

Exploring antecedents of employees turnover intention in telecommunication company: the role of transformational leadership and employee engagement.

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Abstract-- *The current study examines the relationship between transformational leadership and the employee's turnover intention and the mediation role of engagement. Leaders who perform a transformational style believed to provide great vision, guidance, and build positive relations which can drive their follower to develop higher motivation, commitment and more attached to the organization so they will engage beyond their job description. Employee turnover intention usually affected by an how deep the employee engages in their job and the relation with their supervisor. An individual who is firmly engaged with the organization will stay longer and demonstrate higher performance. This cross-sectional study using a sample of 150 participants from a telecommunication company in Indonesia. SPSS 21 and Macro Process was used for data analysis and result interpretation. Results reveal that there is a significant negative influence of transformational leadership on employee engagement and the employee's turnover intention. Transformational leadership also found to have positive link with employee engagement. Thus, engagement mediated the linkage between transformational and turnover intention. This empirical study provides a thorough explanation regarding the correlation between variables. Future studies using wider participants from across Indonesia can be conducted to reflect cultural differences among other provinces.*

Keywords--Transformational Leadership, Engagement, Turnover intention.

I INTRODUCTION

Human capital plays important role in every business organizations to achieve best performance [48]. Without human factor, such organization cannot progress and develop. Good human resources management will promote a good work environment which in the end can affect employee's loyalty and job performance. Retaining great and outstanding employees has been important, yet difficult task for every human resources manager. This was reflected from some studies that devoted to examining various factors which affecting employee turnover [54], [27], [58], [29], [62], [20], [22]. Those studies expressed the notion that turnover was expensive and harmful for the organization. Organize image, the leader's role, employee engagement, work stress, perceive support, human resource practice, organizational commitment already proven as major variables

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affecting employee turnover. Therefore, the need to study various factors that influence turnover intention (TI) is arising, such study can contribute to organizations so they know how to keep their outstanding employees. They must create supportive and challenging environment, yet did not inflict too much stress.

Leader-related factor found to have an effect on turnover intention [47]. Effective leadership style can promote a good working environment. Transformational leadership considered to be effective since it, always drive employee in engaging behaviors, enhancing the enthusiasm among their followers and most importantly treat followers using individualized consideration [60]. The transformational leader develops positive behavior and produces greater output and improve the organization performance. Employees will have higher job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and stronger engagement. Engagement level will affect employee's loyalty towards the organization. Thus, such loyalty will decrease their intention to quit.

The objectives of the study were to examine the effects of transformational leadership on employee turnover intention, transformational leadership on engagement, and engagement on employee turnover intention. Also, we will determine whether engagement mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention. The contribution of the study is the use of engagement as the mediation which still very limited in the relation of leadership style and turnover intention. Exploring the indirect effect of engagement can increase not only the possibility of the human resource department in successfully managing the turnover but also build loyal employees.

II LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

1) Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership (TL) style has become the most popular styles. This concept based on certain behaviors displayed by leaders that can drive, motivation of their followers to achieve organizational goals [7]. [44] Mention that TL is a style where leaders empowers or enables their followers and transcend them to a higher level of motivation and morality. Transformational leaders motivate others to do more than they originally intended and often even more than they thought possible [6]. Transformational leaders also help their subordinate to raise the level of moral maturity. They touch each follower's sense of self-worth so they develop higher commitment and involvement. [38] Also mention that TL inspires their followers to do more than they required.

The TL is one of the most used styles in organizations and plays an important role in the organizational performance [4]. They develop employees with strong motivation which in turn provide better customer service, enhancing organizational performance [39]. The implementation of TL can generate positive outcomes such as job satisfaction and team performance [10], increasing level of trust, less work stress [33], more engaged employee [18], innovativeness and well-being [56], motivation [13], decreasing turnover intention. Knowing the positive impact of TL, it is imperative that organizations should concentrate on how to develop a leadership style that can act as role models, take risks, demonstrate ethical conduct, motivate, and develop trust. Such leaders could provide meaning and arouse the follower's spirit and develop a sense of importance and commitment to the organization goals.

2) *Engagement*

Engagement defined [52] as a strong sense of connection with the organization and passion for one's job. Describe engagement as a synonym for high levels of intensity and persistence in work effort by and individual. Individuals who are engaged will invest their efforts, ability, and their energies into their jobs. Another definition came [37] that argue employee engagement as an individual emotional and cognitive motivation, particularly a focused, intense, persistent, and purposive effort to work-related goals. We summarize those definitions regarding employee engagement as the strong emotional attachment from individuals in their job and or organization so persistently they are willing to focus their abilities, efforts, and energies towards organizational goals. Engaged employees will contribute more and as a result, they are simply becoming more productive. Recent academic studies indicate that engagement has become an important behavior in the current world of work.

The benefit of having engaged employees is that they will act proactively, autonomously expand their own knowledge and skills, persistence, and adaptable to changes [35]. Engaged employee can also create positive impact on organizational goals by saying positive things about the organization, stay longer at their organization, and give their best. A strong employee engagement could help the organization to gain competitive advantage over the others [41]. Engaged employee will add value to the organization of their innovation, enthusiasm, productivity, citizenship behavior, and better outcomes in general [40], [3]. The level of turnover will also decrease when employee engaged with their organization and work [22], [2].

What are the drivers of employee engagement? With the many advantages of strongly engaged employee organization must identify the antecedents of employee engagement. [9] Summarized studies from 2002 until 2015 and found career development, open communication, fairness, organizational climate, rewards, benefits, development, organizational support, justice, autonomy, job characteristics, goal setting, feedback, leadership, are some of the common factors that act as drivers of engagement. Linked engagement with perceived organizational support, compensation, and job satisfaction. Leadership style also predicts employee engagement. [17], [43] found a positive link between transformational leadership style and engagement.\

3) *Turnover Intention*

Turnover intention (TI) as a person's collective reaction to the inner or outer stimuli [5]. This reaction related with their current work situation and their choice to stay or leave the organization. [31] Explain turnover intention as the extent to which employee plans to leave the organization. This study defines TI as the conscious and deliberate desire from individual to leave the current organization. In other words, it is voluntarily leaving the organization. This is the initial indication or tendency of employee to leave which ultimately can cause employees to completely leave the company.

Turnover has negative outcomes for any organization. The loss of skilled employees can reduce the service level, hampering daily operations, increasing recruitment and training costs [28], [8], [59]. [25] Added other negative consequences regarding the loss of tacit knowledge. Those negative impacts will be detrimental to any

organizations which can affect their performance. To prevent the potential loss, organization needs to understand factors and possibilities that can control employee turnover and more importantly prevent outstanding and knowledge employees from quitting.

Although individuals may rarely decide to switch jobs, however, sometime the decision to quit can emerge because there are opportunities presented (new career, new prospect, higher salary). In fact employee's most turnover intention was affected by perceived opportunities which may come at any moment. The organization does not have power about what is going on on the outside. But, they can implement various actions which can help to prevent or to match outside offering. [16] Expressed that proper and effective leadership style can help to retain employment. An organization that provides balanced between work and private life as well as a great career opportunity, compensation and welfare believed to have more loyal employee [12]. Other important predictors of TI include job satisfaction [49], affective commitment [32], perceived organizational support [26], transformational leadership [46], and intrinsic motivation [30].

4) Transformational Leadership & Engagement

The TL is expected to drive their subordinate potential and fulfilling their needs which in turn will increase employee commitment and involvement. Various empirical studies from different organization and cultural settings reveal that transformational leadership is positively related to work engagement. [17], [43], [60], [23], [63], [64], [19], [11], [13], All confirm the positive correlation between TL and engagement. Thus, we hypothesize the following:

H1: transformational leadership style will have a significant and positive effect on engagement.

5) Transformational Leadership & Turnover Intention

Transformational leadership can help diminish employee's intention to quit. TL demonstrate significant attention which builds emotional linked with subordinate and inspiring employee motivation which also can reduce turnover intentions. The needs of employees were fulfilled so they believe that their organization/leader care and give consideration which make them willing to stay longer. [46] Found the negative relation between TL and turnover intention. Also, [42] discover that TL was inversely linked to turnover intentions. These results supported by findings from [60], [1], [61]. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: transformational leadership will have a significant and negative effect on turnover intention.

6) Engagement & Turnover Intention

Engaged employees ensure lower turnover intention or they less likely to voluntarily leave the organization. Studies from different industries and cultural settings found that employee engagement is negatively related to turnover intention. [60] in Pakistan, [27] in Malaysia, [55] in the United Kingdom, [2] in Australia, [34] in the United States, [50] in Canada confirming that engagement significantly predicts turnover intention. Considering

that most of the studies support the significant and negative relationships, this study determine the following hypothesis;

H3: Engagement will have significant negative effects on turnover intention.

Given that transformational leadership becomes important antecedents which predict engagement and the outcome of the engagement can predict employee turnover intention, it is possible that engagement mediates the relationship between the antecedents and the outcome. This is consistent with the result from [60] that engagement mediates the relationship between TL and turnover intention. Therefore, the final hypothesis of this study is the following:

H4: engagement will have significant and negative mediating effect on the relation of transformational leadership and turnover intention

III METHODOLOGY

1) *Participants*

The study was conducted between January and April 2019 in a telecommunication company in Bandung Indonesia. Data was collected using a questionnaire which distributed through the human resources department. We distributed 225 questionnaires and received 150 useable responses. Table 1 presents the demographic characteristic of the participants. Male employees were having a slightly higher number than female (58% - 42%). 53.3% of employees were under 25 years old. Most of them still single (58.7%). Undergraduate education level dominated as they held 88.4% of participants. And 56.6% have under three years of tenure.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristic

Characteristic	Category	Number	%
Gender	Male	87	58.0%
	Female	63	42.0%
Age	<25 year	80	53.3%
	25-30 year	18	12.0%
	>30-35 year	18	12.0%
	>35-40 year	11	7.3%
	>40 year	23	15.3%
Marital	Married	62	41.3%
	Single	88	58.7%
	Divorced	0	0.0%
Position	Officer	126	84.0%
	Supervisor	5	3.3%
	Manager	19	12.7%
Tenure	<1 year	47	31.3%
	1-3 year	41	27.3%
	>3-5 year	29	19.3%
	>5-10 year	23	15.3%
	>10 year	10	6.7%
Education	High School	9	7.0%
	Diploma	6	4.7%
	Undergraduate	114	88.4%
	Pos teraduate	21	16.3%
Child	Yes	54	36.0%

	No	96	64,0%
Workhour	≤ 9 hours	140	93.3%
	> 9 hours	10	6.7%

2) Data Analysis

Data processing was run using SPSS with Macro Process develop [24]. Macro Process was used to conduct measure the regression and mediation. The mediating role of engagement will be determined based on the value of the Upper-level and Lower-level Confidence Interval. Both values should not contain the number 0. The macro will facilitate the implementation of bootstrapping approach. [36] argue that bootstrapped confidence intervals can avoid some problems due to asymmetric and other non-normal sampling distributions. This notion backed [53] who stated that bootstrapping is a statistical method based on building a sampling distribution of a statistic by resampling from the data at hand. One important advantage of bootstrapping is that no assumptions about the shape of the sampling distribution of the statistic are necessary when conducting inferential tests. The approach has become popular as evidenced by its recurrent appearance in the literature [15], [21].

3) Measurement

The items measuring transformational leadership, engagement, and turnover intentions are presented in Appendix 1. Transformational leadership was measured 16 items (e.g. “Emphasize the importance of a shared mission” and “Develop team members to enhance their ability”) based on the concept developed [7]. The engagement was measured using 14 item instrument (e.g. “I feel full with energy at work” and “Enthusiastic about my job”) proposed [51]. Turnover intention was measured using a 6 items (e.g. “I Often think of quitting from work” and “Actively look for better employment opportunities”) developed [16]. Participants were asked to choose one from the six point Likert scale (strongly disagree = 1 to strongly agree = 6).

IV RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1) Result

Table 2 presents the mean, standard deviation and intercorrelation values of the variables. It is worth noting that all were significantly correlated with each other. As predicted transformational leadership develops positive relations with engagement, while both variables have negative relation to turnover intention.

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation, & Correlation

	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Age	2.19	1.52								
2 Service	2.39	1.56	0.28**	1						
3 Position	1.29	0.68	0.12	0.14	1					
4 Education	2.98	0.65	0.12	0.25**	0.09	1				

5	Work Time	1.07	0.25	0.07	0.17*	-0.03	0.05	1			
6	Transformational	4.97	0.26	0.13	0.25**	0.06	0.08	0.17*	1		
7	Engagement	4.92	0.30	0.19*	0.33**	0.10	0.07	0.19*	0.55**	1	
8	Turnover	3.25	0.77	-0.09	-0.20*	-0.03	-0.09	-0.15	-0.47	-0.46	1

Table 3 presents regression coefficient. It was shown that transformational leadership would predict engagement (coeff. = .647, $p > .01$). Thus hypothesis H₁ is supported. Transformational leadership also negatively predicts turnover intention (coeff. = -.931, $p < .00$), while engagement also affecting turnover intention (coeff. = -.747, $p < .01$). Therefore, hypothesis H₂ and H₃ were supported.

Table 3: Regression coefficient, Standard error, & Model Summary

	Engagement			Turnover Intention		
	Coeff	SE	p-value	Coeff	SE	p-value
Transformational	0.647	0.082	0.000	-0.931	0.252	0.000
Engagement	-	-	-	-0.747	0.214	0.000
Constant	1.709	0.404	0.000	11.544	1.110	0.000
	R Square		0.300	R square		0.290
	F =		63.373	F =		28.564
	P =		0.000	P =		0.000

Employee engagement proved to lie mediation role in the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention. It was shown in Table 4. The bootstrap confidence interval did not contain zero and both shown negative sign in Lower-level and Upper-level. Thus the hypothesis H₄ was also supported.

Table 4: Indirect Effect of Engagement

	Effect	Boot SE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Transformational → Engagement				
→ Turnover Intention	-0.483	0.185	-0.894	-0.165

The regression analysis from Process presented in Figure 1. It is shown the significant relation between variables. Then, Table 5 summarized the results of hypothesis testing.

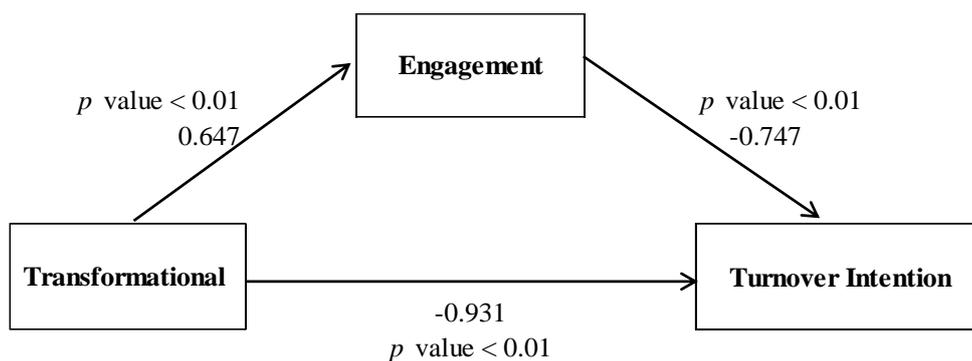


Figure 1: Mediation Model

Table 5: Hypothesis Summary

Hypothesis	Effect	Result
H ₁	Transformational → Engagement	Accepted
H ₂	Transformational → Turnover Intention	Accepted
H ₃	Engagement → Turnover Intention	Accepted
H ₄	Transformational → Engagement → Turnover Intention	Accepted

2) Discussion

The present study investigates the relationship between transformational leadership style, engagement, and turnover intention in telecommunication organization. It was found that transformational leadership negatively predict turnover intention through the mediation of employee engagement. Employees in telecommunication industry seem to perceive the practice of transformational style inside the organization. The engagement level also shows the high point while turnover was in medium to low level. This study contributes to the models of relationships involving transformational leadership, engagement, and turnover intention which is still limited in Indonesia. This article also supports the results of previous research from [43], [60], [23], [63], [19] which acknowledge that transformational leadership positively affecting engagement. This study found that transformational leadership negatively related to turnover intention which is in accordance with previous studies [42], [1]. Lastly, engagement showed a negative effect on turnover intention which support the findings of [27]; [55], [3], [34]. The finding regarding mediation role of engagement strengthens previous study [60] in Pakistan.

The results of this study have implications for organization in the telecommunication industry. Efforts should be made to promote transformational leadership practice. An organization can develop their leaders so they can motivate, support, and willing to develop their subordinate. Leadership training which focus on how to motivate and drive emotional attachment can be arranged. Meanwhile, they can argue current leader to start personal approach to identify an employee need. Great leaders can ensure that they acquire suitably subordinate which can be developed to be a great talent. The leader can provoke higher engagement. They can start by giving employees the right role, which mean alignment between capability and the job. Then to can coach and train employees to improve the knowledge and ability. Employees can be more engaged if they perceived their work is meaningful

work and they have a clear understanding of how they contribute to the company. Leaders should communicate what are the objectives and the reward when individual achieve them. Without this clarity, organization took the risk of losing their outstanding employees. Next step is to communicate often with employees. Not just rely on formal half year review, but they must provide feedback more often. In this way, early problems can be detected and organization can avoid waste of their valuable resources. Conducting frequent productive meetings also can help leader to hear and discover the true feeling of employees regarding their intentions to stay or leave. Providing such care can enhance employee emotional sense which can transfer into increasing commitment and attachment. Thus, they will enjoy their work and will stay longer. They also haven't easily attracted by offers or opportunities from the outside. In this way, organizations can reduce the cost of replacing employees.

There are several limitations in the current study. First, it was carried out in one industry only which makes the generalizability to other industries difficult to be established. To improve this, future study involving wider industries should be conducted. The use of cross-sectional data becomes our second limitation since it cannot enable us to determine the direction of causal relation variables in the long run. Longitudinal design can improve the quality of the future study. Third limitation was the use of self-reported questionnaire which might have a bias. In depth interview with managers and employees can enhance the quality of future study.

V CONCLUSION

All hypotheses in this study were accepted. Transformational leadership has a positive effect on employee engagement (H1). While transformational leadership and engagement have a negative effect on turnover intention (H2 and H3). Employee engagement has a negative mediating effect on the relation of transformational leadership and turnover intention (H4). Independent variables in this study can predict the level of employee's turnover intention.

Telecommunication industry facing tremendous challenges and company needs to invest heavily in people. In the end, is the people who handle all activities. Increasing customer demands, new business opportunities, new technology, new market, and new product should be seriously develop and create in order to survive. This can be easily achieved if the organization does not experience high turnover. Turnover of great talent can hurt an organization since it restrained their effectiveness. They need to manage the voluntary turnover in place. As evidenced by the results of this study, an organization can practice transformational leadership style to enhance employee engagement and to reduce their turnover intentions. This study contributes to broaden the literature which highlighting the mediating role of engagement on turnover intention. Understanding how leadership style can influence employee turnover also brings crucial benefits for organizations given its potential to simultaneously promote engagement behavior as well as loyal employee whose contribute more.

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