

Perceived Organizational Culture and Perceived Organizational Support on Work Engagement

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Abstract *The study examines the effectiveness of perceived organizational support, perceived organizational culture on work engagement among academic staff universities. The study adopts quantitative technique and utilized the use of questionnaire in collecting data from respondents. The data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The regression results indicate that all independent variables which are perceived organizational culture, perceived organizational support are positively correlated with the dependent variable which is work engagement. Finally, the study offers recommendation and conclusion.*

Key words Organizational culture, organizational support

JEL Codes: D23, M14

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1. Introduction

There is a rapid growth of interest among organizations and academics on the topic of work engagement (Guest, 2014). Nowadays, employee engagement is very important since organizations have become more demanding from their workers compared to previously (Sahoo and Mishra, 2012). To be highly competitive in a rapidly changing workforce and tumultuous economic environment, organizations need to hire employees who are proactive and can give commitment to increase their performance to a high standard (Chughtai and Buckley, 2011).

It is essential for organizations to have a better workforce in order to be more competitive and to increase their market growth. Engaging with employees will help the organizations to achieve their goals (Schaufeli, 2013). Albrecht (2012) mentioned that there are many elements needed to be focused on such as the arrangement of employment-level assets (profession advancement, chief help, self-governance and part lucidity), hierarchical-centered assets (a culture of decency and support) and group-centered assets (group atmosphere) that play a vital role to get greater results on work engagement. Organizations that are successful in engaging their workforce can accomplish positive organizational benefit, for example, enhanced efficiency, increased profit and higher retention rates (Agarwal *et al.*, 2012). Similarly, Schneider *et al.* (2017), argued that effective organisations can positively make the employee engaged emotionally, physically and cognitively with work that they are doing and also it can help to make them energized and focused on their job.

In addition, most researchers have identified a link between the employee's level of engagement at work and long-term outcomes for organizations. A study by Rich, Lepine and Crawford (2010), discovered that an engaged workforce can give positive outcomes through numerous ways, including exhibiting higher individual task performance and more organizational citizenship behaviors. Other research indicated that engagement among employees may even contribute to increased organizational success, possibly via an increase in employees' discretionary effort applied toward their work (Shuck *et al.*, 2011). However, disengagement likely occurs because of exhaustion. Allam (2017) defined disengagement as lack of interest, enthusiasm and commitment of employees with their work or a workplace. Meanwhile, Saks (2006) argued that disengaged employees are likely to show negative job attitude, for instance, not being involved in work, uncommitted and lack of organizational citizenship behavior. According to Anbar and Eker (2007), academicians also suffer from disengagement which they develop behavioural attitudes such as no attention, less communication and lower performance. These matters should be of concern to the organization and to it should identify and observe the reasons on their employees' disengagement in order to make them engaged with their work. In a higher education institution, the academic staff is an essential part in the running of the university (Basarudin *et al.*, 2016).

Higher education institutions are also affected by global changes in terms of social, cultural, political and technological system (Silman, 2014). To be competitive and to maintain the quality of education, higher education institutions need to ensure that the planning process, communication, leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving are well assisted by the management. Alzyoud *et al.* (2015) argued that it is important to have academic staff who is engaged because it will

increase productivity and drive the university to a higher level. Moreover, high levels of work engagement will give a positive workplace outcome like increased employee commitment, and organisational performance (Geldenhuis *et al.*, 2014). Besides their main role in teaching and learning, they also need to produce more research and high quality in order to lift the university rank higher (Basarudin *et al.*, 2016). This is because to publish research is one of tasks that academic staff need to do other than teaching and learning. According to Markos and Sridevi (2010) academicians who feel they are being valued by the management will likely encourage them to be more engaged and committed with their work.

Academic staff's attitude and behaviours have significant effects on the performance of the university. As academic staff play a vital role in the university's performance, it is necessary for the university management to determine factors that might influence academic staff work engagement. For instance, the number of credit hours can sometimes become excessive and combined with a burdensome KPI, force academic staff to give extra effort in contributing to the university (Azlan *et al.*, 2017). Azlan *et al.* (2017) also argued that increased workload among academic staff will affect the quality of productivity and in turn, leads to low work engagement.

Rapid changes in the working environment have created a need to engage the workforce in organization activities in order to achieve organization objectives. According to Husein *et al.*, (2017) if the organization wants to be more competitive, they need to give the highest priority on reaching the highest performance in the organization. They further stated that, employees who are well engaged with his or her work are valuable assets for the organization because they can contribute to the organization's innovativeness and productivity which translate to higher organization performance. However, it will be a problem when the organization is having disengaged employees as it will hinder effort to accomplish their objectives and goals (Allam, 2017). Moreover, a study by Rahman and Avan (2016), found that increasing workload among academic staff is not reasonable even though the organization is willing to increase their salaries. According to the academic staff, the excessive workload had become a burden making them too exhausted which in turn will affect their research activities and creating problems in their work life balance. Based on Rahman and Avan (2016), private universities tend to require their academic staff to do administrative work instead of doing their own work. Thus the additional workload takes time away from research activities (Basarudin *et al.*, 2016). In turn, this will cause stress among academic staff and affects their motivation, performance and reduces engagement in their work (Sajid and Shaheen, 2013). They also stated that many academic staff is not happy with their amount of workload and it should be reduced so that they can give a higher quality commitment towards their existing work.

Another problem faced by academic staff is regarding their performance measurement (Masron *et al.*, 2012). The performance criteria are normally termed as key performance indicators (KPI). Recently, the qualification and criteria that are needed for promotion are based on the outcome of scientific research (Azlan and Rizal, 2017). Masron *et al.* (2012) argued that other than publication and research, the KPI's should also include several aspects such as teaching, supervision and consultancy. In addition, for academic staff who are seeking for a promotion, it is compulsory for them to produce two to three publications in academic journals per year and publish in high impact publications and citations (Basarudin *et al.*, 2016). Basarudin *et al.* (2016), stated that academic staff need to do extra workload and effort to reach their individual KPI targets. In addition, research and supervision are also factors that cause stress and exhaustion to academicians that lead them to be less engaged with their work (Azlan and Rizal, 2017).

According to Brenyah and Darko (2017), organizational culture is one of the elements that could affect employee engagement and performance. Organizations that practice a positive culture can encourage job and work engagement among their employees (Parent and Lovelace, 2015). Brenyah and Darko (2017) stated that the organization's goals and objectives usually influence organizational culture, and has direct impact on employee morale and their level of engagement. Thus, the organizational culture and policies that are practiced in the organization could influence academic staff to engage with their work. Apart from that, perceived organizational support (POS) also has a positive relationship with employees' job and organizational engagement (Saks, 2006). According to Biswas and Bhatnagar (2013), interaction between the organization and their employees about higher level of POS will enable employees to utilize their abilities without any doubts or threats to their jobs, social standing and self-esteem. When an employee perceived that their organization care about their well-being and values their contribution, they will return the favourable treatment by engaging in performances that benefits the organization (Gavino *et al.*, 2012). Thus, POS could encourage academic staff to be more engaged and committed to accomplish their tasks.

Therefore, this study aimed to examine the effect of perceived organizational culture and perceived organizational support on work engagement among academic staff in University. This study will help University management to recognize the elements that affect academic staff engagement with the purpose of enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency as well productivity of Universities.

2. Literature review

2.1. Work Engagement

The concept of employee's work engagement was developed by William A. Kahn in 1990 in his study of personal engagement. The term 'engagement' had been defined in various ways such as personal engagement, work engagement, job engagement or employee engagement (Welch, 2011). Based on Kahn (1990), employee engagement refers to "the simultaneous employment and expression of a person's 'preferred self' in task behaviours that endorse the connection to work and others, personal presence (physical, cognitive, emotion) and active full performances".

Meanwhile, Schaufeli *et al.* (2002), defined engagement as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by absorption, dedication, and vigor. Absorption means being fully concentrated and happily immersed in one's work and one has problems with detaching oneself from work. Dedicated is about the sense of significance, enthusiasm, challenge, pride and inspiration. "While vigor refers to the highest level of energy, mental resilience during working Vigor is also where it is the person's willingness to invest extra effort in one's work, and persistence in face of difficulties. Thus, Kahn (1990) and Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), shared a common focus on the expressions of engagement: cognitive-absorption; emotional-dedication; and physical-vigor".

Furthermore, "Macey and Schneider (2008) describe employee engagement as a desirable situation, has an organizational purpose and indicates involvement, passion, enthusiasm, commitment, focused effort, and energy, so it has behavioural components and both attitudinal. The concept of engagement in the tripartite level comprised trait, state and behavioural constructs, as well as the work and organizational conditions that influence behavioural engagement (Macey and Schneider, 2008). Similarly, Albrecht (2010), interpret employee engagement as a positive and energized work-related motivational state and willingness to contribute to work role and organizational success". Bakker (2014), argued that engaged employees always show a positive attitude since they are more appreciated, recognized and successful which help them build a positive reaction. A previous study found that work engagement has a significant relationship with personal outcomes (Patrick and Bhat, 2014). Therefore, employee engagement can be a strong factor to increase organizational performance and affects employee loyalty and productivity as well (Andrew and Sofian, 2012).

Other than that, it is important for employees to have a feeling of their work being meaningful and treasured in order to be more engaged (May *et al.*, 2004). Meaningful work is very important to individuals because it leads them to engage with their work and organizational outcomes (Soane *et al.*, 2013). An individual potentially can experience meaningfulness of work when they know the job they are doing and once they found the work meaningful it will influence their behavior and attitudes toward their work (Petchsawanga and Duchon, 2012). Asik-Dizdar and Esen (2016), argued that individuals who believe their work to be meaningful tend to be joyful and looking forward to coming to work every day, which in turn enhance their work wellbeing and performance.

Moreover, work engagement has a positive relation with innovative work behaviours and negatively related to withdrawal intentions (Agarwal *et al.*, 2012). Successful organizations are due to the development of engaged employees which leads to organizational advantages such as increased profits and improved productivity. Similarly, Ariani (2013) argued that employees who are engaged with their work tend to display extra role behavior towards achieving goals and perform their task efficiently. Individuals those have a positive perception on their work will consistently feel enthusiastic with their job compared those who are disengaged (Ariani, 2013) and are more likely to show extra positive and a lesser amount of deviant work behaviours (Den Hartog and Belschak, 2012).

2.2. Perceived Organizational Culture

There are many terms used by different researchers to denote organizational culture. Hofstede (1980) defined organizational culture as a mindset that differentiates the members of one organization from another in terms of shared beliefs, values and practice. According to Martins and Terblanche (2003), it is the culture that is genuinely related with values and beliefs that are shared by personnel in an organization which includes the activity and behavioral set of standards. Meanwhile, another definition of organizational culture refers to a dynamic force within the organization which is revolving, interactive and engaging and it is formed by the employees and management systems gestures, behaviors and attitudes (Schein, 2004). Furthermore, Mannion *et al.* (2003) defined organizational culture as a wide range of social phenomena in explaining organization character which include the norms, beliefs, behaviour, language, values, myths and form of respect and subversion. Organizational culture is not all about the value of the institution but also about manners and behaviors that are created by each person in the organization (Aksoy *et al.*, 2014). Culture, also can be related with the overall information, belief, art, law, ethnics, custom habit and skills that are brought by individuals to the society in which they belong (Eroglu, 2007).

Schein (2004), argued that organizational culture could influence how an employee believes that he or she should behave in a particular environment. Different types of cultures may create different environment that lead employees to think how much they can feel safe in behaving more accurately. The discussion of organizational culture has focussed on various aspects such as the impact of organizational culture on organizational changes and performance (Rowlinson, 2001). Similarly, Yazici (2009) found a significant relationship between organizational culture and performance. In addition, Armstrong (2009), argued that organizational culture relates to the subjective and touchable aspects of what is happening in the organization. Individuals who are likely to share their values will be selected to work with the organization, and this kind of person can flourish in innovative organizations (Sharifirad and Ataei, 2012).

2.3. Perceived Organizational Support

Eisenberger *et al.* (1986) characterized perceived organizational support (POS) as a worker's recognition that the organization values his or her commitments and thinks about employees' prosperity. At the point when workers feel they are a profitable resource of an organization, they tend to search for the organization's responsibility towards their social enthusiastic need, derived as perceived organizational support (Ringgle *et al.*, 2009). Hence, exchange theory here is social exchange theory and organizational support believe that such help can prompt positive representative results in term of attitudinal, conduct and execution (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Gouldner (1960), clarified the reciprocal are bolstered by the correspondence standards which ties the beneficiary to restore the advantage, support and care offer by other gathering. Along these lines, when workers have high level of POS, in turn it will (Gouldner, 1960) motivates them to help association to accomplish its objectives and target (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986).

According to Ahmed *et al.* (2013), in POS, there is an exchange between organization and employees where the organizational commitment towards employees brings up the approaches of support from the organization (Baran *et al.*, 2012). Organizations express their commitment in various ways, for example supervisory support, justice, provision of growth opportunities, and co-worker support (Ahmed and Nawaz, 2015). However, the organizational outcomes after the huge amount of investment in provision of support are still questionable. Furthermore, POS also refers to how much the organization shows their concern to employees needs and their recognition on employee's achievements (Colakoglu *et al.*, 2010). The organizational support theory claims that positive outcomes will be obtained if there are obligational relationships between employees and the organization (Arshadi, 2011). Therefore, organizations should be reminded that higher level of POS can contribute to diverse optimistic work outcomes. Hence, organizations should find ways to encourage higher POS values among its workforce.

As such, POS is also used as workers appraisal on their experience at workplace in which it helps to reflect the organizational concern about workers well-being (McKeown and Cochrane, 2012). Organizations that embrace the POS culture will benefit at the individual and organizational level affect by the social exchange theory and the reciprocal norms (Panaccio and Vandenberghe, 2009). Hence, researchers believe that when workers perceive an abnormal state of organizational support, they might utilize negative practices in response to the treatment from the organization (Lambert, 2000). Since, POS is related to their concern on individual well-being and the value of their contributions, organizations that provide high POS expect employees to be able to trust the organization, understand some certain difficulties on risk taking that could lead to failure and most importantly, they will be more engaged in optimal risk taking (Neves and Eisenberger, 2013). Moreover, creating a daily exchange process with the organization could lead to positive outcomes where employees will react with extra role activities (Afsar and Badir, 2017). Thus, when employees that perceive their organization show anxiety, truthful reaction about their work and support their performance, this can encourage them to be more active and involved in doing their work and also will increase the organizational outcome (Gregory *et al.*, 2010).

2.4. Perceived Organizational Culture and Work Engagement

Despite the fact that work engagement is seen as a relatively new field, there are several studies that have been conducted on the achievement of organizational culture on work engagement. Naidoo and Martins (2014) investigated the relationship between organizational culture and employee engagement at a South African Information Technology firm. They found that organizational nurture culture is positive and it affects employees to be more engaged with their work in order to sustain the worker in the organization for longer periods. Sadeli (2012), also supports that organizational culture existing in the organization can influence employee engagement. Sadeli (2012), found that leadership culture positively influence employee engagement by ensuring that the leader must align organizational and employees' mission, vision, values and goals. Meanwhile, according to Brenyah and Darko (2017), employees tend to be engaged with their work when they perceive that a supportive culture exists in the organization. The presence of a supportive culture in an organization shows there is a positive trust between the organizations and individuals which can drive employee engagement to a higher level.

Moreover, the management in an organization plays an important role to foster positive organizational culture to motivate employees and manage differences which affect employee's productive outcomes (Chaudhary, 2017). When employees have a positive perspective about organizational culture, it can influence their willingness to be engaged with their work (Naidoo and Martins, 2014). Perceived organizational culture not only can make employees more engaged but also influence their behaviors. Chaudhary (2017) argued that it is important to develop organizational culture for employee engagement. For instance, a learning culture in an organization can help to increase knowledge and skills of employees where they can work more effectively and efficiently. This is supported by Sheri et al. (2017), where they stated that individuals tend to be more engaged when the organization provides them a learning and development environment. Moreover, an organizational culture of effective communication also promotes employee engagement (Ludwig and Frazer, 2012). This is because internal communication can build trust between the management and their employees that will affect employee engagement and maximize their productivity.

Perceived positive organizational culture is also related with the engagement process due to the fact that a positive workplace supports its employees. Thus, improved engagement will happen where there are positive working relationships, employee input in giving suggestions and supporting growth and development with learning opportunities (Sirisetti, 2012). Meanwhile, when there is organizational change, it is important for the organization to create a positive culture to maintain employee engagement (Parent & Lovelace, 2015). This is because when individuals perceived a positive organizational culture, it makes it easy easier for them to adapt with the change and engage with their work as usual. Base on the discussion above, a hypothesis for this study was developed as follows:

H₁: perceived organizational culture affects work engagement

2.5. Perceived Organizational Support and Work Engagement

Ahmed *et al.* (2015) in their study found that there is a strong relationship between POS and employee engagement. Employees in the organization that feels supported will reciprocate favourably by contributing to their work with better attitudinal and behavioral outcomes. Thus, when the employees' values are perceived to suit organizational norms, the employees feel that they are given a higher responsibility and they are empowered Biswas and Bhatnagar (2013). Thus, employee engagement also positively influences organizational performance as well as individual level of performance (Dalal *et al.*, 2012; Karatepe, 2013). According to Ahmadi *et al.* (2014), there is an optimistic connection between POS and employee engagement. It is a duty of the management to enhance employees' perception of organizational support by valuing their contribution so that employees can engage more which is very important for the overall effectiveness of the organization. Biswas and Bhatnagar (2013) argued that employees who perceive positive organization support will intrinsically be more motivated which can make them give a higher effort. This also supported by Ahmed *et al.* (2015) who stated that organizational support can affect employees' motivation in which they favorably do their work beyond their tasks and performance.

Moreover, organizational support is a very important asset for an organization. This is because when employees perceive the job as being highly supported; this will help to increase the employees' positive behavioral and attitudes performances (Lo and Nieh, 2015). Therefore, organizations should take the initiative to develop POS for example by having a supportive management, autonomy variety, providing training and promotion in order to increase work engagement and their productivity (Thirapatsakun *et al.*, 2014). In the manufacturing industry, employees consistently receive response, training and are rewarded for their good performance compared with the education or governmental organizations (Ahmed *et al.*, 2015). This shows that organizational support is really important to enhance employees work engagement and increase their performance. When employees feel that the organization supported them such as appreciation of work, recognition and approval, this will increase their higher self-determination motivation and work engagement level (Gillet *et al.*, 2012). Thus, organizational and managerial influences, and individual features are the factors involved in predicting work engagement.

Furthermore, Naujokaitiene *et al.* (2015), argued that organizational support and involvement in technology will enhance learning in relation to engagement. The management support in an organization can contribute to increased work engagement among employees. This can help employees to work effectively and efficiently and their productivity will grow as well (Alvi *et al.*, 2014). Thus, the organization plays an important role in observing and understanding what types of support that employees need in doing their work because this can make them more engaged. It is important to know the employees' emotional and physical needs in order to make them more engaged with their work (Naujokaitiene *et al.*, 2015). Perceived organizational support from the organization can strengthen employees' feeling that they belong to the organization (Dai and Qin, 2016). This can influence their engagement towards their work where they will work harder to achieve the organization's objectives.

Furthermore, support in an organization from managers, colleagues, infrastructural and institutional policy can enhance employees' work engagement (Naujokaitiene *et al.*, 2015). POS can help to increase employees' determination in accomplishing their work when they feel unmotivated (Haider and Abid, 2017). Other than that, by increasing POS in the aspect of organization care, approval, appreciating employees' contribution, and fulfilling their socio emotional needs, employees engagement will be enhanced (Yongxing *et al.*, 2017). A previous study showed that support in an organization can cause employees to be psychologically and mentally involved in the organization (engagement), where they give more commitment to achieve organization goals rather their own personal goals (Ahmed *et al.*, 2015). Employees who perceived organizational support will reciprocate with high engagement and citizenship behaviour. Therefore, management in the organization needs to ensure employees receive better support which can increase individual and the organization's performance as well (Rubel and Kee 2012). Based on the discussion above, a hypothesis for this study was developed as follows,

H₂: perceived organizational support affects work engagement

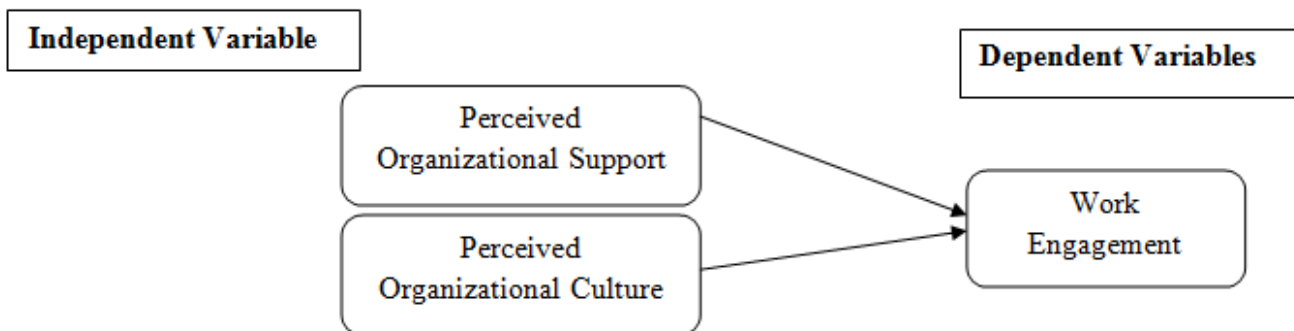


Figure 1. Research Framework

3. Methodology of research

3.1. Sampling Design

Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to staffs of College of Business. The researchers went through offices of the staffs to distribute the questionnaire. Staffs were informed of the research objective and guidelines to answer all items in the questionnaire. The questionnaires comprised of items to measure work engagement, perceived organizational culture and perceived organizational support. The instrument developed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) with 9 items were utilized to measure work engagement of individuals. Perceived organizational culture instrument of 9 items developed by Ginevičius and Vaitkūnaite (2006) was used in this study. Perceived organizational support instrument of 8 items developed by Eisenberger (1986) were adapted for this study. Respondents were asked to respond to the items by indicating their level of agreement using a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree).

3.2. Research Procedure

Purposive sampling method was utilized for the data collection among academic staff in the university. The unit of analysis are academic staffs, irrespective of their length of service. The questionnaires were distributed among academic staff in the School of Business. The reason for these target participants is to identify the relationship between their perceived organizational culture and perceived organizational support with their level of work engagement. This will give feedback on what attribute and skills the academic staffs have attained throughout their job.

3.3. Data analysis and results

Data was analysed using SPSS version 22. Numerous tests were lead to determine the Pearson correlation and relationship between variables. A total of 230 questionnaires were distributed but only 203 set of questionnaires were returned and used for further analyses.

3.4. Pearson results

The results of the correlation indicate that the three variables have significant relationship with work engagement. Work engagement, perceived organizational culture and perceived organizational support indicate a positive correlation of ($r = 0.595$; $p \leq 0.05$).

Table 2. Pearson Correlation Analysis of the Variables

No.	Variables	1	2	3	4
1	Work engagement	1			
2	Perceive organisational culture	.599**	1.00		
3	Perceived organisational support	.349**	.275**	1.00	

** p ≤ 0.01 level (2-tailed) ; * p ≤ 0.05 level (2-tailed)

3.5. Regression results

Regression analysis is conducted on the three independent variables. This is to determine if there is significant relationship with the variable. From the regression result, the value of R^2 was 0.354 meaning that the independent variable (Perceived organizational culture and perceived organizational support) explains 27.9% variability on work engagement. From the regression analysis, it was found that perceived organizational culture ($\beta=0.409$, $p\leq 0.05$) and perceived organizational support ($\beta=0.159$, $p\leq 0.05$) have significant influence on employee engagement.

Table 3. Multiple Regression Analysis of Independent Variables on work engagement

Model	Unstandardized				Standardized
	β	Std. Error	beta	t	
Constant	1.725	.214		8.065	.000
Perceive organisational culture	.409	.048	.501	8.469	.000
Perceived organisational support	.159	.044	.212	3.589	.000

** p ≤ 0.01 level (2-tailed) ; * p ≤ 0.05 level (2-tailed)

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1. Conclusions

Work engagement among employees is important to ensure organizations become more competitive and to increase organizational performance. Thus, it is vital for organizations to observe the needs of employees in order to increase their motivation to engage with their work. Based on the findings, the study concludes that perceived organizational culture and perceived organizational support affect work engagement among academic staff in the university. The management should continuously observe and survey other factors that could influence academic staff work engagement. In order to know academic staff problems and needs, it is essential for the university management to have a close relationship with them so that they will feel supported by the organization. Perceived organizational support will boost employees' motivation and their willingness to involve themselves in any work.

Moreover, the management can provide skills and development to increase employees' confidence level in accomplishing their tasks. A positive organization culture can affect employee behaviors and attitude towards work engagement. Therefore, organizations need to be more alert about the managerial practices and the organizational climate because this could lead to negative behaviors among employees. Finally, the individuals themselves which in this case are the academic staff should be aware about their duties and responsibilities which they cannot or should not avoid so that they should be responsible and engaged with their work.

4.2. Recommendations

The results from this study showed that perceived organizational culture, perceived organizational support influenced work engagement. However, the researcher would like to give several recommendations which are: the current study has only examined the effects of perceived organizational culture and perceived organizational support on work engagement. "It is recommended that future studies should include other types of work demands and resources to discover their interaction with work engagement, it is also suggested to research on other factors that could possibly give a strong impact to the employees' work engagement and moreover, the data collection method should be executed with a proper plan such as identifying the right demographic and organization type to ensure the accuracy of the result.

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