

Workplace Friendship, Trust in the Leader and Turnover Intention: The Mediating Effects of Work Engagement

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Abstract

The job demands-resources model hypothesizes work engagement's positive mediating effects between job resources and positive outcomes; its mediating effects between job resources and negative outcomes have rarely been examined. We propose workplace friendship and trust in the leader as job resources and turnover intention as a negative outcome and hypothesize that workplace friendship and trust in the leader will positively predict work engagement, and that work engagement will negatively predict turnover intention. To test our hypotheses, we conducted a study among 166 bank tellers in Bangkok, Thailand using a questionnaire survey. Regression analysis with bootstrapping was used to test the hypotheses and the mediation model. The hypotheses and the model were supported. The results of our study provide support for the job demands-resources model and suggest for the bank management the advisement of encouraging friendship among bank tellers and cultivating their trust in the managers.

Keywords: workplace friendship, trust in the leader, work engagement, turnover intention,

bank tellers, Thailand

1. Introduction

Organizational members who are absorbed in their work, dedicated to their jobs and vigorously perform their duties are said to be work-engaged (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-romá & Bakker, 2002). Work engagement has become a frequently researched topic in hotel (Park, Johnson, & Chaudhuri, 2019) and nursing (García-Sierra, Fernández-Castro, & Martínez-Zaragoza, 2016; Keyko, Cummings, Yonge, & Wong, 2016) management and the overall effect of interventions on work engagement though small is positive and significant (Knight, Patterson, & Dawson, 2017, 2019). Work engagement is a key variable in the job demands-resources model; antecedents of work engagement are job resources and consequences include positive outcomes with work engagement positively mediating their relationships (Schaufeli, 2017). A review of work engagement studies shows work engagement to be positively related to job attitudes; antecedents of work engagement include job characteristics, leadership styles and dispositional characteristics; and consequences of work engagement include task and contextual performances (Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011). Using the job demands-resources model (Schaufeli, 2017), we propose workplace friendship and trust in the leader to be antecedents and turnover intention a consequence of work engagement. Workplace friendship is defined as an opportunity to form a strong bond and trust in the coworkers (Nielsen, Jex, & Adams, 2000); trust in the leader is the organizational members' reliance on their managers' words, deeds and good intentions (Dirks, 2000), and turnover intention is the organizational members' thought of leaving their jobs and the organizations (Pravichai & Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2018). Figure 1 displays the model of proposed relationships among workplace friendship, trust in the leader, work engagement and turnover intention.

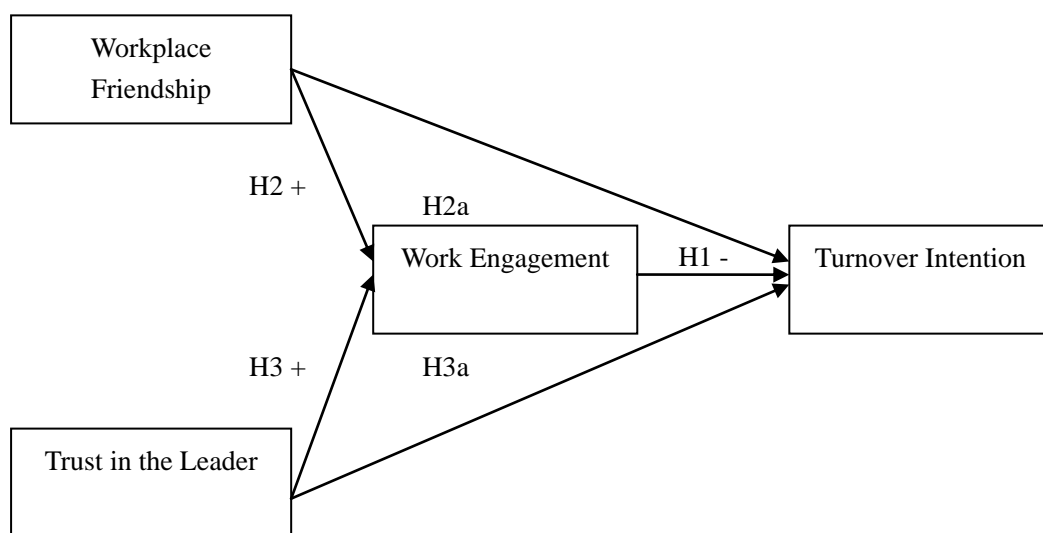


Figure 1. Conceptual model of the hypothesized relationships: H1: Work engagement negatively predicts turnover intention; H2: Workplace friendship positively predicts work engagement; H2a: Work engagement mediates the relationship between workplace friendship and turnover intention; H3: Trust in the leader positively predicts work engagement; H3a:

Work engagement mediates the relationship between trust in the leader and turnover intention.

To test our model, we conducted a study among 166 bank tellers in commercial bank branches in Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand in Southeast Asia. Although bank customers can use the automatic teller machines to deposit and withdraw money, their preference for personal contact results in the tellers still manually handling deposits and withdrawals. There were 15 Thai commercial banks in Thailand with a total of 6,708 branches, 1,987 of which were in Bangkok (Bank of Thailand, 2018b). There were 152,573 employees in all commercial banks in Thailand as of the first half of 2018 (Bank of Thailand, 2018a). Assuming an average of eight tellers for each bank branch, the number of tellers would be 53,664, or one third of all bank employees. Given the large proportion of tellers among bank employees, our study will have an important implication for the bank management in showing that turnover intention among bank tellers is traceable to their workplace friendship, trust in their managers and work engagement. As turnover intention is predictive of actual turnover (Steel & Ovalle, 1984; Sun & Wang, 2017), reduced turnover intention may result in actual turnover reduction thereby reducing banks' human resource costs.

Our study is also important from the theoretical standpoint. The job demands-resources model hypothesizes work engagement's positive mediation between job resources and positive outcomes (Schaufeli, 2017); work engagement's mediation between job resources and negative outcomes has rarely been examined. We propose workplace friendship and trust in the leader as job resources and turnover intention as a negative outcome, and hypothesize the relationships between workplace friendship and trust in the leader and work engagement to be positive while the relationship between work engagement and turnover intention to be negative. Our study is in response to a call (Lesener, Gusy, & Wolter, 2019) for an examination of work engagement's role between job resources and negative outcomes. The results of our study will provide support for the job resources-demands model (Schaufeli, 2017) and the refinement of the work engagement model (Christian et al., 2011).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Research on Bank Tellers

The bank teller's job used to be men's work; the shortage of male applicants, the increased amount of paper work connected with bank transactions and the glamorization of the work lead to the feminization of the teller's job (Prather, 1971). Studies on bank tellers range from the recruitment of tellers to the negative effects of job demands. Teller applicants who are given specific and general previews of their work tend to leave during the first three weeks in their jobs, while those who do not get any preview leave their jobs later (Dean & Wanous, 1984). During orientation, tellers are instructed to adhere strictly to the bank's established policy, only to find the instructions being disregarded by colleagues at the branch (DiSanza, 1995). Centralized and formalized organizational structures are related to bank tellers' job stress (Chahardoli, Motamedzade, Hamidi, Soltanian, & Golmohammadi, 2015) and, although task redesign may quickly increase bank tellers' satisfaction and commitment, their

satisfaction soon returns to the initial pre-redesign level (Ricky, 1991). The video display terminals used by the tellers seem to cause insomnia complaints among Iranian bank tellers (Giahi, Shahmoradi, Barkhordari, & Khoubi, 2015) and musculoskeletal disorder symptoms among Korean bank tellers (Yun, Lee, Eoh, & Lim, 2001). As they work in the standing position 80% of the time, two-thirds of bank tellers suffer pain in the back, legs and feet, and experience psychological distress related to robberies and difficult relations with their superiors (Seifert, Messing, & Dumais, 1997). Excessive workload has been found at teller workstations in a Brazilian bank (Serikawa, Albieri, Bonugli, & Gregghi, 2012). Bank tellers tend to prefer more conformity, hedonism and power values and less benevolence, universalism and self-direction values (Tartakovsky & Cohen, 2015). Employees whose job involves cash handling exhibit greater levels of work stress, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and overall burnout than those who do not handle cash (Mutsvunguma & Gwandure, 2011), and those who work outside the main office are dissatisfied with the nature of their work, co-workers, pay, promotion policies, and supervision (McLaughlin & Cheatham, 1977). A research on bank tellers' workplace friendship, trust in the leader, work engagement and turnover intention will inform bank management of the importance of friendship among bank tellers and their trust in the managers in reducing turnover intention.

2.2 Work engagement and Turnover Intention

Work engagement (Schaufeli et al., 2002) has variously been examined as personal engagement, burnout/engagement, work engagement and employee engagement—each with its own measurement (Simpson, 2009). In our study, we examine work engagement as the description of organizational members who are immersed in, dedicated to their jobs and vigorously perform their tasks (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Although conceptually similar to workaholism (Di Stefano & Gaudiino, 2019) the outcomes of work engagement have been positive; the quality of care by nurses improves through work engagement (García-Sierra et al., 2016) and positive outcomes of work engagement among nurses include job satisfaction, compassion, quality care and patient satisfaction (Keyko et al., 2016).

Organizational members who think frequently of leaving their jobs and the organizations are said to have turnover intention. Turnover intention is more predictive of actual turnover than job satisfaction or organizational commitment (Steel & Ovalle, 1984). Age, location, position, salary, and working time are significantly related to Chinese primary health workers' turnover intention (Y. Mao, He, Liu, Zhang, & Zhu, 2018). Among U.S. child welfare workers, work-related factors such as stress and emotional exhaustion are positively associated with turnover intention, whereas attitudes and perceptions such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment are negatively associated with turnover intention (H. Kim & Kao, 2014). Stress may be classified into hindrance and challenge stressors with opposite effects; hindrance stressors such as resource inadequacies are positively associated with turnover intentions, whereas challenge stressors such as task pressure are negatively associated with turnover intentions (Podsakoff, LePine, & LePine, 2007). Supervisors have significantly lower turnover intentions than do line-level employees (Lu, Lu, Gursoy, & Neale, 2016). Supportive aspects of organizational culture (Timms et al., 2015) and psychological contract fulfilment (Bal, De Cooman, & Mol, 2013) are related to lower turnover intentions. Work

engagement is positively associated with job satisfaction and job satisfaction is negatively associated with turnover intention (H. Kim & Kao, 2014). The relationship between work engagement and turnover intention is negatively curvilinear (Caesens, Stinglhamber, & Marmier, 2016) and work engagement has a direct and negative association with turnover intention (Alarcon & Edwards, 2011; De Simone, Planta, & Cicotto, 2018; W. Kim, 2017; Zhang, Meng, Yang, & Liu, 2018), we hypothesize that:

H1: Work engagement negatively predicts turnover intention.

2.3 Workplace Friendship and Work Engagement

Workplace friendship is defined as the extent to which one perceives an opportunity to form a strong bond with and a trust in coworkers; operationally workplace friendship consists of opportunity for and prevalence of friendship in organizations (Nielsen et al., 2000). Personality, perceived similarity and shared tasks seem to be the most important factors to initiate friendship (Sias, Pedersen, Gallagher, & Kopaneva, 2012), and workplace friendship progresses from coworker to friend stage, from friend to close friend status, and finally from close-friend to almost-best-friend position (Sias & Cahill, 1998). Whereas role ambiguity (Chen, Mao, & Hsieh, 2012), positions at higher organizational levels (H.-Y. Mao, 2006), and bureaucracy (H.-Y. Mao, Chen, & Hsieh, 2009) may hinder workplace friendship formation, sharing gossip seems to increase the likelihood of a future workplace friendship (Ellwardt, Steglich, & Wittek, 2012). Workplace friendship is related to positive organizational outcomes. Workplace friendship opportunity and prevalence are strongly related to job satisfaction for men (Morrison, 2009). The number of workplace friendships in one's social network is positively related to supervisor ratings of job performance (Methot, Lepine, Podsakoff, & Christian, 2015). Workplace friendship is also related to perceived job significance (H.-Y. Mao, Hsieh, & Chen, 2012). When work includes rewarding interactions with coworkers (Kahn, 1990) work engagement increases; we hypothesize that:

H2: Workplace friendship positively predicts work engagement.

To test that workplace friendship, work engagement and turnover intention belong to the same model, we hypothesize that:

H2a: Work engagement mediates the relationship between workplace friendship and turnover intention.

2.4 Trust in the Leader and Work Engagement

Trust is an important component in any social interactions. Trust may be understood as a decision under risk with three core components: attitudes toward risky prospects, expectations of trustworthiness, and sensitivity to betrayal (Thielmann & Hilbig, 2015). There are three types of dyadic trust: reciprocal trust, where one party returns the other party's trust; mutual trust, where both parties trust each other; and asymmetric trust where one party trusts more than does the other (Korsgaard, Brower, & Lester, 2015). Trust in the leader has been defined as the subordinates' reliance on the leader's words, deeds, and good intentions towards them (Dirks, 2000). Antecedents of trust in the leader are the leader's

ability, benevolence, integrity and reputation; outcomes of trust in the leader include communication, organizational citizenship behavior, team performance and turnover (Burke, Sims, Lazzara, & Salas, 2007). Consequences of trust also include job performance and job satisfaction. Trust mediates the relationship of psychological empowerment to job performance (Huang, 2012); a supervisor's participative leadership to a subordinate's job performance (Miao, Newman, & Huang, 2014); and trustworthiness and trust propensity to task performance, citizenship behavior and counterproductive behavior (Colquitt, Scott, & LePine, 2007). Trust in management predicts job satisfaction (Gockel, Robertson, & Brauner, 2013) and mediates the supervisors' transformational leadership-job satisfaction relationship (Braun, Peus, Weisweiler, & Frey, 2013), and procedural and informational fairness and transformational leadership-job satisfaction relationship (Gilstrap & Collins, 2012).

The relationship of trust in the leader to turnover intention has recently been examined. Teacher-principal trust is one of the four important antecedents of beginning teachers' turnover intention (Tiplic, Brandmo, & Elstad, 2015). Although trust in the firm's CEO and top management is more highly related to turnover intention than is trust in the supervisor (Costigan, Insinga, Berman, Kranas, & Kureshov, 2011), Russian employees who have either weak or strong affect-based trust of the supervisor have high turnover intention (Costigan, Insinga, Berman, Kranas, & Kureshov, 2012). Managers' trust-generating behavior is negatively associated with turnover intention (Singh & Amish, 2015). Trust mediates the transformational leadership-commitment and turnover (Tremblay, 2010) and the transformational leadership-turnover intention (Pravichai & Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2018) relationships. When employees have trust in their leaders they are willing to invest themselves in their work (Kahn, 1990), we therefore hypothesize that:

H3: Trust in the leader positively predicts work engagement.

To test that trust in the leader, work engagement and turnover intention belong to the same model, we hypothesize that:

H3a: Work engagement mediates the relationship between trust in the leader and turnover intention.

3. Method

3.1 Participants

The participants of our study were bank tellers working at branches in Bangkok, Thailand. The sample consisted of 166 tellers randomly selected from ten bank branches. The majority of bank tellers in our study are single (65.1%), female (82.5%) and in the early 30s age bracket ($M = 31.57$ years, $SD = 7.80$). Most of them (84.3%) are college graduates, and about half (52.4%) earn a monthly income of Baht 20,000 to Baht 39,000 (US\$625 to US\$1,218 at Baht 32 to US\$1). Table 1 contains details of their demographic characteristics.

3.2 Instruments

Work engagement. The nine-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale was used to assess work engagement (UWES-9; (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006). The scale contains statements

that purportedly represent the participants' feeling about their jobs such as: 3. "Time flies when I am working." Participants indicated the extent of their agreement with the statements by crossing one of the numbers from 0 (*Never*) to 6 (*Always*). The scores of nine items were summed, with a high score representing a high level of work engagement. An exploratory factor analysis (Eigen value = 1, Varimax rotation) produced one factor that accounted for 57.96% of the variance. Reliability test yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .91.

Workplace friendship. Workplace friendship was assessed using the six-item Friendship Prevalence dimension, a subscale of the Workplace Friendship Scale (Nielsen et al., 2000) that includes Friendship Opportunity and Friendship Prevalence dimensions. We decided not to use the Friendship Opportunity dimension as it deals with friendship opportunities while the Friendship Prevalence dimension deals with formed friendship. The scale contains statements that purportedly gauge the participants' perceived friendship in their jobs and trust in their coworkers such as: 1. "I have formed strong friendships at work." Participants

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the sample (N = 166)

Participant Characteristics	Number	Percent
Gender: Male	29	17.5
Female	137	82.5
Age: $M = 31.57$, $SD = 7.80$		
Marital Status: Single	108	65.1
Married	55	33.1
Divorced/Widowed	3	1.8
Education: Senior High School	1	.6
Bachelor's degree	140	84.3
Higher than bachelor's degree	25	15.1
Monthly income: (Baht 32=US\$1)		
Baht 10,000 – 19,999	49	29.5
20,000 – 29,999	67	40.4
30,000 – 39,999	20	12.0
40,000 – 49,999	19	11.4
50,000 – 59,999	7	4.2
60,000 – 69,999	3	1.8
More than 70,000	1	.6

indicated the extent of their agreement with the statements on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*The least*) to 5 (*The most*). The scores of six items were summed, with a high

score representing a high level of workplace friendship. An exploratory factor analysis (Eigen value = 1, Varimax rotation) produced one factor that accounted for 53.75% of the variance. Reliability test yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .77.

Trust in the leader. The seven-item Trust Scale (Robinson, 1996) was used to assess trust in the leader. Sample items include (2) I can expect my manager to treat me in a consistent and predictable fashion and (5) I don't think my manager treats me fairly. Participants responded to a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Items 3, 5, and 7 expressed doubts in the leader and were reversed coded. The scale was used in a previous study (Pravichai & Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2018) and was found to possess satisfactory psychometric properties. Reliability test for this study yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .81.

Turnover intention. A six-item Turnover Intention Scale was used to assess turnover intention (Pravichai & Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2018). The scale asks the participants to indicate the frequency of their thought of leaving their jobs and organizations. Sample items include: 1. "If an organization offered you a job with the same salary you are receiving, would you leave your job?" (responses ranging from 1. *Would definitely not leave* to 5. *Would definitely leave*), and 4. "How important is your career with your organization?" (responses ranging from 1. *Very important* to 5. *Very unimportant*). The scores of six items were summed with a high score representing a high level of turnover intention. An exploratory factor analysis (Eigen value = 1, Varimax rotation) produced one factor that accounted for 60.56% of the variance. Reliability test yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .86.

3.3 Procedure

Instruments used. The Work Engagement and Workplace Friendship Scales are in English. The authors translated them into Thai and had the Thai versions checked for translation integrity by two professional translators. The Trust in the Leader and Turnover Intention scales are in Thai.

Sample size determination. The parameters (two-tails, effect size = 0.15, α error probability = 0.01, power = 0.99, number of predictors = 3) entered into the G*Power program (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009) suggested a sample size of 164 for this study.

Data collection. Participants in this study were bank tellers at ten bank branches in Bangkok. Data were collected near their work sites. Bank tellers were easily identified as they wore bank uniforms. Research assistants approached the tellers while they were on lunch break and requested their cooperation in participating in the research. Approximately 31% of the tellers approached refused; the data collection resulted in 166 responses. A letter from the researchers was attached to the questionnaire informing the participants of the voluntary nature of their participation (that they could refuse participation at any time), the confidential nature of the study (the data would be kept confidential), and the non-disclosure of personal data (no personal data would be published in the report). The participants were given new ballpoint pens (costing US\$1.50 each) to mark the questionnaire and after completion they were allowed to keep the pens as a gift. The participants could complete the questionnaire in

15 minutes. The research assistants were compensated Baht 100 (US\$3) for each questionnaire collected.

4. Findings

4.1 Preliminary Analysis

Table 2 displays means and standard deviations of work engagement, workplace friendship, trust in the leader and turnover intention, and their associations with the participants' age, education and income. Age was highly and significantly associated with income; participants in the high age brackets tended to earn high salaries. Education was associated with income and trust in the leader; participants with high level of education tended to earn high salaries and placed more trust in their leaders. Work engagement, workplace friendship and trust in the leader were associated with each other. No demographic characteristic was associated with turnover intention.

Table 2. Work Engagement, Workplace Friendship, Trust in the Leader, and Turnover Intention: Means, standard deviations, and correlations with participants' age, education and income

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Age	Education	Income	Work Engage- ment	Workplace Friendship	Trust in the Leader
Age	31.57	7.80						
Education	5.14	.40	.14					
Income	3.29	1.30	.74***	.29***				
Work Engagement	4.06	.91	.11	-.01	.08			
Workplace Friendship	4.03	.60	-.14	.04	-.10	.35***		
Trust in the Leader	3.86	.77	-.13	-.19*	-.11	.38***	.36***	
Turnover Intention	2.16	.79	-.09	.08	-.06	.59***	-.22**	-.34***

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .00$

Analysis of the Hypothesized Relationships

To test the hypotheses, the PROCESS dialogue, Release 2.15 (Hayes, 2018) was used to perform regression analysis, specifying Model 4, 95% confidence interval and 5,000 bootstrap resamples. As none of the demographic characteristics was associated with turnover intention, no control variable was entered in the model. Results of the regression analyses are

displayed in Figure 2 and Table 3.

Table 3. Bootstrap results to test significance of mediation effect of work engagement on the relationship between workplace friendship and trust in the leader and turnover intention

Path/effect	Standardized		
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
H1: Work Engagement → Turnover Intention (Workplace Friendship Model)	-.34	.04	< .001
H2: Workplace Friendship → Work Engagement	.80	.17	< .001
H2a: Workplace Friendship → Work Engagement → Turnover Intention	-.27	.07	[CI95: -.40 to -.15]
H1: Work Engagement → Turnover Intention (Trust in the Leader Model)	-.31	.04	< .001
H3: Trust in the Leader → Work Engagement	.57	.11	< .001
H3a: Trust in the Leader → Work Engagement → Turnover Intention	-.18	.04	[CI95: -.26 to -.10]

Note. The 95% confidence interval for the standardized results were produced with bias corrected bootstrap re-samples = 5,000 option in PROCESS procedure (Hayes, 2018).

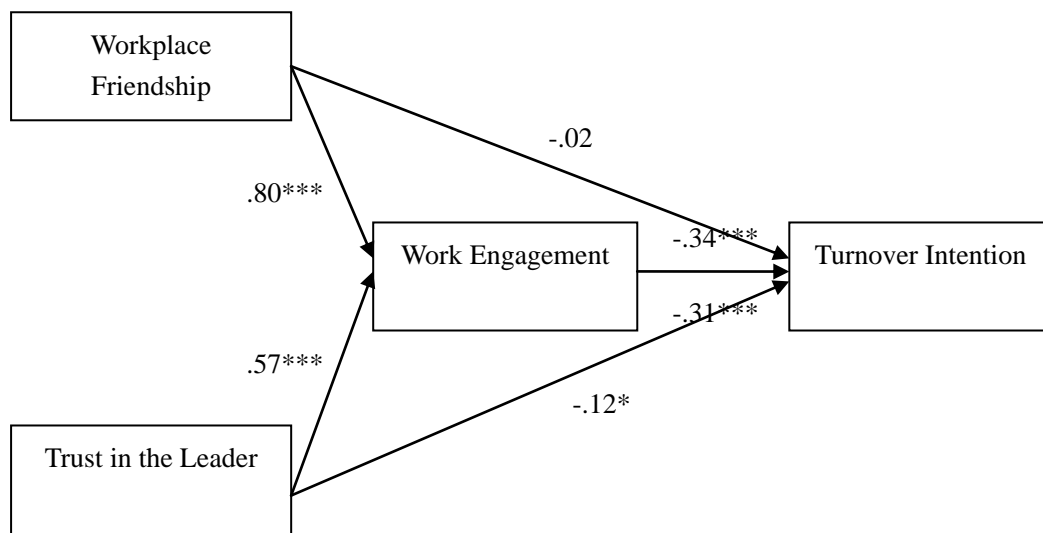


Figure 2. Statistical tests of the hypothesized relationships: H1: Work engagement negatively predicted turnover intention; H2: Workplace friendship positively predicted work engagement; H2a: Work engagement mediated the relationship between workplace friendship and turnover intention; H3: Trust in the leader positively predicted work engagement; H3a: Work engagement mediated the relationship between trust in the leader and turnover intention. Together, the predictors account for 35% (Workplace Friendship Model) and 36% (Trust in the Leader Model) of the variance in turnover intention. Standardized regression coefficients are displayed. * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

Hypothesis 1—Work engagement negatively predicted turnover intention (Workplace Friendship Model, $\beta = -.34$, $SE = .04$, $p < .001$; Trust in the Leader Model, $\beta = -.31$, $SE = .04$, $p < .001$). Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Hypothesis 2—Workplace friendship positively predicted work engagement ($\beta = .80$, $SE = .17$, $p < .001$). Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Hypothesis 2a—Work engagement mediated the relationship between workplace friendship and turnover intention ($\beta = -.34 \times .80 = -.27$, $SE = .07$, $CI95 = -.40$ to $-.15$). Hypothesis 2a was supported.

Hypothesis 3—Trust in the leader positively predicted work engagement ($\beta = .57$, $SE = .11$, $p < .001$). Hypothesis 3 was supported.

Hypothesis 3a—Work engagement mediated the relationship between trust in the leader and turnover intention ($\beta = .57 \times -.31 = -.18$, $SE = .04$, $CI95 = -.26$ to $-.10$). Hypothesis 3a was supported.

5. Discussion

5.1 Contribution to Knowledge

To test the job demands-resources model (Schaufeli, 2017) and refine the work engagement model (Christian et al., 2011) we proposed workplace friendship and trust in the leader as antecedents and turnover intention as a consequence of work engagement. The results of our study show that the tellers' workplace friendship and trust in the leader predicted work engagement, that their work engagement negatively predicted turnover intention, and that work engagement mediated the relationships between workplace friendship and trust in the leader and turnover intention. The results of our study provide a support for the job demands-resources model and a refinement of the work engagement model adding workplace friendship and trust in the leader as antecedents and turnover intention as a consequence of work engagement. Our results indicate that workplace friendship and trust in the leader influence bank tellers' work engagement that in turn reduces their intention to leave their jobs and the banks.

The results of our study support the role of social support in the work engagement model (Christian et al., 2011). Friendship helps adolescents to develop a strong sense of belonging to the schools (Hamm & Faircloth, 2005) and older women to reduce their loneliness (Stevens, Martina, & Westerhof, 2006). Job candidates are likely to receive job offers if they have a friend employed in the organization (Sterling, 2014). Friendship opportunities in organizations have direct effects on job involvement and job satisfaction and indirect effects on organizational commitment and turnover intention (Riordan & Griffeth, 1995), and workplace friendship mediates the relationship of ethical leadership to task performance (Liu, Kwan, Fu, & Mao, 2013). Volunteers' strong friendship is critical to sustaining a defunct newspaper's production for 21 years (Smethers, Bressers, & Mwangi, 2017). Opportunities exist for research on workplace friendship on the acquisition and retention of employees, and its influence on the task and contextual performances.

Leadership is an extremely consequential phenomenon that influences the performance of teams, groups and organizations (Hogan & Kaiser, 2005); the results of our study provide support for the role of leadership in the work engagement model (Christian et al., 2011). Trust in the leader and the extent of the subordinates' belief in the leader have increasingly been used to explain the conditions in which leadership is effective in bringing about individual and organizational outcomes. Thus, trust in the leader mediates the transformational leadership-job satisfaction (Perilla-Toro & Gomez-Ortiz, 2017), paternalistic leadership-ethical climate (Ötken & Cenkci, 2012) and leader-follower exchange-job insecurity (Lawal & Babalola, 2016) relationships. Trust in the leader also mediates the relationships of ethical leadership (Yurtkoru, Ensari, & ErdilekKarabay, 2018), servant leadership (Kashyap & Rangnekar, 2016) and transformational leadership (Pravichai & Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2018) to turnover intention. Our study indicates that trust in the leader influences turnover intention through the mediation of work engagement. Whereas leadership theories deal with the description of leaders and leaders' behaviors, trust in the leader allows for research into the extent of the employees' belief in their leaders. The antecedents and consequences of trust in the leader need be further explored.

5.2 Practical Implications

Researchers tend to examine the moderators and mediators of the work engagement-turnover intention relationships. Thus, consciousness (Agarwal & Gupta, 2018), psychological capital (Manish & Musarrat, 2017), affective commitment (Zhao & Zhao, 2017) moderate, and employee esprit de corps (Siddiqi, 2013) mediate the relationship of work engagement to turnover intention. The results of our study show that workplace friendship and trust in the leader are antecedents of the work engagement-turnover intention relationship. In practical terms our findings imply that to reduce turnover intention among bank employees not only do bank management need to promote friendship among their employees but they also need to help branch managers to cultivate the branch employees' trust. To inspire trust, managers require a behavior repertoire that includes transformational leadership style and polite speech (Pravichai & Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2018).

Limitations and Future Research

The Workplace Friendship Scale consists of two dimensions: Friendship Prevalence and Friendship Opportunities. The use of only the Friendship Prevalence dimension may be the first limitation of our study. Out of consideration for the respondents' convenience we used only the Friendship Prevalence dimension to keep the questionnaire short. The decision to use only the Friendship Prevalence dimension was also due to the Friendship Opportunities dimension items expressing only the opportunities for and not the formation of friendship. We believe the use of only the Friendship Prevalence dimension is justifiable.

The preponderance of female participants may be the second limitation; the generalizability of our results will be limited to white-collar jobs where a large proportion of female employees are found. Future studies on male and blue-collar workers in organizational settings other than banks would further expand the generalization of our findings.

The third limitation of our study involves turnover intention that may be influenced by factors other than workplace friendship or trust in the leader. Low salary, difficult commute to the branch, heavy workload, limited promotion opportunities, factors not covered in this study, may contribute to turnover intention. Although these external factors are antecedents of turnover intention future research may well include them for further clarification.

The fourth limitation of our study is the use of a self-report questionnaire with its attendant risk of common method bias (Conway & Lance, 2010). As the objective of the study was to assess the subordinates' perception of friendship prevalence and trust in the leader a self-report questionnaire was considered a suitable method of data collection. We believe the high level of reliability indices and the factor analysis results ameliorate the risk of common method bias.

6. Conclusions

To provide support for the job demands-resources model and to refine the work engagement model, we proposed workplace friendship and trust in the leader as antecedents of the work engagement-turnover intention relationship and conducted a study among 166 tellers at bank branches in Bangkok, Thailand. The results provide support for the job demands-resources model and work engagement model: workplace friendship and trust in the leader positively predict work engagement; work engagement negatively predicts turnover intention; and work engagement mediates the relationships between workplace friendship and trust in the leader and turnover intention. To reduce turnover intention among tellers, bank management need promote friendship among tellers and advise branch managers to cultivate their subordinates' trust.

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