affirmation (through organizational support). In the absence of either component, efforts to enhance engagement may be fragmented or unsustainable. Therefore, strategic interventions aimed at cultivating a culture of trust, autonomy, and recognition are critical to sustaining educators' motivation,

particularly in institutional contexts like police academies, where pedagogical tasks intersect with high-stakes public service mandates.

By reinforcing the interplay between individual psychological states and organizational climate, recent research shifts the focus from isolated interventions to holistic engagement frameworks. This alignment not only advances theoretical models of motivation in organizational psychology but also provides a practical blueprint for leadership development, human resource policy, and institutional performance enhancement. In light of these findings, institutions such as SPN Hinai are urged to implement structured support mechanisms that recognize educators as central agents of transformation both in classroom settings and in the broader agenda of promoting an information-literate and ethically grounded police force.

In the context of SPN Hinai, fostering a culture of information literacy a key component of modern policing education relies not only on curriculum and infrastructure but also on the psychological engagement of the educators themselves (Ritonga et al., 2023). Information literacy, which refers to the ability to identify, evaluate, and use information effectively, requires a learning environment driven by motivated, empowered, and supported educators (Head & Eisenberg, 2010). Without adequate psychological and institutional support, attempts to embed this culture may falter (Ritonga et al., 2024).

This study investigates the influence of psychological empowerment on work engagement among educators (GADIK) at SPN Hinai, with perceived organizational support as a mediating variable. The findings aim to contribute both theoretically and practically by elucidating the psychological mechanisms that enhance educator engagement and, in turn, improve the institutional capacity to cultivate information literacy among future law enforcers.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used in this study is quantitative. Descriptive research aims to accurately describe the characteristics of an individual, condition, symptom, or certain group, or to determine the frequency of certain relationships between other symptoms in society. The population in this study was 177 SPN Educators. In this study, the sampling technique used was total sampling, namely the entire population was sampled, thus the number of samples was 177 people. The data collection technique used in this study is the main way for researchers to obtain an overview of the research focus to be studied. This study uses a quantitative method with three scales: work engagement, psychological empowerment, and perceived organizational support. The data analysis method used in this study was computer-assisted using the SEM program.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research findings revealed a positive and significant influence of Psychological Empowerment on Perceived Organizational Support among Educators (GADIK) at the National Education System (SPN). The influence of Psychological Empowerment on Perceived Organizational Support was significantly positive, with a beta value (magnitude of influence) of 0.337 (33.7%).

Based on the data analysis, it was also revealed that the instruments or indicators in the Psychological Empowerment variable had the largest factor loadings influencing Organizational Support. The highest factor loading was found in the Meaning dimension, coded as PE4, with a

factor loading of 0.853. Next, the Competence dimension, coded as PE6, had a factor loading of 0.832.

The results of this study align with and support the opinions of several experts and previous research findings, including those by Avianti & Hatta (2022), who stated that perceived organizational support (POS) refers to employees' perceptions that the organization values their work contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 2016). When employees perceive that the organization provides benefits, compensation, and salaries fairly, that the organization pays attention to their aspirations, that they receive support from their superiors, that their work is valued, and that they receive promotions, awards, and favorable benefits from the organization, they will feel obligated to contribute their energy for optimal performance, and will be more enthusiastic about their work. They will also feel a desire to reciprocate the kindness received from the organization.

This is supported by the social exchange theory (SET) perspective, which states that when employees perceive that management values and cares about them and their work, they will feel obligated to reciprocate through positive and active engagement (Chooi et al., 2018). POS is a crucial aspect of the hospitality industry for increasing efficiency in many organizations (Asghar et al., 2021).

Rhoades and Einseberger (2016) suggest that organizations demonstrate trust in employees' independence to make informed decisions about how to perform their work. This will increase perceived organizational support, a situation largely determined by internal factors within employees, namely psychological empowerment. Psychological empowerment is a psychological state described by four sets of cognitions: meaning, competition, self-determination, and impact. Psychological empowerment helps individuals develop to be more effective within an organization through the social interactions that occur within it. Psychological empowerment can be defined as an active motivational orientation related to an individual's work role and their sense of control in the workplace. Psychological empowerment is considered crucial because it can influence their professional development and psychological well-being. Empowered individuals will not passively wait for instructions but will actively change and influence their work environment, leading to greater efficiency (Putri & Ratnaningsih, 2020).

Psychological empowerment serves as a benchmark for organizations in psychological empowerment because it plays a role in individual performance, enabling them to control, manage, and choose how to complete a task. Lourdes Machado et al. (2020) state that psychological empowerment plays a crucial role in gaining organizational support, organizational effectiveness, and significantly impacts work quality.

The findings of this study further confirm the significant role of Perceived Organizational Support (POS) in influencing Work Engagement among educators (GADIK) at the National Police School (SPN). The analysis revealed that POS has a statistically positive and significant effect on work engagement, with a beta value of 0.300, indicating that POS contributes to 30.0% of the variance in educators' work engagement. This suggests that when educators perceive strong support from their organization, they are more likely to be emotionally and cognitively involved in their work roles.

The dimension of organizational rewards and working conditions emerged as the most influential indicators within the POS construct. Specifically, the indicator coded POS14, related to organizational reward and working conditions, showed the highest factor loading at 0.879, followed by POS18 at 0.803. These findings reinforce the importance of tangible organizational

support in fostering engagement such as equitable compensation, favorable work conditions, and institutional recognition. Although these two indicators were dominant, other POS dimensions also contributed meaningfully, suggesting a holistic support environment is critical for sustaining high engagement levels.

These findings are consistent with previous studies. For instance, Mujibburrahman et al. (2020) argued that perceived organizational support enhances employee performance, which in turn significantly contributes to organizational advancement. The greater the support received by an individual, the more likely they are to perform their duties effectively, ultimately propelling the organization forward. Similarly, Firnanda & Wijayati (2021) highlighted that organizational support fosters employees' desire to continuously develop their skills in support of achieving organizational goals.

POS has been defined as the organization's ability to appreciate employee contributions and show concern for their overall well-being (Untari et al., 2021). Forms of organizational support may include respectful communication, financial compensation, fair promotion opportunities, and emotional consideration all of which help employees feel valued and motivated in their work (Diana & Frianto, 2021). In fact, Ashar & Murgianto (2019) emphasized that recognition and rewards are among the most vital aspects of organizational life, enhancing employees' job satisfaction and sense of purpose.

From a theoretical standpoint, the relationship between POS and engagement can be explained through Social Exchange Theory (SET). According to Onyeka & Onuoha (2021), organizational support is not automatically given; rather, it is part of a reciprocal relationship. When employees actively contribute to achieving organizational objectives, the organization is more inclined to respond with tangible and intangible support. This reciprocal exchange strengthens the relational bond between employees and the institution.

Saks (2006) further reinforced this perspective by suggesting that POS can lead to greater engagement, as employees who perceive high organizational support tend to reciprocate with higher levels of involvement and emotional investment in their work. This engagement serves not only as a motivational driver but also as a catalyst for organizational success.

In support of this, Albrecht (2010) reviewed a cross-sectional study by Bakker and Demerouti (2017) that identified several antecedents of work engagement—among them, job characteristics, POS, rewards and recognition, leadership, communication, job satisfaction, and organizational trust. These factors collectively serve as engagement enhancers and suggest that POS plays a central role in shaping an employee's emotional and cognitive relationship with their job.

Research has also indicated that the strength of the relationship between POS and work engagement may vary depending on other contextual or individual factors. For example, Man and Hadi (2013) studied 128 private high school teachers in Surabaya and found a weak but positive correlation between perceived organizational support and work engagement. They suggested that other job-related and personal resources may moderate this relationship. Similarly, Mujiasih (2015) conducted a study involving 80 contract employees in a private company and found that POS contributed 39.8% of the effective variance in work engagement.

Taken together, these findings reinforce that perceived organizational support is a powerful predictor of work engagement, particularly when aligned with reward systems and conducive working conditions. In educational environments like SPN, where the responsibilities of educators extend beyond technical instruction to character and values formation, POS can be

a decisive factor in fostering the sustained engagement necessary for institutional transformation and the advancement of an information literacy culture 9Ritonga et al., 2024).

The findings of this study indicate a positive and significant influence of psychological empowerment on work engagement among educators (GADIK) at the National Police School (SPN). The regression analysis revealed a beta value of 0.256, suggesting that psychological empowerment accounts for 25.6% of the variance in work engagement. This implies that when educators feel empowered psychologically especially in terms of meaning and competence they tend to be more engaged, motivated, and emotionally connected to their professional roles.

The analysis further identified that among the indicators of psychological empowerment, the "Meaning" dimension (PE4) had the highest factor loading (0.853), followed by the "Competence" dimension (PE6) with a loading of 0.832. These results emphasize that educators who find value in their work and feel capable of fulfilling their responsibilities are more likely to be actively and positively engaged. This aligns with the fundamental idea that empowerment is a driver of intrinsic motivation, leading individuals to feel more invested in their professional duties.

These findings are consistent with the theoretical assertions of Feldman and Khademian (2003, as cited in Spreitzer, 2017), who argued that psychological empowerment not only impacts individuals but also has ripple effects on organizations and broader communities. Studies conducted in the United Kingdom revealed that empowerment particularly through the dimensions of meaning, self-determination, and impact significantly affects both physical and mental well-being, while also boosting job satisfaction (Holdsworth & Cartwright, 2013, in Spreitzer, 2017). Thus, to mitigate the adverse effects of employee disempowerment, it is essential for leadership to be actively involved in empowering their staff.

Psychological empowerment, according to Spreitzer (2017), contributes directly to improving individual performance and effectiveness. It enhances productivity, fosters greater motivation, and builds an organizational culture that encourages autonomous and accountable action. It is defined as a psychological state manifested in four key cognitions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact each of which plays a vital role in motivating employees to act with initiative and responsibility.

Supporting this notion, Buksnyte-Marmiene et al. (2022) analyzed various organizational factors influencing psychological empowerment and concluded that organizations must be seen as interconnected systems where goals, leadership, relationships, and rewards directly impact empowerment. Their study revealed that organizational purpose and leadership predict employees' perceived autonomy and capacity to make decisions, while trust in one's competence is shaped by organizational recognition and feedback.

Earlier theoretical models also reinforce these ideas. For instance, Hackman and Oldham (1980) and Kanter (1983) (as cited in Whetten & Cameron, 2015) proposed that nine organizational factors foster psychological empowerment. Among these are (a) the ability to understand and align with the organization's vision and mission which provides employees with clarity and purpose and (b) the development of individual competencies through supportive leadership, which enables staff to grow professionally and contribute more meaningfully.

psychological empowerment has been shown to positively correlate with work engagement, which refers to a state where employees are deeply involved in their organizational roles, demonstrating high energy, enthusiasm, and resilience. Empowered educators are more likely to demonstrate characteristics such as commitment, positive behavior, pride in their work, and strong focus traits that are critical in educational institutions like SPN.

Psychological empowerment fosters a sense of control and autonomy, allowing educators to make decisions about how to carry out their tasks and use their skills effectively. It bridges the gap between personal motivation and organizational goals. Therefore, promoting psychological empowerment is not only a strategy for enhancing individual well-being and performance but also a structural mechanism to increase educators' engagement in meaningful work, which ultimately supports the creation of a more effective and resilient educational environment.

The results of this study revealed that psychological empowerment significantly influences work engagement among educators (GADIK) at SPN, with perceived organizational support (POS) serving as a mediating variable. This conclusion was supported by a Sobel test, which demonstrated a statistically significant mediation effect, with a p-value of 0.03 (< 0.05) and a Sobel test statistic of 2.148 (> 1.96). These values confirm that POS acts as an effective mediator in the relationship between psychological empowerment and work engagement.

Further analysis of both direct and indirect effects reinforced this finding. The indirect effect of psychological empowerment on work engagement mediated by perceived organizational support was greater than its direct effect, suggesting that POS enhances and strengthens the influence of empowerment on educators' engagement. This underscores the critical function of organizational support as a psychological mechanism that facilitates the translation of individual agency into sustained, committed workplace behavior.

This finding is consistent with Schaufeli's theory of work engagement, which identifies three core components: vigor, absorption, and dedication (Gómez-Salgado et al., 2019). These dimensions reflect an individual's energetic and focused involvement in work, and are strongly associated with internal psychological resources resources that are shaped and sustained through empowerment and organizational support.

According to Kahn (as cited in Gómez-Salgado et al., 2019), three conditions significantly influence work engagement: meaningfulness, safety, and availability. These psychological states serve as foundations for full involvement in one's work role. Meaningfulness refers to the subjective assessment that one's work is purposeful and aligned with personal values and identity (Matuska & Christiansen, in de Crom & Rothmann, 2018). This intrinsic motivation is strongly fostered by psychological empowerment, particularly through the dimensions of meaning and competence.

Psychological safety, on the other hand, refers to the belief that one can engage in work without fear of negative consequences whether social, emotional, or professional. This form of safety is closely tied to perceived organizational support, as employees who feel cared for and valued by their organization are more likely to take initiative and show engagement without reservation. Lastly, availability refers to having the physical, emotional, and cognitive resources required to invest in one's role (Kahn, as cited in Gómez-Salgado et al., 2019). Organizational environments that provide support, recognition, and a sense of belonging help reinforce this availability.

The mediation of POS in this relationship offers both theoretical and practical insight. Theoretically, it affirms the social exchange theory, where supportive organizational climates facilitate reciprocal employee behavior in the form of increased engagement. Practically, it signals that leadership in SPN and similar institutions should not only focus on empowering educators individually, but must also institutionalize support systems through fair policies, recognition, and care that make such empowerment meaningful and sustainable.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that psychological empowerment plays a significant role in enhancing both perceived organizational support (POS) and work engagement among educators (GADIK) at the National Police School (SPN). The empirical findings demonstrate that psychological empowerment not only has a direct positive effect on POS ($\beta = 0.337$) and work engagement ($\beta = 0.256$), but also exerts an indirect effect through POS, as confirmed by the Sobel test ($Z = 2.148$; $p = 0.03$). These findings affirm the mediating role of POS, which strengthens the relationship between psychological empowerment and educators' engagement with their work. The dimensions of meaning and competence within psychological empowerment emerged as the most influential cognitive drivers of support and engagement, reflecting the importance of aligning personal values with organizational roles. Similarly, organizational rewards and working conditions were the dominant dimensions within POS, underscoring the relevance of tangible and emotional recognition in shaping engagement. The study supports the theoretical framework of Social Exchange Theory, which posits that employees reciprocate perceived organizational support with greater emotional investment and performance commitment. This reciprocity reinforces the idea that a supportive organizational climate is essential for translating psychological empowerment into sustained engagement. Moreover, the findings highlight that engagement is shaped by psychological conditions namely meaningfulness, safety, and availability which are intrinsically linked to empowerment and organizational support. These conditions enable educators to invest their physical, emotional, and cognitive resources more effectively, resulting in increased dedication, vigor, and absorption in their professional roles. In practice, these results suggest that institutional leaders should adopt an integrated approach: enhancing psychological empowerment through developmental strategies, while simultaneously strengthening perceived support through inclusive, responsive, and fair organizational systems. Such dual efforts are pivotal not only for improving educator engagement but also for advancing broader institutional objectives, including the cultivation of a resilient, ethical, and information-literate learning culture within police education institutions.

SUGGESTION

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed for educators, policymakers, and Islamic boarding school administrators. First, Islamic educational institutions should formally integrate ethical communication and information literacy into the Aqidah-Akhlaq curriculum through standardized modules, ensuring consistency across teaching practices. Second, teacher development programs should be prioritized, with a focus on adolescent psychology, participatory pedagogy, and digital ethics to strengthen educators' capacity as role models. Third, dormitory guardians should be trained to apply ethical communication strategies in daily interactions, transforming the boarding environment into a living laboratory for character formation. Fourth, information literacy should be framed not merely as a technical skill but also as a moral compass to prevent misinformation, cyberbullying, and unethical discourse both online and offline. Lastly, future research may adopt comparative or longitudinal approaches to assess the long-term impact of integrating communication ethics and literacy on students' character development across different pesantren contexts.

THANK YOU-NOTE

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