

Research Article

Job Demands, Job Resources, and Work Engagement among Civil Servants in Sumedang Regency, West Java, Indonesia: A Job Demands-Resources Perspective

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Abstract. Work engagement is a key psychological resource for public sector organizations that must deliver quality services under increasing administrative pressure. This study examined the effects of job demands and job resources on work engagement among civil servants (State Civil Apparatus, ASN) working in regional apparatus organizations in Sumedang Regency, West Java, Indonesia. Guided by the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, a quantitative cross-sectional survey was conducted with 150 civil servants selected through proportionate sampling. Job demands, job resources, and work engagement were measured using validated self-report scales, and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple linear regression. The results showed that job demands and job resources together explained 47.0% of the variance in work engagement. Job resources, including supervisor support, autonomy, performance feedback, and career development opportunities, were a strong positive predictor of work engagement ($\beta = .66, p < .001$), whereas job demands were not a significant unique predictor ($\beta = -.09, p = .140$). These findings indicate that strengthening job resources is a more effective strategy than merely reducing workload for sustaining engagement in local government.

Keywords: Civil Servants; Human Resource Management; Job Demands; Job Resources; Sumedang Regency.

1. Introduction

Organizations increasingly compete through the quality of their people rather than Local governments occupy the front line of public service delivery in Indonesia. Since decentralization, regencies have carried substantial responsibility for education, health, population administration, licensing, and community development. The quality of these services depends largely on the human resources who deliver them. As a result, the psychological condition of civil servants, including their motivation, well-being, and engagement, has become a central concern of public human resource management (HRM). Law Number 20 of 2023 concerning the State Civil Apparatus emphasizes professionalism, performance management, and merit-based management of civil servants (Republic of Indonesia, 2023), which raises the expectation that employees are not only compliant but also energetic and dedicated in their work.

Sumedang Regency is located in West Java Province and is known for its Sundanese cultural heritage as well as its strategic position between the Bandung metropolitan area and the northern coastal corridor. In recent years the regency has experienced infrastructure development, growing educational activity around the Jatnangor area, and a stronger orientation toward digital public services. These changes are positive for regional development, yet they also alter the nature of work for local civil servants. Employees are expected to master new information systems, comply with more demanding performance reporting, and respond quickly to public expectations, often with limited staffing and budget. Such conditions may increase job demands while leaving job resources unchanged, a combination that is widely associated with strain and disengagement in the occupational psychology literature (Demerouti et al., 2001; Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

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Work engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Engaged employees show higher task and contextual performance, stronger commitment, and better well-being (Christian et al., 2011; Halbesleben, 2010). For a regional government, engaged employees are therefore an asset that supports service quality and bureaucratic reform. Despite this importance, research on work engagement in Indonesian local governments remains limited, and empirical evidence from specific regencies such as Sumedang is scarce. Most available studies focus on private firms, hospitals, or large metropolitan governments, whose organizational conditions differ from those of medium-sized regencies.

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model offers a useful framework for filling this gap. It proposes that every occupation has its own risk factors (job demands) and motivating factors (job resources), and that the balance between them shapes strain and engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Accordingly, the present study addresses two research questions: (1) To what extent do job demands and job resources relate to work engagement among civil servants in Sumedang Regency? and (2) Which of the two, demands or resources, is the stronger predictor of engagement? The study contributes theoretically by testing the JD-R model in a local Indonesian public sector context and practically by providing evidence to guide HRM policy in Sumedang Regency.

2. Literature Review

Work Engagement

Kahn (1990) described personal engagement as the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles, whereby people express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performance. Building on this idea, Schaufeli et al. (2002) conceptualized work engagement as a persistent affective-cognitive state consisting of three dimensions. Vigor refers to high energy and mental resilience while working, dedication refers to a sense of significance, enthusiasm, and pride, and absorption refers to being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in work. Engagement is distinguished from workaholism and from job satisfaction because it combines high activation with positive affect and is directed toward the work itself rather than an internal compulsion.

Meta-analytic evidence shows that engagement is positively related to job performance, organizational commitment, and health, and negatively related to burnout and turnover intention (Christian et al., 2011; Halbesleben, 2010). In public organizations, where financial incentives are relatively fixed by regulation, engagement is particularly valuable because it can sustain performance through intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation. Self-determination theory supports this view by arguing that work environments that satisfy the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness foster autonomous motivation and vitality (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

The Job Demands-Resources model

The JD-R model was first proposed to explain burnout by showing that job demands and lack of job resources jointly predict exhaustion and disengagement (Demerouti et al., 2001). Job demands are physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of work that require sustained effort and are therefore associated with physiological and psychological costs. Job resources are aspects of work that help achieve work goals, reduce demands and their costs, or stimulate personal growth and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). The model assumes two relatively independent processes. The health impairment process links high demands to exhaustion and ill health, while the motivational process links resources to engagement and positive organizational outcomes.

The motivational process can be explained from two theoretical angles. First, resources satisfy basic psychological needs, which fosters intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Second, conservation of resources theory argues that people strive to obtain, retain, and protect valued resources, and that resource gain becomes more salient when resources are under threat (Hobfoll, 1989). Recent reviews confirm that the JD-R framework has been extended to include personal resources, job crafting, and reciprocal relationships between resources and engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Bakker et al., 2023).

Job demands and work engagement

The relationship between job demands and engagement is less straightforward than the relationship between demands and burnout. Some studies report small negative relationships, because excessive demands deplete energy and reduce vigor (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Others find near-zero or even positive relationships, because certain demands are experienced as challenges that promote mastery and growth. The challenge-hindrance stressor framework distinguishes between demands that offer potential gain, such as workload and responsibility,

and demands that obstruct goal attainment, such as red tape and role ambiguity (LePine et al., 2005). A meta-analysis by Crawford et al. (2010) found that hindrance demands were negatively related to engagement, while challenge demands were positively related to it. Consequently, the net association of general job demands with engagement is often weak.

Job resources and work engagement

In contrast, the association between job resources and engagement is consistently strong. Resources such as social support, autonomy, feedback, and opportunities for development have been found to be the most important predictors of engagement across occupations and countries (Halbesleben, 2010; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Bakker et al. (2007) further showed that resources become especially salient when demands are high, and Xanthopoulou et al. (2009) demonstrated that daily fluctuations in resources predict daily engagement and subsequent performance. In bureaucratic settings, resources such as supportive leadership, clear career paths, and access to training are particularly important because they compensate for limited financial rewards and rigid procedures.

Research hypotheses

Based on the JD-R model and the empirical evidence reviewed above, the following hypotheses are proposed for civil servants in Sumedang Regency:

H1: Job demands are negatively related to work engagement.

H2: Job resources are positively related to work engagement.

H3: Job demands and job resources jointly predict work engagement.

3. Research Method

Research Design

This study used a quantitative, cross-sectional, explanatory survey design (Sugiyono, 2019). The design was chosen because the purpose was to test hypothesized relationships among variables measured at one point in time within a defined population of civil servants.

Participants and setting

The population consisted of civil servants employed in regional apparatus organizations (Organisasi Perangkat Daerah, OPD) of the Sumedang Regency Government. An a priori power analysis conducted with G*Power (Faul et al., 2009) for multiple regression with two predictors, a medium effect size ($f^2 = .15$), $\alpha = .05$, and power = .80 indicated a minimum sample of approximately 68 respondents.

To improve precision and allow subgroup description, 180 questionnaires were distributed to employees in twelve OPDs using proportionate sampling based on the size of each unit. In total, 158 questionnaires were returned and 150 were complete and usable (83.3% of those distributed). Inclusion criteria were permanent civil servant status and a minimum of one year of service in the current organization. The sample comprised 87 women (58.0%) and 63 men (42.0%). Participants' mean age was 38.6 years ($SD = 8.2$) and their mean tenure was 11.4 years ($SD = 7.3$). Most participants held a bachelor's degree (64.0%) and worked in staff positions (66.0%). Table 1 presents the demographic profile.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 150).

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Gender	Female	87	58.0
	Male	63	42.0
Age (years)	30 or younger	27	18.0
	31 to 40	63	42.0
	41 to 50	42	28.0
	Over 50	18	12.0
Education	Diploma	21	14.0
	Bachelor	96	64.0
	Master	33	22.0
Position	Staff	99	66.0
	Functional official	33	22.0
	Structural official	18	12.0

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Instruments

All variables were measured with self-report questionnaires using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The instruments were translated into Indonesian, back-translated, and reviewed by two experts in industrial and organizational psychology to ensure content validity. A pilot test with 30 civil servants outside the sample confirmed that all items were clear and that item-total correlations exceeded .30.

Job demands were measured with eight items adapted from the JD-R literature (Demerouti et al., 2001), covering workload, time pressure, emotional demands, and administrative burden (sample item: "I have to work under time pressure to meet reporting deadlines"). Job resources were measured with twelve items covering supervisor support, autonomy, performance feedback, and career development opportunities (sample item: "My supervisor helps me when work becomes difficult"). Work engagement was measured using the nine-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9; Schaufeli et al., 2006), which consists of three subscales, vigor, dedication, and absorption (sample item: "I am enthusiastic about my job"). Cronbach's alpha coefficients in the present sample were .84 for job demands, .89 for job resources, and .91 for work engagement, all above the .70 threshold recommended for research purposes (Hair et al., 2019).

Procedure and ethical considerations

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the regional personnel agency and the heads of participating OPDs. Questionnaires were distributed in printed and online form during regular working hours over a period of four weeks. Participation was voluntary, participants provided written informed consent, and anonymity was ensured by not collecting names or employee identification numbers. Data were used solely for research purposes.

Data analysis

Data were analyzed with IBM SPSS Statistics. Analyses included descriptive statistics, reliability testing, Pearson product-moment correlation, and multiple linear regression with work engagement as the dependent variable. Classical assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, independence of residuals, and multicollinearity were checked before the regression analysis (Field, 2018). Because all data came from a single source, Harman's single-factor test was used to assess common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The first unrotated factor accounted for 38.4% of the total variance, below the 50% criterion, suggesting that common method bias was not a serious threat. Statistical significance was set at $\alpha = .05$.

4. Results and Discussion

Descriptive statistics and correlations

Preliminary analysis indicated that the assumptions of regression were met. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test on residuals was not significant ($p = .200$), scatterplots showed no systematic pattern, the Durbin-Watson statistic was 1.94, and variance inflation factors were 1.03, indicating no multicollinearity. Table 2 displays the means, standard deviations, and correlations among study variables.

Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among Study Variables (N = 150).

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3
1. Job demands	3.42	0.61	1		
2. Job resources	3.78	0.55	-.18*	1	
3. Work engagement	3.91	0.58	-.21*	.68**	1

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .001$ (two-tailed).

Participants reported moderately high job demands ($M = 3.42$) and high job resources ($M = 3.78$). Work engagement was also high ($M = 3.91$), with dedication as the strongest dimension ($M = 4.02$), followed by vigor ($M = 3.88$) and absorption ($M = 3.83$). Job demands were weakly and negatively correlated with work engagement ($r = -.21$, $p = .010$), while job resources showed a strong positive correlation with work engagement ($r = .68$, $p < .001$). Job demands and job resources were weakly and negatively correlated ($r = -.18$, $p = .028$).

Regression analysis

Table 3 summarizes the multiple regression results. The overall model was significant, $F(2, 147) = 65.26$, $p < .001$, with $R^2 = .470$ (adjusted $R^2 = .463$), which corresponds to a large effect (Cohen's $f^2 = 0.89$; Cohen, 1988). Thus, H3 was supported, since the two predictors together explained 47.0% of the variance in work engagement.

Table 3. Multiple Regression Predicting Work Engagement (N = 150).

Predictor	B	SE B	β	t	p
(Constant)	1.56	0.29		5.37	<.001
Job demands	-0.09	0.06	-.09	-1.48	.140
Job resources	0.70	0.06	.66	10.88	<.001

Note. Dependent variable: work engagement. $R^2 = .470$; adjusted $R^2 = .463$; $F(2, 147) = 65.26$, $p < .001$.

Job resources significantly predicted work engagement ($\beta = .66$, $t = 10.88$, $p < .001$), and their unique contribution accounted for about 42.6% of the variance in engagement. Hence, H2 was supported. In contrast, job demands did not significantly predict work engagement once job resources were controlled ($\beta = -.09$, $t = -1.48$, $p = .140$). Therefore, H1 was supported only at the bivariate level and was not supported in the multivariate model.

Discussion

The finding that job resources are the dominant predictor of work engagement is consistent with the motivational process of the JD-R model and with prior evidence from many occupational groups (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Halbesleben, 2010; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Civil servants in Sumedang who perceived stronger supervisor support, greater autonomy, regular feedback, and clear opportunities for development reported greater vigor, dedication, and absorption. From the standpoint of self-determination theory, these resources are likely to satisfy needs for relatedness, autonomy, and competence, which in turn foster autonomous motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). From the standpoint of conservation of resources theory, employees who are surrounded by resources feel more secure and are more willing to invest additional energy in their work (Hobfoll, 1989).

The non-significant unique effect of job demands is also informative. Although demands correlated negatively with engagement at the bivariate level, the relationship disappeared when resources were taken into account. This pattern is in line with earlier work showing that demands are stronger predictors of exhaustion than of engagement (Crawford et al., 2010; Demerouti et al., 2001). A plausible explanation is that many demands in local government, such as public service responsibility, target achievement, and rapid digital adaptation, are perceived by employees as challenges that carry meaning, particularly in a regency where civil service is regarded as a respected occupation and a form of community service. Following the challenge-hindrane framework (LePine et al., 2005), the composite measure of demands used here may have combined challenge and hindrance elements whose opposite effects offset each other. Future studies should separate these two types of demands to test this interpretation.

The high mean level of dedication compared with vigor and absorption deserves attention. It suggests that civil servants in Sumedang draw strong meaning and pride from their public service role, but that their energy and immersion are more sensitive to daily working conditions. This observation is consistent with the view that resources especially sustain the energetic components of engagement in bureaucratic settings.

Practical implications for human resource management

The findings suggest that HRM policy in Sumedang Regency should give priority to strengthening job resources rather than concentrating only on reducing workload. Four actions are recommended. First, leadership development programs should train heads of units in supportive and coaching-oriented supervision. Second, delegation of authority should be increased where regulations allow, so that employees have more discretion over how they complete tasks. Third, the performance management system should provide timely, constructive feedback instead of an annual administrative appraisal only. Fourth, transparent career pathways and access to training, including digital competency programs, should be provided to all employees, including those in functional and staff positions. Job crafting workshops could also help employees to shape their tasks and relationships in ways that increase meaning and fit.

Limitations

Several limitations should be noted. The cross-sectional design prevents causal inference, and the JD-R literature suggests that engagement can also increase resources over time through reciprocal processes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). The reliance on self-report data raises the possibility of response bias, although the single-factor test did not indicate a serious problem. The sample was limited to one regency and may not represent civil servants in other regions with different characteristics. Finally, personal resources such as self-efficacy and optimism, and outcome variables such as performance and turnover intention, were not

examined. Longitudinal, multi-source, and multi-region designs are recommended for future research.

5. Conclusions

This study investigated the roles of job demands and job resources in explaining work engagement among civil servants in Sumedang Regency. Job demands and job resources together explained nearly half of the variance in engagement, and job resources emerged as the only significant unique predictor. Job demands were weakly and negatively related to engagement at the bivariate level but did not add unique explanatory power once resources were considered. These results support the motivational process of the JD-R model and demonstrate its applicability to a local Indonesian public sector setting.

The main practical message is that investing in supportive leadership, autonomy, feedback, and career development is a promising route to a more engaged civil service in Sumedang Regency. Theoretically, the study adds evidence from a medium-sized regency to a literature dominated by private sector and Western samples. Future research should apply longitudinal and mixed-method designs, differentiate challenge and hindrance demands, and include personal resources and performance outcomes to provide a more complete understanding of engagement in Indonesian local governments.

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