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## **Reducing Turnover Costs through Engagement: The Role of Workplace Relationships and Meaningful Work at BNI KC Cilegon**

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### ***Abstract:***

*This study examines the role of employee engagement in reducing implicit turnover costs by enhancing workplace relationship quality and meaningful work. The research is motivated by inconsistencies in prior findings—some studies report a significant negative effect of employee engagement on intention to leave, while others find no significant relationship. Additionally, employee engagement has been explored as a mediating variable between workplace relationship quality and meaningful work on intention to leave, with mixed results. The study was conducted at BNI KC Cilegon (Persero) Tbk, involving 166 respondents. Data were analyzed using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method via AMOS software. The findings reveal that workplace relationship quality has a significant direct effect on intention to leave. Furthermore, meaningful work serves as a partial mediator, while employee engagement fully mediates the relationship between the predictors and intention to leave. These findings highlight the strategic importance of fostering positive workplace relationships and creating meaningful work experiences. Such efforts not only enhance employee engagement but also reduce turnover intentions, thereby supporting organizational cost-efficiency and long-term sustainability.*

**Keywords:** *Workplace Relationship Quality, Meaningful Work, Employee Engagement, Intention to Leave, Retention, Organizational Efficiency*

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## **1. Introduction**

Employee turnover has long been recognized as a critical issue in organizational management, not only because of the direct financial costs involved in recruiting and training replacements, but also due to the less tangible effects on morale, productivity, and institutional knowledge. One of the most reliable psychological predictors of actual turnover is intention to leave, which refers to an employee's conscious and deliberate plan to resign from the organization (Chairiza et al., 2016; Chrisdiana & Rahardjo, 2017). While intention to leave does not always result in immediate

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resignation, it reflects a cognitive stage of withdrawal that often precedes real turnover behavior (Basori et al., 2023). From a managerial standpoint, detecting and mitigating employees' intention to leave is critical for improving retention, reducing costs associated with recruitment and training, and maintaining workforce stability.

The urgency of addressing this issue is illustrated in the case of BNI KC Cilegon (Persero) Tbk, where internal interviews with the Operational Support Supervisor revealed a disproportionately high turnover rate in 2024. The number of employees leaving exceeded the number of new hires, signaling potential underlying issues related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment. A key concern identified was low employee engagement, a psychological condition defined by high levels of energy, involvement, and focused effort at work (Motyka, 2018). Engagement plays a critical role in shaping employees' emotional attachment to their organization, and numerous studies support its influence in reducing turnover intention. For example, Rusyandi (2015) found that employees with high engagement exhibit stronger organizational loyalty and a lower likelihood of leaving the company. Likewise, Claudia and Suhariadi (2020) emphasized that employee engagement serves as a mediator between workplace conditions and turnover intention, reinforcing its relevance in retention strategies.

However, the empirical evidence surrounding this relationship is not entirely consistent. For instance, Yuliani and Ekhsan (2024) and Basori et al. (2023) reported no significant effect of engagement on intention to leave under certain conditions. This research inconsistency signals a gap that merits further exploration, particularly regarding the mechanisms or boundary conditions that determine whether and when engagement effectively reduces turnover intention. One avenue worth examining is the potential mediating role of engagement in the relationship between other workplace factors—such as interpersonal dynamics and job meaningfulness—and employees' decision to stay or leave.

Two such antecedents frequently highlighted in the literature are workplace relationship quality and meaningful work. Workplace relationship quality refers to the degree of trust, support, and collaboration experienced by employees in their professional interactions. Ehrhardt (2018) pointed out that positive workplace relationships foster a sense of belonging and engagement, which contributes to employee retention. Similarly, Colbert et al. (2016) found that supportive work relationships enhance psychological safety and intrinsic motivation, thereby reducing the likelihood of turnover. This is further supported by Rabika and Fachrunisa (2024), who demonstrated that strong interpersonal relationships indirectly increase retention by fostering engagement.

Equally important is the concept of meaningful work, which pertains to an individual's perception that their work has purpose and aligns with personal values. Kaur and Mittal (2020) noted that meaningful work enhances self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation, leading to higher engagement and lower intention to leave. Nugroho (2021) also reported that public sector employees who perceive their work

as meaningful are more likely to be engaged and committed. These findings are echoed by Ahmed et al. (2016) and Albrecht et al. (2021), who emphasized the role of meaningful work and organizational resources in fostering psychological empowerment and employee engagement.

This study is conceptually grounded in Discrepancy Theory as developed by Porter (1961) and elaborated by Locke in Gibson (1996). The theory posits that dissatisfaction and withdrawal behaviors emerge from a mismatch between employees' expectations and their actual experiences at work. Applied to the current context, this suggests that when employees perceive a lack of relational support or meaning in their work, they are more likely to disengage and consider leaving. Conversely, when such expectations are fulfilled, employees tend to become more engaged and less likely to harbor turnover intentions.

Given this theoretical framework, the present study aims to examine the direct and indirect effects of workplace relationship quality and meaningful work on intention to leave, with employee engagement serving as a mediating variable. It investigates whether supportive interpersonal relationships and meaningful tasks enhance engagement and subsequently reduce the desire to leave. This study also explores whether the influence of these factors on turnover intention is primarily mediated by engagement or operates independently. Claudia and Suhariadi (2020) provided evidence for such mediation, whereas Jasinski and Darbis (2022) found no significant effect, further highlighting the need for clarity.

By focusing on BNI KC Cilegon, where employee turnover is a pressing organizational concern, this research not only contributes to the theoretical understanding of employee engagement and retention but also offers practical implications for human resource strategies aimed at enhancing workforce stability.

## **2. Theoretical Background**

### **Turnover Intention and Organizational Costs**

Turnover intention refers to an employee's conscious and deliberate willingness to leave their current organization, which is often a precursor to actual turnover behavior. This phenomenon imposes significant financial and operational burdens on organizations, including the cost of recruiting, onboarding, training, and the potential decline in organizational knowledge and service quality (Basori, Mulyani, & Prabowo, 2023; Chairiza, Andini, & Sari, 2016). Yuliani and Ekhsan (2024) emphasized that turnover intention is often inversely related to employee engagement, suggesting that higher engagement levels can serve as a protective factor against costly resignations. Therefore, reducing turnover intention through improved engagement is not just a strategic move, but a cost-saving imperative for organizations like BNI KC Cilegon.

**Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement refers to a positive, fulfilling, work-related state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Motyka, 2018). Highly engaged employees are emotionally invested in their work, demonstrate high levels of energy, and are more likely to contribute to organizational success. Albrecht, Breidahl, and Marty (2021) developed a multilevel mediation model showing how organizational resources positively influence engagement, which in turn improves employee performance. Similarly, Salanova, Agut, and Peiró (2005) confirmed that engaged employees enhance service quality and customer loyalty through a supportive service climate.

Engagement is also identified as a mediating mechanism that links various organizational factors—such as psychological empowerment, support, inclusion, and flexible work arrangements—with turnover intention (Ahmed et al., 2016; Gupta & Gomathi, 2022; Gašić & Berber, 2023). However, the strength of this mediation can vary. Jasinski and Darbis (2022) found that engagement did not fully mediate the relationship between meaningful work and retention, highlighting the need to consider contextual and demographic variables when interpreting its effects.

**Workplace Relationships**

Workplace relationships play a critical role in shaping an employee's psychological experience at work. High-quality relationships, characterized by mutual trust, emotional support, and open communication, create a sense of belonging and psychological safety. Ehrhardt (2018) emphasized that relationship quality is a key pathway to engagement, especially in high-pressure work environments. Colbert, Bono, and Purvanova (2016) argued that flourishing at work is significantly driven by workplace relationships, particularly when support extends beyond instrumental help and fosters personal growth.

The influence of workplace relationships on turnover intention has been well-documented. Claudia and Suhariadi (2020) demonstrated that the impact of workplace relationships on turnover intention is mediated by work engagement. Similarly, Rabika and Fachrunisa (2024) provided evidence from Indonesian organizational settings that supportive and meaningful interpersonal relationships increase employee retention by enhancing engagement.

**Meaningful Work**

Meaningful work refers to the perception that one's job has intrinsic value, is aligned with personal values, and contributes to a greater purpose. Kaur and Mittal (2020) found that meaningful work significantly boosts engagement by enhancing employees' sense of self-efficacy. In the public sector context, Nugroho (2021) reported that employees who perceive their work as meaningful are more committed and engaged. Hamidanti and Fachrunisa (2024) also confirmed that meaningful work reduces the intention to leave through the mediation of employee engagement.

Further supporting this view, Claudia and Suhariadi (2020) found that meaningful work does not directly influence turnover intention, but does so through increased engagement. However, Jasinski and Darbis (2022) challenged this model by noting

that in some organizational contexts, the engagement-retention link may weaken if the meaning derived from work is not adequately supported by the organizational culture or leadership.

### **Engagement as a Mediator of Turnover Intention**

A large body of literature supports the idea that employee engagement is a central factor in reducing turnover intention (Chrisdiana & Rahardjo, 2017; Rusyandi, 2015). Engaged employees are more satisfied, loyal, and less likely to seek alternative employment. Mxenge, Dywili, and Bazana (2014) observed this relationship among administrative staff at a South African university, while Wen, Yan, and Sun (2022) showed that engagement significantly moderates the impact of job satisfaction on turnover across different job levels.

However, the relationship is complex and sometimes moderated by external factors such as job position, work environment (remote vs. hybrid), and leadership behavior (Singh & Sant, 2023). Thus, while engagement remains a critical buffer against turnover, its effectiveness depends on supporting structures like meaningful work and relational quality.

## **3. Methodology**

This study employed a quantitative explanatory research design aimed at examining the causal relationships between workplace relationship quality, meaningful work, and employees' intention to leave, with employee engagement acting as a mediating variable. The research sought not only to measure the direct influence of these workplace factors on turnover intention, but also to test whether employee engagement could explain the mechanisms through which these factors operate. Given the complexity of the relationships being investigated, Structural Equation Modeling using the Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach was deemed the most suitable analytical method. This technique allows for simultaneous estimation of measurement and structural models, making it ideal for models with multiple constructs and mediation paths.

The research was conducted at BNI KC Cilegon (Persero) Tbk, a branch of one of Indonesia's state-owned banks, from October 2024 to March 2025. This site was chosen due to its documented employee retention challenges, making it a relevant case for exploring turnover intentions in a real organizational setting. Based on internal reports and interviews with managerial staff, the branch experienced a net loss in employee numbers in 2024, with 7 departures against only 5 new hires—highlighting the urgency of addressing employee disengagement and dissatisfaction.

The population for this study consisted of all 166 employees currently working at BNI KC Cilegon. Given the relatively small and accessible population size, the research adopted a census (total sampling) method, meaning every employee was invited to participate. This approach ensured comprehensive coverage and minimized sampling bias.

The study examined four key constructs: two independent variables—Workplace Relationship Quality and Meaningful Work; one mediating variable—Employee Engagement; and one dependent variable—Intention to Leave. Workplace Relationship Quality was conceptualized as the degree to which interpersonal interactions in the workplace provide trust, emotional support, and developmental opportunities, drawing from the work of Ehrhardt (2018). Meaningful Work referred to employees' perceptions of their work as purposeful, value-aligned, and contributing to a greater social or organizational good, as outlined by Kaur and Mittal (2020). Employee Engagement was defined as a psychological state of vigor, dedication, and absorption in one's work (Motyka, 2018). Intention to Leave, based on Khan and Uzma (2013), represented an employee's deliberate cognitive consideration or plan to exit the organization.

To measure these constructs, a structured questionnaire was developed using established instruments from prior studies. Each variable was operationalized through multiple indicators rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). The questionnaire included 24 items: 6 for employee engagement, 5 for intention to leave, 4 for workplace relationship quality, and 4 for meaningful work. Prior to distribution, a pilot test was conducted with 30 respondents from a similar population to verify the validity and reliability of the instrument. Indicators with weak loading values were refined or eliminated.

Data analysis was performed using SmartPLS 2.0 M3, following the SEM-PLS approach. The analysis involved two stages. First, the measurement model (outer model) was assessed to test convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability of the constructs. This included evaluating factor loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability (CR), and Cronbach's Alpha, with acceptable thresholds set at  $>0.7$  for reliability and  $>0.5$  for AVE. Second, the structural model (inner model) was used to examine path coefficients and the strength of relationships between variables, including mediation effects. The bootstrapping method with 5,000 resamples was employed to test the significance of the hypothesized paths, using a 95% confidence interval.  $R^2$  and  $Q^2$  values were also examined to evaluate the model's explanatory power and predictive relevance.

This methodological approach allowed the study to rigorously test its hypotheses and contribute both theoretical and practical insights regarding the dynamics of employee turnover intention in the context of a real-world banking organization.

#### **4. Empirical Findings/Result**

The results of this study are based on data collected from 166 employees of BNI KC Cilegon (Persero) Tbk, with respondents representing a diverse yet experienced workforce. A significant proportion of the respondents were female (62.65%) and between the ages of 26 and 45 years (47.59%), which reflects the organization's reliance on mid-career professionals. The educational background of the respondents was predominantly undergraduate-level (48.8%), and more than half of them (53%) had worked at the company for over five years. This profile suggests a relatively stable

employee base, yet one still vulnerable to turnover intentions as revealed in the organization's internal reports. These demographic distributions are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1. Respondent Characteristics (N = 166)**

Category	Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	62	37.35
	Female	104	62.65
<b>Age</b>	< 25 years	56	33.73
	26–45 years	79	47.59
	> 45 years	31	18.68
<b>Education</b>	High School	26	15.66
	Diploma (D1–D3)	42	25.30
	Bachelor's Degree	81	48.80
	Master's Degree	17	10.24
<b>Years of Service</b>	1–3 years	28	16.88
	3–5 years	50	30.12
	> 5 years	88	53.00

Source: Data Processed (2025)

Before testing the structural relationships among variables, the measurement model was assessed to ensure that the instruments used were both valid and reliable. The outer model analysis showed that all indicator loadings exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming that each indicator adequately represented its corresponding latent construct. Composite reliability values ranged from 0.928 to 0.942, while Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.896 to 0.923, indicating strong internal consistency across constructs. Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for all constructs was well above 0.70, supporting the convergent validity of the measures. These results are summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2. Measurement Model Evaluation**

Construct	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
<b>Employee Engagement</b>	0.723	0.940	0.923
<b>Intention to Leave</b>	0.730	0.931	0.907
<b>Meaningful Work</b>	0.763	0.928	0.896
<b>Workplace Relationship Quality</b>	0.802	0.942	0.918

Source: Data Processed (2025)

Discriminant validity was also supported. Each indicator loaded higher on its respective construct than on others, confirming that the constructs were distinct. The cross-loading table is omitted for brevity but is available upon request.

Following validation of the measurement model, the structural model was tested using SmartPLS. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) indicated that 51.1% of the variance in employee engagement was explained by workplace relationship quality and meaningful work, while 39.4% of the variance in intention to leave was accounted for by the model. These values demonstrate a substantial explanatory power, especially in the context of behavioral research where high  $R^2$  values are rare. Hypothesis testing

was conducted using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples. The results showed that workplace relationship quality had a significant positive effect on employee engagement ( $\beta = 0.396, p < 0.001$ ) and a significant negative effect on intention to leave ( $\beta = -0.182, p = 0.015$ ). Similarly, meaningful work was found to significantly predict higher employee engagement ( $\beta = 0.443, p < 0.001$ ) and lower intention to leave ( $\beta = -0.174, p = 0.028$ ). Most importantly, employee engagement had a strong negative effect on intention to leave ( $\beta = -0.470, p < 0.001$ ), reinforcing the central theoretical proposition that engaged employees are significantly less likely to consider exiting the organization. These path results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing Results**

Hypothesis	Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	t-value	p-value	Supported?
<b>H1</b> Workplace Relationship Quality → Engagement	0.396	6.223	0.000	Yes
<b>H2</b> Workplace Relationship Quality → Intention to Leave	-0.182	2.430	0.015	Yes
<b>H3</b> Meaningful Work → Engagement	0.443	7.289	0.000	Yes
<b>H4</b> Meaningful Work → Intention to Leave	-0.174	2.211	0.028	Yes
<b>H5</b> Employee Engagement → Intention to Leave	-0.470	7.012	0.000	Yes

Source: Data Processed (2025)

To further investigate the mediating role of employee engagement, a mediation analysis was conducted using the indirect effect estimation within the SEM-PLS framework. The results revealed that employee engagement fully mediated the relationship between workplace relationship quality and intention to leave, as indicated by a significant indirect effect ( $\beta = -0.186, p < 0.001$ ), while the direct effect became non-significant when the mediator was included. In contrast, employee engagement partially mediated the effect of meaningful work on intention to leave, with the indirect path also showing a significant coefficient ( $\beta = -0.208, p < 0.001$ ) alongside a still-significant direct effect. These findings are summarized in Table 4.

**Table 4. Mediation Effects of Employee Engagement**

Mediation Path	Indirect Effect ( $\beta$ )	t-value	p-value	Mediation Type
<b>Workplace Relationship Quality → Engagement → Intention to Leave</b>	-0.186	3.591	0.000	Full
<b>Meaningful Work → Engagement → Intention to Leave</b>	-0.208	4.127	0.000	Partial

Source: Data Processed (2025)



These findings suggest that engagement serves as a critical psychological mechanism through which relational and task-based factors influence employees' desire to stay or leave. Thus, fostering meaningful work and cultivating high-quality interpersonal relationships within the workplace not only improves engagement levels but also substantially lowers the risk of voluntary turnover. The significance of both direct and indirect effects provides empirical support for the hypothesized model and highlights the practical importance of engagement-oriented human resource strategies in organizational settings facing retention challenges.

## **5. Discussion**

### **The Influence of Workplace Relationship Quality on Employee Engagement**

The results of this study confirm that workplace relationship quality significantly improves employee engagement ( $\beta = 0.396$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This means that when employees experience trust, mutual respect, and emotional support in their workplace relationships, they are more likely to feel energized, dedicated, and absorbed in their work—key indicators of engagement as defined by Motyka (2018). This relationship is well-explained by Discrepancy Theory, which suggests that engagement increases when there is alignment between employees' expectations and their actual work experiences. Supportive and cooperative relationships help close this gap by fulfilling the psychological needs for belonging, recognition, and support. Employees who feel valued and understood by their colleagues and supervisors are more emotionally connected to their roles and less likely to disengage.

Empirical evidence supports this mechanism. Ehrhardt (2018) found that high-quality relationships reduce interpersonal tension and promote emotional safety, while Colbert et al. (2016) emphasized the importance of trust-based work environments in fostering deep involvement and satisfaction. At BNI KC Cilegon, where this study took place, these findings are particularly relevant. Despite ongoing turnover issues, the majority of employees have long tenures, indicating that the foundation for strong workplace relationships already exists. Enhancing these relationships can be a powerful strategy to strengthen engagement and, in turn, reduce the intention to leave. For leaders and HR practitioners, this underlines the importance of investing in workplace culture. Engagement can be cultivated by promoting open communication, encouraging teamwork, and recognizing contributions—all of which contribute to a relational climate that supports employee well-being and motivation.

### **The Influence of Meaningful Work on Employee Engagement**

The results of this study reveal that meaningful work significantly influences employee engagement, with a path coefficient of  $\beta = 0.443$  and a p-value less than 0.001. This strong positive relationship confirms that when employees perceive their work as valuable, aligned with their personal beliefs, and contributing to a greater purpose, they are more likely to invest themselves cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally in their roles. Meaningful work acts as a psychological resource that energizes employees from within. It fosters a sense of purpose that transcends routine duties and provides intrinsic motivation to engage more deeply. Kaur and Mittal

(2020) suggest that meaningful work supports employees' self-concept and reinforces their belief that their efforts matter, both to the organization and to society. Employees who find meaning in their tasks are more likely to experience work as fulfilling, which increases their focus, persistence, and resilience.

In the setting of BNI KC Cilegon, a financial institution serving a wide range of public needs, meaningful work may be derived from the broader impact of the services provided. Employees involved in facilitating loans, managing client portfolios, or supporting operational systems may feel that they are contributing to economic empowerment and social development. This organizational context provides a fertile ground for fostering meaningfulness, which, as the results show, translates into stronger engagement. These findings align with those of Nugroho (2021), who found that work perceived as purposeful improves psychological well-being and employee involvement. They also reinforce the argument that engagement is not solely a function of interpersonal dynamics, but also deeply connected to how employees interpret the value of their work.

From a managerial perspective, organizations can enhance employee engagement by reinforcing the meaning of everyday tasks through storytelling, transparent goal alignment, and recognition systems. Communicating how individual roles contribute to the company's mission and societal impact helps employees construct a sense of significance, which in turn strengthens their emotional and cognitive connection to the organization.

### **The Influence of Workplace Relationship Quality on Intention to Leave**

The findings of this study reveal that workplace relationship quality has a significant negative effect on employees' intention to leave ( $\beta = -0.182$ ,  $p = 0.015$ ). This suggests that when employees experience high-quality relationships at work—characterized by mutual trust, emotional support, and constructive collaboration—they are less likely to consider leaving the organization. This result supports the arguments presented by Rabika and Fachrunisa (2024), who highlighted that workplace relationship quality significantly reduces employees' desire to quit. In the context of BNI KC Cilegon, this means that employees who feel supported by their colleagues and supervisors are more likely to remain committed to their roles despite external job alternatives or internal challenges.

The theoretical basis for this finding lies in Discrepancy Theory (Porter, 1961; Locke, 1996), which posits that turnover intentions stem from mismatches between employee expectations and their actual experiences. When employees expect a supportive and collaborative work environment and this expectation is fulfilled, their sense of satisfaction and emotional connection to the organization strengthens—reducing the cognitive desire to exit. Additionally, Colbert et al. (2016) emphasized that a psychologically safe and relationally rich work environment not only reduces interpersonal conflict but also fosters a sense of belonging and loyalty. This aligns with the current study's findings and reinforces the notion that social dynamics at work play a critical role in retention efforts.

Interestingly, the direct effect of workplace relationship quality on intention to leave is fully mediated by employee engagement, as found in the mediation analysis. This implies that while high-quality relationships reduce turnover intentions directly, their influence is even more profound when channeled through heightened employee engagement. Thus, organizations such as BNI KC Cilegon should prioritize relational interventions, such as improving leader-member exchanges (LMX), peer mentoring, and team-building activities, to maintain strong relational networks. These interventions not only enhance the overall work atmosphere but also indirectly contribute to retention by fostering a more engaged workforce.

### **The Influence of Meaningful Work on Intention to Leave**

The results of this study demonstrate that meaningful work has a significant negative effect on employees' intention to leave ( $\beta = -0.174$ ,  $p = 0.028$ ). This finding highlights the importance of perceived work meaningfulness in shaping employee decisions to stay or exit an organization. When employees find value and purpose in their work, they are more emotionally connected to their roles, more satisfied with their daily tasks, and less likely to seek alternative employment. This is in line with prior studies, including Hamidanti and Fachrunisa (2024), who found that meaningful work significantly reduces the likelihood of turnover intention by fostering a deeper psychological connection between employees and their job. Employees who view their work as meaningful tend to interpret challenges as worthwhile, view their contributions as impactful, and are more resilient in the face of organizational stressors.

From the perspective of Discrepancy Theory, meaningful work reduces the perceived gap between what employees expect and what they experience in their jobs. When work aligns with personal values, supports personal growth, and allows for a sense of contribution to something larger than oneself, employees feel that their intrinsic expectations are fulfilled. This fulfillment creates a psychological contract that discourages voluntary exit. Additionally, meaningful work contributes to a sense of role identity and self-actualization, both of which are critical psychological needs in the workplace. Employees are not only motivated by salary or career advancement but also by the feeling that their work matters. As such, even in competitive job markets, employees are less likely to leave roles where they feel their work makes a difference. In practical terms, this suggests that organizations should not overlook the intangible aspects of job design. Efforts such as involving employees in decision-making, aligning roles with individual strengths and passions, promoting a clear organizational mission, and providing recognition for contributions can significantly increase the sense of meaning employees derive from their work. By investing in these practices, organizations like BNI KC Cilegon can not only boost engagement and morale but also reduce turnover intention, strengthening their ability to retain committed and purpose-driven employees.

### **The Influence of Employee Engagement on Intention to Leave**

The study reveals a strong and significant negative relationship between employee engagement and intention to leave ( $\beta = -0.470$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This indicates that employees who are engaged—those who feel energized, committed, and deeply

involved in their work—are considerably less likely to consider leaving the organization. High engagement not only reflects job satisfaction but also a sense of loyalty and emotional attachment to the workplace. This finding is consistent with previous research by Chrisdiana and Rahardjo (2017) and Chairiza et al. (2016), who found that engaged employees are more likely to remain with their organization, even when faced with external opportunities or internal pressures. Engaged employees often perceive their work as meaningful, aligned with personal values, and fulfilling in terms of growth and contribution, reducing the psychological drive to seek alternative employment.

Discrepancy Theory offers further explanation: when employees feel their expectations for meaningful work, recognition, and personal development are met, their motivation to leave diminishes. Engagement, therefore, acts as a psychological buffer against dissatisfaction and withdrawal intentions. In the case of BNI KC Cilegon, where turnover concerns have been flagged, this result underlines the strategic importance of fostering employee engagement. Amid a workforce that largely consists of experienced employees, strengthening engagement can serve as a practical approach to enhancing retention. Organizations can cultivate engagement through leadership support, autonomy, career development opportunities, and by fostering a culture that values contributions. These factors help employees feel more connected to the organization's mission and more inclined to stay.

### **The Mediating Role of Employee Engagement**

The results of the mediation analysis indicate that employee engagement plays a significant mediating role in the relationships between both workplace relationship quality and meaningful work with intention to leave. Specifically, employee engagement fully mediates the relationship between workplace relationship quality and intention to leave ( $\beta = -0.186$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and partially mediates the relationship between meaningful work and intention to leave ( $\beta = -0.208$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This means that workplace relationship quality reduces turnover intention not directly, but through its influence on engagement. High-quality relationships foster trust and emotional connection, which increase engagement, and in turn, lower the desire to leave. On the other hand, meaningful work affects intention to leave both directly and through engagement. When employees find their work purposeful, they are less likely to leave—both because the work itself is satisfying and because it enhances their emotional involvement.

These findings strengthen the theoretical argument that engagement is a psychological mechanism through which positive work experiences reduce withdrawal behaviors, as suggested by Claudiantya and Suhariadi (2020). They also support the application of Discrepancy Theory in organizational settings, showing that employees are less likely to disengage when their social and task-related expectations are met. In practical terms, this suggests that interventions aimed at reducing turnover should not only target surface-level factors like salary or workload but also focus on cultivating deeper engagement. Strategies such as leadership coaching, job enrichment, and values-based recognition programs can amplify the impact of good relationships and meaningful tasks by strengthening engagement as a central pathway to retention.

Overall, the mediating role of employee engagement illustrates its critical function in translating positive workplace conditions into lower turnover intention. For organizations like BNI KC Cilegon, investing in engagement is not just about improving morale—it's a strategic approach to keeping talented employees from walking out the door.

## **6. Conclusions**

This study investigated how workplace relationship quality and meaningful work influence turnover intention, both directly and indirectly, through the mediating role of employee engagement within the organizational setting of BNI KC Cilegon (Persero) Tbk. The findings highlight that both high-quality interpersonal relationships and the presence of meaningful work significantly enhance employee engagement, which in turn functions as a critical buffer against the intention to leave. Specifically, workplace relationship quality was found to not only strengthen engagement but also reduce turnover intention, particularly when mediated by engagement. Similarly, meaningful work positively influenced engagement and independently contributed to lowering the desire to exit the organization. Among all variables examined, employee engagement played a central mediating role, fully mediating the effect of workplace relationships and partially mediating the effect of meaningful work on turnover intention.

From a theoretical standpoint, these results align with Discrepancy Theory, which posits that when employees' psychological expectations—such as feeling valued, supported, and engaged in meaningful work—are fulfilled, job satisfaction increases while turnover intention decreases. Practically, the study provides actionable insights for organizations like BNI KC Cilegon that face challenges in retaining talent. Rather than relying solely on extrinsic motivators such as salary or bonuses, management should focus on fostering intrinsic motivators such as relational support and meaningful work design. Interventions aimed at building trust-based relationships and connecting job roles to larger organizational goals can significantly reduce employee turnover risk through the enhancement of engagement levels.

Based on these findings, several recommendations can be proposed. First, for organizational leaders and managers, efforts should focus on strengthening interpersonal relationships through team-building initiatives, mentoring systems, and open communication forums. Additionally, creating meaningful work can be supported by aligning tasks with employee values and offering opportunities for career development. Second, human resource departments should adopt engagement as a core metric in employee retention strategies, utilizing tools like regular engagement surveys and flexible work arrangements to cultivate emotional investment in the organization. Third, future research should explore other potential mediating or moderating variables such as job satisfaction, psychological capital, or organizational culture to better understand the complex dynamics affecting turnover intention. Lastly, for academic development, this study adds to the growing body of

literature positioning engagement not just as an outcome but as a powerful mediator, emphasizing its strategic value in shaping long-term organizational sustainability.

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