

# Assessing Factors influencing Employees Work Productivity in Tanzania's Local Government

Bernadetha Clement<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Paul Martin Gwaltu (PhD)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>St. Augustine University of Tanzania, P.O.BOX 307, Mwanza

<sup>2</sup>St. Augustine University of Tanzania, P.O.BOX 307, Mwanza ,Orcid: 0000 - 0001- 8740 -7206

\*Corresponding author: clementbernadetha@gmail.com

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**Abstract**— *The current study assessed factors influencing work productivity in Tanzania's local government authorities, a case of Ilemela Municipal in the City of Mwanza. The study was guided by three objectives. To assess the relationship between employee engagement and employees work productivity at Ilemela Municipal Council, to examine the link between the family – resources spillover and employee's work productivity at Ilemela Municipal Council and to find out the link between perceived organizational support and employees work productivity at Ilemela Municipal Council. Drawing from conservation of resources theory and work – family resources spillover theory, the study hypothesized that, employees' work engagement positively relates to work productivity, work – family resources spill over positively relates to work productivity and lastly, perceived organizational support positively relates to work productivity. The findings of the current study indicated that all the hypotheses were tested positive and very significant. It was hence concluded that, employees' work engagement is positively related to work productivity, work – family resources spill over positively relates to work productivity and perceived organizational support positively relates to work productivity. The practical implications of the study is that, managers need to effectively implement work – family life policies and practices at work environment so that to trigger some positive attitudes and emotions that enhances more productivity at the working place.*

**Keywords**— *Employees' work engagement, Work – family resources spillover, Perceived organizational support, conservation of resources theory and Work - family resources theory.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Embarking on the new business environments fostered by the advancement of digital technologies, organizations strive to increase work engagement of their employees, as engaged workers are more productive workers. Being productive can help the firm increase and utilize the capacity of the human resources available. Employees who are engaged with their job and employer are more productive because they are motivated beyond personal factors (Harter et al., 2019). Previous studies have also indicated the important role of perceived organizational support as a necessary factor in linking to work productivity on employees in the work place (Bonaiuto et al., 2021 ; Hu et al., 2011; Li & Mohamed, 2022).

However distant studies had less explored the relationship between family resources spill over and work productivity of such employees in the workplace (Bernik, 2021; Chen et al., 2018). Organizations can support employees with work – family balances by implementing some policies and practices which are family – friendly (Bernik, 2021). This current study fills the gap by including family – resources spill over as a factor in enhancing work productivity in a work place.

Work engagement is defined as a positive work-related state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor means that the individual has a high level of energy during work and is mentally resilient (Albrecht et al., 2021; Salanova et al., 2005). Dedication refers to the fact that the employee is strongly involved in their work and at the same

time experiences a sense of importance, enthusiasm and challenge. Absorption means that the individual is completely immersed in his or her work with minimal mistakes (Patro, 2015; Shrestha, 2019). Work engagement is therefore a relatively permanent state of mind that refers to the simultaneous investment of personal energy in work experience and success.

The concept of work engagement is the subject of many studies. In the literature, work engagement is characterized as an important outcome of a healthy work environment, so it is important, if not necessary, that organizations work with a sense of what their employees need in the work environment. In this way, they stimulate work engagement and thus higher productivity (Sekhar & Patwardhan, 2017). Work engagement involves the emotional and psychological relationship between employees and their organization, which can be transformed into negative or positive behavior that employees display in the workplace (Shrestha, 2019).

In addition to the problem of work-family balance, organizations are also confronted with the problem of a lack of engagement in working life. Data from a Gallup survey of 155 countries for the year 2016 shows that worldwide only 15% of employees were engaged at work, with 67% being unengaged, and 18% actively unengaged. In comparison, the best companies in the world have around 70% engaged employees (Patro, 2015). Organizations today need employees who are energetic and committed at work, or in other words, organizations need engaged employees, because engaged employees are more productive employees.

Organizational support theory has posited that individuals develop general views concerning to what extent their organizations appreciate their contributions and are concerned about their well-being. Perceived organizational support refers to "the extent to which the organization values employees' contributions and cares about their well-being" (Miao & Kim, 2010). A supportive organization is committed to its workers. According to organizational support theorists, high POS tends to improve work attitudes and engender effective work that enhances work productivity in a work place (Bonaiuto et al., 2021).

The current research hence explores on the factors (work engagement, family – resources spill over and perceived organizational support) on the employees' productivity of Tanzania's local government workers, a case of Ilemela Municipality, in Mwanza region.

## II. THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

### Key Concepts

**Employees' engagement:** Employee engagement has been defined in various ways. One definition emphasizes the level of commitment and involvement an employee has towards their organization and its values (Anitha, 2014). Another highlight the emotional components of engagement, describing it in terms of the passion, commitment and willingness to invest oneself and expand one's discretionary effort to help the employer succeed (Abukhalifeh & Som, 2013).

Some definitions include additional elements such as employee enthusiasm and satisfaction as sub-factors of engagement (Harter et al., 2002; Nguyen & Pham, 2020). Many workplace variables may contribute to employee engagement, including leadership, work environment, co-workers and work teams, compensation, organizational policies, general workplace well-being, communication, rewards and recognition, extended employee care, training and career development opportunities, and work-life balance (Anitha, 2014; Bedarkar & Pandita, 2014; Nguyen & Pham, 2020; Abu Khalifeh & Som, 2013; Alsafadi & Altahtat, 2021; Vu, 2020).

**Work Productivity:** The productivity of a task can be defined as the final product of three very important variables: time spent executing the task, the quality of the final product, and the cost of the task (Ulubeyli, Kazaz, & Er, 2014). The productivity of employees in the organization or workplace is measured by the output produced in the daily task. However, in cases where quantitative or traditional productivity measurements are not applicable, subjective productivity may be used based on personnel's subjective assessment.

Most definitions of productivity draw on a manufacturing model of inputs and outputs, but inputs and outputs are extremely difficult to measure in organizational research on individuals, particularly when objective indicators (such as., units produced) are not applicable or accrue only after long periods of time (such as., publications). Productivity can also be defined as the overall performance of a group of workers, which reflects how efficient the group is (Stang et al., 2001).

**Family – Resources spill over:** Family–work resource spillover, defined as the transfer of psychological resources generated at home into the workplace. Psychological resources refer to the personal resources, including positive emotions, motivation and energy, that help people to deal with tasks actively and energetically (Hobfoll, 2002).

These resources are transferable from family to work (Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). The psychological

resources spilled over into workplace may further enhance creativity at work. On one hand, psychological resources can broaden employees' creative thinking and facilitate the generation of creative ideas (Fredrickson, 2013).

On the other hand, they sustain employees' creative endeavors and enable them to take bold actions, thus translating their ideas into creative work performance. Spillover is a linking mechanism by which work and family influence each other (Edwards & Rothbard 2000). Spillover occurs in two directions such that work experiences can affect family (work-to-family spillover) and experiences from family can affect work (Family-to-Work Spillover).

**Perceived Organizational Support:** Perceived organizational support is defined, as the degree to which employees believe that their organization and their superiors value their contributions and care about their well-being (Li & Mohamed, 2022).

Perceived organizational support could produce a feeling of obligation to care about the organization's welfare and to help the organization to achieve its goal (Miao & Kim, 2010). Perceived organizational support can also be content specific to a domain such as employees' family-supportive organizational perceptions, the degree to which an organization is seen as family supportive. We build on this work and define organizational work-family support as perceptions that one's employer cares about an employee's ability to jointly effectively perform work and family roles and facilitates a helpful social environment by providing direct and indirect work-family resources (Bonaiuto et al., 2021).

## HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

### Linking Employees' Engagement and Employees' Work Productivity

The concept of work engagement is the subject of many studies. In the literature, work engagement is characterized as an important outcome of a healthy work environment, so it is important, if not necessary, that organizations work with a sense of what their employees need in the work environment. In this way, they stimulate work engagement and thus higher productivity (Patro, 2015).

Work engagement involves the emotional and psychological relationship between employees and their organization, which can be transformed into negative or positive behavior that employees display in the workplace. A person is generally engaged when feels valued and included (Jyoti & Rani, 2017).

Research shows that work engagement has a number of positive effects that are important both for the work organization and for the individual. Management scholars summarize the effects of work engagement that were

investigated in three groups: performance, professional results, and personal outcome. Work engagement therefore has a significant positive relationship with work outcomes and with the outcomes of employees beyond work (Simbula et al., 2011).

Previous studies have revealed that employee engagement is a major construct for employee performance and well-being. With employees' engagement employees display a positive attitude, and high energy level toward their work that leads them to actively intervene in their work environment. Resources in the work environment and the person mainly influence employee engagement. These resources have the strongest impact on engagement when job demands are high. As a result, it is an important predictor of positive attitudes toward the organization and work productivity. Furthermore, earlier researchers (Rich et al., 2010; Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006) argued that engagement, as a motivational variable, should lead to high levels of work productivity.

Drawing from the conservation of resources theory the current study posits that, when psychological resources of employees are well conserved from home (family) for instance the employee will be more engaged at work and hence be more productive in the organization. Organization support increases motivation levels to employees and hence facilitates work productivity at workplace.

Hobfoll (1989) explained how employees' engagement links to work productivity through "Conservation of Resource Theory" (COR theory). As per the COR theory, individuals are motivated to protect and acquire new resources (Halbesleben et al., 2014). Simultaneously, when employees have the opportunity to utilize flexibility, they have more opportunity to use resources, achieve work-related goals, and eventually more control over their work (Bal & De Lange, 2015). This study hence hypothesizes that,

*H1: Employees' engagement is positively related to employees' work productivity*

### Linking Work - Family Resources Spill over on Employee Work Productivity

Spillover refers to one of the linking mechanisms between the work and family domain (Lambert, 1990). Spillover theory suggests that one's experiences associated with one life domain can carry over into another domain (Zedeck, 1992). Employees' family demands are linked to the work domain through a process of psychological spillover in which family experiences are carried over to work and influence employees' feeling and functioning at work (Voydanoff, 2004). Most of the research on the spillover process have examined the affective experience across the family and work domains, such that daily events cause

mood or affect spillover influencing attitudes and behaviors across domains (van Hooff, Geurtz, Kompier, & Taris, 2006).

Work - family spill over is explained by the spill over theory. According to the hypothesis of the spill over theory, emotions and attitudes in one living space are carried to another living space. For example, happiness in the workplace triggers happiness in the family (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990).

Studies on work and family interaction have shown that job satisfaction increases life satisfaction, negative emotions at work negatively affect emotions in other life areas in general. In addition, experience, talent and values gained at work are carried to the family living area (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Clark (2000) defined spillover theory as a theory that adopts an open system approach (Clark, 2000).

However, because affect and cognition are largely intertwined (Damasio, 2001), Repetti and colleagues (2009) proposed that the mechanisms of spillover effects include both mood/affect and cognition. Stressors at home may lead to negative emotions that carry over across time and interfere with the work process (Judge, Ilies, & Scott, 2006). Simultaneously, thoughts about these family issues during the work time may interrupt the needed focus on the tasks at hand (Williams, Suls, Alliger, Learner, & Wan, 1991), thereby reducing the effectiveness of available job resources use.

The work– home resources model (ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012) indicates that individuals have finite psychological and physiological resources. The use of finite resources in one domain reduces the availability of these resources for use in the other domain (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Involvement in multiple roles can induce a depleting process whereby demands in one role drain personal resources such as emotional and mental energy, thereby limiting the personal resources that are left for optimal functioning in the other role. For example, employees who think about family issues in the workplace consume cognitive resources, therefore may have difficulties to deal with the complexity of the work. Most previous research has used direct family–work interference measurements to suggest that family generally interferes with work (Amstad, Meier, Fasel, Elfering, & Semmer, 2011), but has not identified clearly the process at work and how family interacts with the work process.

Family–work resource spill over can result to employee work productivity. In short, employees are likely to accumulate abundant psychological resources from their families. The accumulation of psychological resources fuels and drives family–work resource spillover (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000).

The spill over of psychological resources can take place through the transference of positive psychological states generated from family life into work life. For example, energetic state achieved at home can energize work activities (Sonntag, 2003). Positive affective state at home can be carried over into workplace (Song *et al.*, 2008).

This current study therefore hypothesizes that,

*H2: Family –work resources spill over is positively related to employees' work productivity*

### **Linking Perceived Organizational Support and Work Productivity**

Perceived organizational support has an important role in facilitating outcome variables (Yousef, 2000). (Liao & Chuang 2007) in their study argued that leaders create a positive service climate to improve employee service performance, the present study contributes to a body of research that positions perceived organizational support in terms of resource allocation (Hochwarter & Ferris, 2006).

According to Eisenberger, Huntingdon, Hutchinson and Sowa (1986:501), individuals tend to “form global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being.” These beliefs that are exchanges between an employee and employing organization are called perceived organizational support and is used to define in this study. High levels of perceived organizational support creates feelings of obligation, to the employers as well as makes them feel they have to return the employers' commitment by engaging in behaviours that support organizational goals. From the social exchange perspective, research has revealed that perceived organizational support is positively related to job attendance and measures of job performance (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986).

From a social exchange perspective, it can be argued that employees who perceive a high level of support from the organization are more likely to feel an obligation to repay the organization in terms of affective commitment (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986; Shore & Wayne, 1993). According to Eisenberger, Fasolo and Davis LaMastro (1990), employees who feel supported by their organization and care about the organization would engage in activities that help to further the organization's goals

Although perceived organizational support has traditionally been viewed as a social exchange process in that it sets the basis for exchange relationships researchers have suggested that perceived organization support also acts as a resource from which employees may draw. Consistent with conservation of resources theory, the study hence hypothesizes that,

H3: Perceived organizational support is Positively related to Employees' work productivity

### III. METHODS

#### Sample and Procedures

This is a survey – based study. The sample used for the purpose of this study was drawn from employees of Ilemela Municipal in Mwanza, Tanzania. Mwanza is the second largest city in the country. The researcher explained the objectives, the scope and the implications of the study to those who volunteered to attend the survey questionnaires online.

The data were collected using the online questionnaires which were sent to Ilemela Municipal employees through a link into their whatsapp and e-mails. A total number of 174 questionnaires were sent, 152 respondents attended the questionnaires. Calculating from the perspective of those returned the questionnaires; the response rate was 87%.

#### Measures

**Employee Engagement** was measured by five-item scale from strong agree to strong disagree adopted from (Rich, LePine, & Crawford 2010). I work with intensity on my job, I exert my full effort to my job, I devote a lot of energy to my job, I try my hardest to perform well on my job, I strive as hard as I can to complete my job, I exert a lot of energy on my job, I am enthusiastic about my job, I feel energetic about my job, and I am interested in my job.

**Family–work resource spill over** in accordance, five items adapted from the measure of family–work resource spill over taken from the National Survey of Midlife Development in the United States were used to measure family–work resource spill over. The measure has been widely used to comprehensively capture positive spill over from family to work. The items are as follows: “My home life helps me to relax and feel ready for the next day’s work”; “The love and respect I get at home makes me feel

confident about myself at work”; and “Providing for what is needed at home makes me work harder at my job.” Employees were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with these statements on a five-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.”

**Perceived Organizational Support** was measured using the five-item scale utilized by (Hekman, Steensma, Bigley, & Hereford 2009) in the research of (Shen & Benson 2016). My organization cares about my opinion, my organization cares about my wellbeing, my organization appreciate any extra effort from me, my organization would ignore any complaint from me, even if I did the best job possible my organization would fail to notice, my organization cares about my general satisfaction at work, my organization shows very little concern for me, my organization takes pride in my accomplishments at work. To measure Work Productivity, items were adapted from (Menezes & P. Xavier, 2017).

#### Analytical Strategy

SPSS software version 20 was employed to analyze the data. Firstly, the reliability of data were tested using Cronbach alpha. The test intended to measure if data were suitable for normal distribution and validity of the scales and the research model.

### IV. RESULTS

#### Reliability Test

Reliability as an essential issue in dimension scale and is defined as the degree to which the scores in a specific sample are free from random measurement error (Pallant, 2007). The study used the common measure of internal consistency which the Cronbach’s alpha. It is recommended that Alpha values of 0.6 and above shows acceptable internal consistency of the measurement scale (Malhotra, 2009). The Cronbach Alpha values loaded between 0.759 to 0.839 as shown in table below

Table 1 Reliability test results

Variable	No. of items	Cronbach Alpha
Employee’s Engagement (EE)	6	.850
Perceived Organizational Support	6	.759
Work Productivity	7	.872
Family Work Resources spill over	5	.757

#### Descriptive and Correlation Analysis

The descriptive statistics of this study indicate that more females filled the questionnaire than males (females by

55.3% and males were 47.7%). The demographic information also indicated that respondents with bachelor’s degree (48%) were higher as compared to other education levels. The statistics also indicate the years of work of 1 to 5

have been very cooperative in filling the questionnaires as compared to others.

The correlation analysis have indicated the positive link between all independent variables (employee engagement, work – family resource spill over and perceived organizational support) in the proposed model on employees' work productivity.

For instance on the first hypothesis that posits that work engagement is positively related to work productivity, the statistical results proves the link by the statistical Pearson correlation coefficient value of .23\*\* with a P – value of  $p < .005$  (2 – tailed). This is a statistical indication that the

first hypothesis has been proved empirically true that, work engagement is positively related to employees work productivity at Ilemela Municipal.

The correlation results on the association between work – family resources spill over relating positively to work productivity is also test significant and positive by a Pearson correlation coefficient value of .36\*\* with a P value of .005 (2 – tailed). The link between perceived organizational support as well has shown positive and significant relationship, with a Pearson coefficient value of .75\*\* with a P value of  $p < .01$  (2 – tailed). The details of the correlation results are shown in the table 2 below.

Table 2 The means, standard deviation and correlation results

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Employee_E	2.64	1.22							
Work_P	2.69	0.43	.23**						
Family_WRS	2.77	1.93	.84**	.36**					
Organization_S	3.28	0.92	.78**	.38**	.75**				
Gender	1.45	0.49	.25**	0.04	.18*	.16*			
Education	2.48	0.71	.18*	0.03	.19*	.18*	0.01		
Tenure	4.52	4	-.37**	-.17*	.32**	-.39**	-0.1	0.13	

Note: N=152; \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

### Regression Analysis

The purpose of doing a regression analysis is to test an extent to which independent variables (employees' engagement, work family resource spill over and organizational support) have impact on work productivity of employees at Ilemela Municipal.

The evidence from the regression analysis shows that an increase of employees' engagement at Ilemela municipal influences employees work productivity by 70% at  $p$  – value of .000 and  $t$  – value of 18.85. This hence is empirical evidence that work engagement has an influence of work productivity.

The regression analysis indicates that an increase of work – family resources spill over affects work productivity of

employees at Ilemela by 69%  $P$  – value .000 and  $t$  – value of 18.45. This finding hence confirms hypothesis one of this study that, family work resources spillover has a positive relationship to work productivity of employees at Ilemela Municipal.

The results indicate that organizational support of employees at Ilemela Municipality explains work productivity of such employees by 71%  $P$  – value of .000 and  $t$  – value of 19.29. This finding hence confirms hypothesis one of this study that, organizational support has a positive relationship to work productivity of employees at Ilemela Municipal.

Table 3 Regression table with Three Models

	B	$\beta$	t	P	R	Adjusted R Square	F
Tenure	-0.04	-0.33	-0.73	.000	0.87	0.76	76.31
Employee engagement	0.44	0.84	18.85	.000	0.84	0.70	355.57
Family-Work RS	0.024	0.84	18.45	.000	0.83	0.69	340.47
Organizational support	0.02	0.85	19.29	.000	0.84	0.71	372.24

Notes: The dependent variable is Work productivity. \* $p < 0.01$

## V. DISCUSSION AND THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

Previous studies have indicated the importance of work engagement and perceived organizational support as important factors towards work productivity. How few studies have included work – family resources spill over as an important factor to be assessed towards work engagement.

Drawing from conservation of resources model and family resources spill over theory, the current study suggests that organization should start highly considering policies and strategies that makes individuals high engaged not only with the work environments but also with their families to create a favourable work – family balance which in return enhance positive attitudes and emotions which triggers positive energies at work and hence more engagement and more productivity.

In a wider view behaviour and attitudes facilitate how individuals feel of themselves in the working environment. Work engagement, family resources spill over and organizational support are therefore important factors in creating some positive emotional resources that stimulate employees at work and inspire them to pursue some fundamental psychological goals for employees to produce more in an organization.

Theoretically this current study contributes to the body of strategic human resources studies by showing empirically the influence of work – family resources spill over as an important factor on work productivity at Ilemela municipal, with a positive work – family resources spill over, employees will be more engaged at work, with of course a perceived organizational support for which by this current study have proven by empirical evidence that they have significant impact on work productivity.

## VI. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The study recommends future studies to be conducted to cover a larger geographical location within Tanzania. Since this study focused on small sample size of only one municipal in one district, it might have been considered by some scholars as lacking better generalization.

Similarly, future studies should consider conducting this kind of study using a mixed method research approach so as to get a better insight of the problem at hand from the mouth of respondents. Since this study used quantitative research design, it falls short of personal explanations on the issue at hand. Therefore if future researchers use mixed method, it will cover this limitation.

## VII. CONCLUSION

This study examined factors influencing work productivity at Ilemela Municipality in Mwanza City in Tanzania. Employees' work engagement, perceived organizational support, family – resources work spill over were there three major independent variables considered to be the factors influencing work productivity. The overall findings revealed that all the three variables were significant predictors of work productivity.

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