How Well are Job Burnout and Engagement Related to Public Service Motivation Among Civil Servants? Empirical Evidence in Pandemic Setting

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze how job burnout and engagement could affect public service motivation among civil servants in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. The sample in this study was employees who worked in public organizations in Bandung Raya, West Java Province, Indonesia. By using a purposive sampling technique, about 73 civils who are willing to become respondents and participate in the research. The results reveal that all hypotheses proposed in the study can be confirmed. An important finding from this study is the mediating role of job engagement on the effect of job burnout on public service motivation. Although job burnout can directly reduce job engagement and public services motivation, if public organizations can manage job engagement better, they will be able to increase public services motivation even more. The development of relationships between concepts and patterns that apply in context and other research designs is highly recommended to uncover interesting things that may not have been found in this study. Recommendations for further research are to expand the scope of the research object, in addition to re-examining the validity of the model, it is also expected to reveal other things that are important information for policymakers and leaders in public sector organizations.

Keywords: Job Burnout, Job Engagement, Public Service Motivation.

INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed various elements, processes, and even results in the management of a public organization. The situation will lead to an important question about how public services are managed in Indonesia. This brings a new perspective to efforts to create public value by service providers for the community. Regardless of the pandemic condition or not, the existence of government institutions or public organizations still leads to efforts to create value for quality public services (Pramuditha & Agustina, 2022; Ramadhan & Tamaya, 2021) and leads to satisfaction among service users (Duriat & Vaughan, 2020; Novira et al., 2020).

In the service delivery process, the existence of human resources is very important as an actor who plays a role in the service delivery process (Agustina et al., 2021; Guswandi et al., 2020; Kock &
Burke, 2008). Therefore, managing human resources has always been an interesting discussion in the organization, including public organizations. At the individual level, human resources that play a role in the service delivery process in performing are influenced by various factors, one of which is motivation. Employee motivation is one of the important factors as a person's support in building a better spirit in the workplace. In public organizations, a special form of motivation that is recognized for employees is public service motivation, where this concept has been transformed into an integral part of the internal motivation mechanism for employees who works in public organizations (Christensen et al., 2017; Perry et al., 2010).

Empirically, public service motivation can be well confirmed in previous studies (Perry, 1996), including recently in the pandemic situation (Putranto & Anwar, 2021). The empirical results from Putranto & Anwar (2021) reveal how public service motivation felt by employees can still be categorized as good enough even in a pandemic situation. While several other studies have shown that public service motivation can encourage a person's level of emotional attachment (Agustina et al., 2021) and is associated with forms of job satisfaction and better performance results (Hidayati & Sunaryo, 2019; Putranto et al., 2018).

From the theoretical perspective of job-demand resources, previous research has tried to review the important relationship with service motivation in public organizations (Bakker, 2015). The theory of job demand resources is recognized in reviewing how a person's condition is associated with the work being done. How this work has been psychologically and emotionally draining and affects the extent to which individuals are attached to their jobs is an interesting discussion, especially during a pandemic. It is alleged that many individuals have different feelings, especially in terms of fatigue and attachment felt related to work, and this has been shown in several previous empirical results. Covid-19 has affected the work burnout level of workers in the health sector (Alrawashdeh et al., 2021; Bahadiri & Sagaltici, 2021; Liu et al., 2020). In addition, the issue of employee engagement is also highlighted in other sectors (Fute et al., 2022; Sun et al., 2021; Zampetakis, 2022), where the Covid-19 pandemic also affects how work engagement is felt by individuals who work in organizations.

In addition, how work fatigue and work engagement are related to each other can be explained in the theory of job demand resources (Dawson et al., 2016; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2014), as has been conveyed by previous experts (Schaufeli et al., 2009; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Job burnout and engagement are often associated with other determinants such as work-family conflict (Dharmanegara et al., 2018; Pradesa et al., 2021), or the form of attitude or behavior at work (Owens et al., 2016; Sarmiento et al., 2004; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2014; Vinje & Mittelmark, 2007). However, one of the important gaps in this research is the limited study that reviews the determinants of public service motivation from the aspect of job burnout and engagement.

This empirical basis becomes the main point in answering research questions about how the relationship formed between job burnout, job engagement, and public service motivation during the pandemic. Based on the description of the background, the important questions in this study are: how burnout and engagement can affect the level of motivation of public service employees who work in public organizations. Interpreting and examining the role of burnout and engagement in the theoretical framework of job demand resources on the results in the form of a person's attitude mechanism in providing public services can reveal an important picture of how to manage employees in the public sector.

Theoretical and Research Framework
As a form of one's feelings for his work, job burnout has been recognized as a condition of psychological pressure felt by individuals due to demands in their work. Since it was first introduced (Maslach & Jackson, 1981), this concept has been extensively studied in various cross-sectoral literature with several empirical and theoretical studies carried out for its unidimensionality (Brewer & Shapard, 2004; Byrne, 1994; Maslach & Goldberg, 1998; Perlman & Hartman, 1982). The
concept of burnout has attracted many experts and practitioners to continue to discuss it as something that always exists in various existing organizational forms (Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Schaufeli, Leiter, et al., 2009). Although only a few people pay close attention to the level of burnout in the workplace that may arise and be perceived by employees.

Burnout is recognized to be inherent in one's work, and therefore this burnout can appear in various types of professions ranging from nurses in healthcare (Glasberg et al., 2007; Hansen et al., 2009; Jenkins & Elliott, 2004), to expatriates (Bhanugopan & Fish, 2006) and university students (Neumann et al., 1990). In addition, burnout is one of the well-established concepts and has been extensively studied in various previous studies (Brewer & Shapard, 2004; Melchior et al., 1997; Worley et al., 2008) and provides information about the importance of recognizing fatigue levels that perceived by an employee as indicated by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment.

While the antithesis of job burnout is job engagement (Setti & Argentero, 2011; Vinje & Mittelmark, 2007), which is a form of positive understanding of how a person feels positive value in his job. Job engagement involves a worker who is fully involved in his work so that employees can feel great responsibility (Chen et al., 2014; Owens et al., 2016; Wefald & Downey, 2009). Similar to burnout, the concept of job engagement has been widely reviewed in the previous literature in various types of organizations and across professions. There are so many studies on job engagement that are colligated with burnout in nurse analysis units and health service provision (Setti & Argentero, 2011; Vinje & Mittelmark, 2007).

As the most important outcome in this study, public service motivation has received very wide attention since it was first introduced more than three decades ago (Perry & Wise, 1990). Public service motivation is conceptualized as a special form of motivation in organizations that provide public services to the communities (Perry et al., 2010), and is often associated with individual attitudes and behaviors such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Hidayati & Sunaryo, 2019; Potiupoon & Ford, 2017; Putranto et al., 2018; Taylor, 2008) and job performance (Alonso & Lewis, 2001; Leisink & Steijn, 2009). From the various results that have been obtained and their relation to other concepts, public service motivation is often considered one of the important antecedents of the individual attitude and behavior mechanism in public organizations.

Most of the previous research focused on the relationship between public service motivation and outcomes in the form of important attitudes and behaviors of individuals. Therefore, it will be very interesting to review how burnout and engagement can be related to public services motivation felt by employees, especially in the current pandemic situation. The theoretical perspective of the job-demand resources model used in explaining the determinants of public service motivation can be seen in Figure 1 as follows.

![Figure 1. Research Framework](image_url)

This conceptual framework is based on how the theory of job demand resources attached to one's job can affect the level of employee motivation in serving the public interest. From the conceptual framework presented above, the following hypotheses can be formulated:
H-1: Job burnout has a significant negative effect on job engagement
H-2: Job burnout has a significant negative effect on public service motivation
H-3: Job engagement has a significant positive effect on public service motivation
H-4: Job engagement can significantly mediate the effect of job burnout on public service motivation

METHODS

This study uses a quantitative paradigm approach, with a cross-sectional character for the specified research locus. The research location is focused on the Greater Bandung area, West Java. The sampling technique used is snowballing. This is carried out using a network of civil servant respondents who work in public organizations in the Bandung area. The data collection period is December 2021, and questionnaires are distributed online through references from the civil servant network. Technically, the researcher delivered the online questionnaire link to the identified target sample and then followed up by contacting potential respondents. Of a total of 87 employees who are willing to become respondents and participate in the research, obtained as many as 73 employees answered the research questionnaire completely. Table 1 presents the construct variable and indicator developed in this study.

Table 1: Construct Variable and Indicator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Burnout</td>
<td>Emotional Exhaustion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Depersonalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduced Accomplishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Engagement</td>
<td>Vigour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dedication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Absorption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Service Motivation</td>
<td>Attraction to public policymaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commitment to the public interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civic duty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Sacrifice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As explanatory research, this study aims to examine how the theoretical perspective of job demand resources in explaining public services motivation for employees working in public organizations. Assessing this concept is very important and can be related to the form of the job-demand resourcing mechanism. However, job demand resources are manifested in two things that can be considered important determinants of public service motivation, namely job burnout and job engagement.

Therefore, the urgency of this research arises because the potential burnout felt by employees in public sector organizations can affect the level of engagement at work and their motivation in providing services to the public. The instrument developed in this study refers to concepts that have been studied previously, including burnout, engagement, and public services motivation. Data analysis uses a structural equation modeling approach with Partial Least Square (PLS) which aims to answer research questions and test each hypothesis proposed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2. Mean, standard deviation, and correlation between variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Job Burnout</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>2.214</td>
<td>.867</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Job Engagement</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>2.867</td>
<td>-.653**</td>
<td>.810</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Public Service Motivation</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>4.351</td>
<td>-.753**</td>
<td>.849**</td>
<td>.911</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes: **p, 0.01; *p, 0.05; Alpha Cronbach for each scale is italicized and shown diagonally

Table 2 shows the average value of the items for each observed variable, as well as the standard deviation. The mean value for job burnout is 2.71, which means that there is a tendency for employees to have moderate job burnout while working during a pandemic. Furthermore, the mean value of job engagement is 3.79, which means that there is a tendency for employee engagement values to be categorized as quite good. While the average value of public service motivation is 3.83, which means that employees perceive motivation in serving the public at a fairly good level.

The result of the value of factor weights on the indicators of each variable is known that respondents perceive a decrease in accomplishment as the indicator that most reflects work fatigue according to their minds. Meanwhile, absorption is the indicator that most reflects work involvement, and civic duty is considered the most important in reflecting public service motivation. The correlation value between variables can be seen with positive and negative correlation values, ranging from -0.753 to 0.849. Meanwhile, Cronbach's alpha for each variable was found to be above the critical value (greater than 0.60) which ranged from 0.810 to 0.911. These results indicate that all the variables observed in this study have a reliability value that can be confirmed as good.

The results of the beta coefficient values for each relationship between variables can be seen in Figure 2. The findings show interesting things, including:

1. The greatest influence on each relationship is shown by the effect of job burnout on job engagement.
   The finding confirms the perspective of job-demand resources theory which explains how job burnout and engagement can be related to each other. This shows that the more tired an employee is, the lower his work engagement.

2. The results also revealed that job engagement was found to be the most important determinant of public service motivation when compared to job burnout. The finding shows that to make employees who work in the public sector increase their motivation in providing higher quality public services, this can be encouraged by increasing their sense of attachment to their work.

Table 2. Beta Coefficient Value for Relationship Between Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Beta Coefficient</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
<th>Sign.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Burnout → Job Engagement</td>
<td>-0.653</td>
<td>7.449</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Burnout → Public Service Motivation</td>
<td>-0.347</td>
<td>4.472</td>
<td>0.0053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Engagement → Public Service Motivation</td>
<td>0.623</td>
<td>8.628</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data Processed, 2022

Based on Table 2, the hypotheses that have been proposed in this study were tested. Hypothesis testing uses a significance level of 5 percent with the t-table criterion of 1.960 (n = 73). The explanation for each hypothesis is as follows:
Hypothesis 1: Job burnout has a significant negative effect on job engagement
The output of the data analysis results shown in Figure 2 and Table 2 reveals that the value of the effect of job burnout on job engagement was found to be significant ($\beta_1 = -0.653; \text{sign} = 0.000$). The significance value found is below the critical value of 5 percent, so the first hypothesis in this study is accepted. The nature of this influence is negative or inversely proportional. Research findings show that when employees feel increasingly tired of their work, this can reduce their level of attachment to work. The potential value for the decline is quite large with a coefficient of -0.653.

Hypothesis 2: Job burnout has a significant negative effect on public service motivation
The value of the effect of job burnout on public service motivation shown in Table 2 was found to be significant ($\beta_2 = -0.347; \text{sign} = 0.000$). The significance value found is below the critical value of 5 percent. The second hypothesis in this study was also accepted. The nature of this influence is negative or inversely proportional. Research findings indicate that the more tired employees are with their work, the lower the level of employee motivation in providing services to the public. The potential value for the decline is moderate with a coefficient of –0.347.

Hypothesis 3: Job engagement has a significant positive effect on public service motivation
The result in Table 2 also reveals that the value of the effect of job engagement on public service motivation was found to be significant ($\beta_3 = 0.623; \text{sign} = 0.000$). The third hypothesis in this study is accepted. Research findings indicate that employee-perceived job engagement can increase public service motivation. This coefficient value was found to be the largest when compared to other influence paths contained in the research model.

Hypothesis 4: Job engagement can significantly mediate the effect of job burnout on public service motivation
The coefficient value of the direct effect of job burnout on public service motivation was found to be significant ($\beta_1 = -0.653$; sign = 0.0053). Meanwhile, the path coefficient value of the indirect effect of job burnout on public service motivation through job engagement was also found to be significant ($\beta_1 = -0.6530; \beta_3 = 0.623; \text{sign} = 0.0000$ respectively). Therefore, the fourth hypothesis in this study is accepted. The findings indicate that the employee's perceived job engagement can significantly mediate the effect of job burnout on public service motivation. Based on the criteria of Hair, et al. (2010) it can be determined that if $\beta_1$, $\beta_2$ and $\beta_3$ are significant, but the coefficient value of $\beta_2 < \beta_3$, then it can be concluded as partial mediation.

In addition, the output of the data analysis shows the R-square value to measure the model's ability to explain. R-square value for job engagement is 0.4261 indicating that the variance of job burnout diversity can explain job engagement by 42.61 percent and the remaining 57.39 percent can be explained by factors other than job burnout. Meanwhile, the R-square value of public service motivation is 0.790, which indicates that the variance of job burnout and job engagement can explain the motivation of public services by 79.01 percent and the remaining 20.99 percent can be explained by factors other than job burnout and job engagement. Furthermore, the results of the Q-square calculation show a value of 0.8795, so it can be said that the level of model diversity is 87.95 percent. This large level of diversity indicates how good the value of the resulting research model is.

The overall results of the research findings conclude that job engagement can encourage the motivation felt by employees. This form of motivation is specifically directed at the motivation of public services. On the other hand, the results show that job engagement is the most influential determinant of public service motivation. Thus, a high form of work engagement can make a person more motivated to provide higher quality public services because his motivation increases.

This study shows that all the research hypotheses tested are confirmed or acceptable. The pattern of relationships built in the research model as an empirical result supports the theoretical basis used. Therefore, one of the important implications of the findings can be seen contextually, that burnout
experienced by an employee while working during a pandemic is very likely to occur. The important value of burnout is not to indicate whether an employee's level of saturation is high or low with his current job. Because outside the context of a pandemic, an employee must have perceptions and attitudes about the workload that is his responsibility and social support in his work environment, it is expected to influence his perception of conditions that have the potential to cause job burnout.

Job engagement makes an employee feel that their presence in the organization is very meaningful for their lives to the deepest level, which in turn will improve the service performance of public organizations. Employees who feel engaged have high energy levels and are enthusiastic about their work. In addition, research findings indicate that work engagement is a cognitive and affective motivation at work, which is characterized by passion, dedication, and absorption. Job engagement has broad implications for the quality of an employee's primary job responsibilities and supports increasing one's motivation to serve the public interest. Because job engagement is very important for the continuity and growth of the organization, the leaders of public organizations are expected to continue to innovate on internal processes to support the improvement of process standards in completing work. This is important considering that job engagement can have an important impact on employees' discretionary work attitudes and behavior. For employees, the pandemic conditions do not prevent them from finding experience and value in their work, because a lack of meaning in work can lead to disengagement. Finding value in work can make employees more passionate about their work and increase engagement. Thus, engagement is a good thing that will encourage motivation in serving the public better.

The results of the study also provide an important overview of internal self-management for employees working in the public sector. Even in a pandemic condition, leaders in public organizations must participate to be able to properly identify the condition of their employees, so that interventions can be carried out if needed. Having a work-related policy is indeed very helpful to seek the best security for employees. On the other hand, it is suggested that flexible and dynamic work arrangements will not increase job burnout and decrease job engagement. These two things can have an important impact on the motivation of public services, although with different characteristics.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study provide important empirical evidence that the theoretical perspective of job demand resources can be used to explain how public service motivation can be built on employees working in public organizations. Research findings indicate that job engagement is the most important factor in supporting the improvement of public service motivation.

This study cannot be separated from several limitations, including the self-assessment nature of the research instrument, and the cross-sectional data that only captures phenomena at one time. The development of models between concepts and patterns of relationships that apply in other contexts and research designs is highly recommended to reveal interesting things that may not have been found in this study. Further research is suggested to examine other outcomes of public service motivation and integrate them into the same research model. Recommendations for further research are to expand the scope of the research object and re-examine the validity of the model so that it can reveal other things that are important information for policymakers and leaders in public sector organizations.

In addition, public organizations are expected to develop a favorable organizational climate by expanding the possibility of flexible working hours, which can reduce the potential for job burnout to arise. This can support the efforts of public organizations in maintaining employee engagement with their work. This effort is also expected to assist employees in increasing public service motivation, which in turn can make a positive contribution to improving the performance and satisfaction of service users.
REFERENCES


