

# THE EFFECT OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND WORKAHOLISM MEDIATED BY SELF-EFFICACY AND ITS IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE (STUDY ON EMPLOYEES IN SOUTHEAST SULAWESI PROVINCE)

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## Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine: the influence of ethical leadership on employee engagement, the influence of ethical leadership on workaholism, the influence of ethical leadership on self-efficacy, the influence of self-efficacy on employee engagement, the influence of self-efficacy on workaholism, examining the role of self-efficacy in mediating the influence of ethical leadership on employee involvement, the role of self-efficacy in mediating the influence of ethical leadership on workaholism, the influence of ethical leadership on employee performance, the influence of employee involvement on employee performance, the influence of workaholism on employee performance and the influence of self-efficacy on employee performance. The research design is survey research (explanatory survey). The sampling technique used stratified random sampling technique. With a total sample of 377 respondents. The data analysis technique used is SmartPLS (Partial Least Square) version 4.0. The results of the research show that: ethical leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement, ethical leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee workaholism, ethical leadership has a positive and significant effect on self-efficacy, self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement, self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on significant effect on workaholism, self-efficacy is a mediation that has a significant impact (pseudo-mediation) the influence of ethical leadership on employee engagement, self-efficacy is a mediation that has a significant impact (pseudo-mediation) the effect of ethical leadership on workaholism, ethical leadership has an insignificant effect on employee performance, employee engagement has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, workaholism has a positive and significant effect on employee performance and self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Government employees.

**Keywords:** Ethical Leadership, Self-Efficacy, Employee Involvement, Workaholism and Employee Performance.

## INTRODUCTION

Employee performance in every organization is considered as one of the most important concepts. Therefore, one of the most significant challenges in every organization is to improve and enhance organizational and employee performance (Mousakhani, Alvani, Mirza'ee & Muhammadi, 2012). Organizations need constant performance improvement to survive and thrive, and human resources are considered their basic assets and are considered the origin of all forms of change and innovation in the organization (Asgharpoor, 2006). The level of success of an organization in achieving its goals is directly related to the performance of its staff, therefore, the perspective of employees and their performance is considered important to the organization. In line with this, if staff performance is found to be defective there is a possibility that the organization will be challenged and threatened (Mousakhani, Hamidi, & Najafi, 2010). Ethical leadership plays a vital role in enhancing employee productivity in business organizations (Obeidat et al., 2019; Salloum et al., 2018).

Amidst the increasing competition, management and leadership of business organizations need to foster effective examples as far as ethical behavior is concerned (Dhar et al., 2016). Ethical leadership has a positive relationship and impact on organizational performance (Khan et al., 2018). Ethical leadership is multidimensional and involves evaluating employee commitment, psychological well-being of team members, job satisfaction (Alshurideh et al., 2017). Ethical leadership behavior plays a vital role in improving employee attitudes and behaviors (Brown et al., 2005). Ethical leadership increases the significance of the task, which in turn results in improved performance (Piccolo et al., 2010). AlShehhi et al.'s (2021) research found that ethical leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. This is because leaders who implement ethical leadership make employees part of the formulated policies. Thus, it will ensure that they will be able to appreciate and be motivated to work so that their performance improves.

Employee performance is also influenced by employee engagement. Research by Sendawula et al. (2018) found that engagement has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, because employees who are involved are aware of the context of the activities in which they work and work with colleagues to improve performance in their work for the benefit of the organization. Research by Heslina & Syahrani (2021) found that employee engagement has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Many studies have shown a significant relationship between employee engagement and job performance (e.g. Bakker and Bal, 2010; Anitha, 2014; Dajani, 2015), the latter being considered one of the most important employee outcomes in organizational research. Highly engaged employees demonstrate passion for their work, understand the importance of their work and portray loyalty to their organization compared to disengaged employees (Ismail et al., 2018). Intense global competition has made workers increasingly exposed to demanding working conditions. In addition, with advances in communication technology, people can often work outside the office and office hours (Ng et al., 2007). These changes inevitably lead to longer working hours and encourage more workaholic behavior (Clark et al., 2016a). According to Schaufeli, Taris and Bakker (2006) workaholics seem to work hard rather than smart. They create difficulties for themselves and their colleagues, are rigid, inflexible and perfectionist, and do not tend to delegate. This, in the long run, can lead to conflict and friction in the workplace, resulting in low social support and, subsequently, low performance. Balducci et al.'s (2020) study found that workaholism has a negative effect on employee performance. The indirect negative effect of workaholism on performance, through emotional exhaustion, is stronger when supervisor recognition is low (Sandrin et al., 2019).

Individuals with high self-efficacy exert more effort on tasks and persist longer in the face of obstacles, which in turn increases their chances of success. In contrast, individuals with low self-efficacy tend to have low aspirations for pursuing their goals and fail to complete tasks (Feltz, Short, & Sullivan, 2008). Self-efficacy is thought to correlate with employee engagement (Hirschi, 2012). Employees with high self-efficacy are intrinsically motivated to pursue their goals and believe that they are capable of meeting the demands of the job. This leads to high engagement in their work (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). In line with personal resource theory, employees who have personal resources have confidence in their abilities, which leads to goal achievement and impacts employee engagement (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007).

## LITERATUR REVIEW

### Ethical Leadership

From the perspective of the Western tradition, the development of ethical theory dates back to Plato (427–347 BCE) and Aristotle (384–322 BCE). The word ethics is rooted in the Greek word *ethos*, which translates to "custom," "behavior," or "character." Ethics deals with the kinds of values and morals that individuals or societies find desirable or appropriate. Ethical leadership is defined as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate behavior through personal actions and interpersonal relationships and the promotion of such behavior to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement and decision making" (Brown et al., 2005). Ethical leadership is most commonly defined in light of the fact that ethical leaders must demonstrate normatively appropriate behavior, and ethical leadership is distinguished from other leadership styles by its emphasis on moral governance (Brown & Treviño, 2006). De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2009) define ethical leadership as the process by which a leader influences group activities to achieve organizational goals in a socially responsible manner. More specifically, this definition assumes that a leader is ethical, moral and caring and their actions should benefit all stakeholders including followers, the organization and society (Hartog, 2015). Similarly, according to Gini (1997), a leader will be considered ethical who does not intend to harm others and always respects all rights of affected parties. Similarly, Kanungo (2001) argues that ethical leaders must engage in right actions and avoid actions that are harmful to others and their actions must be based on altruistic rather than selfish motives.

### Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is a person's evaluation of their ability or competence to perform a task, achieve a goal or overcome obstacles (Baron & Byrne, 2004). Bandura also added that self-efficacy is the result of cognitive processes that occur in an individual. Self-efficacy is an individual's evaluation of their ability or competence to perform a task, achieve a goal or overcome a challenge. Self-efficacy is considered as one of these factors. Self-efficacy is defined as a person's belief in his or her ability to organize and execute certain behaviors necessary to produce a particular achievement (Bosscher & Smith, 1997). Efficacy refers to the belief in the extent to which a person is able to estimate his/her ability to carry out or perform the tasks required to achieve a particular outcome. Belief in all of these abilities includes self-confidence, adaptability, cognitive capacity, intelligence and the capacity to act in stressful situations. Self-efficacy will develop gradually and continuously as abilities and experiences increase (Ormrod, 2008). Self-efficacy does not just happen. Efficacy judgment is a cognitive process by which individuals use sources of information to judge their self-efficacy. These sources include performance achievement, vicarious experience, forms of social persuasion, and physiological/emotional indices (Bandura, 1977a; Schunk & Usher, 2017). Performance achievement is the most reliable source because it indicates what a person can accomplish. But people also judge their self-efficacy based on their observations of others.

### Employee Engagement

Kahn (1990:894) defines employee engagement as 'the utilization of organizational members' to play a role in their work; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during the performance of their roles. Harter et al. (2002:269) state that engagement is an individual's involvement

and satisfaction with and enthusiasm for work. Saks (2006:602) defines employee engagement as a distinct and unique construct consisting of cognitive, emotional and behavioral components related to an individual's role. Slatten and Mehmetoglu (2011) defined employee engagement as the simultaneous work and self-expression that one enjoys in task behaviors that promote connection to work and others, personal presence (physical, cognitive, and emotional) and active full role performance. May et.al. (2004) viewed employee engagement as multifaceted, consisting of two or more separate components. Britt (2005) proposed a single scale of self-involvement in work, defined as an individual feeling a sense of responsibility and commitment to a performance domain such that performance is important to the individual (Britt et al., 2005). Engagement as psychological presence but further states that it involves two important components: attention and absorption. Attention refers to cognitive availability and the amount of time a person spends thinking about the role while absorption means being engrossed in the role and refers to the intensity of one's focus on the role (Rothbard, 2001:656). Employee engagement as emotional and intellectual commitment to the organization (Saks, 2006) and a representation of the level of personal commitment that employees are willing to make or invest in their work (Macey and Schneider, 2008).

### **Workaholism**

Workaholism was first defined by Oates (1971) as “an uncontrollable compulsion or need to work incessantly”. From a clinical perspective, workaholism is considered a true behavioral addiction and, in line with this idea, the term workaholism has often been used to identify the phenomenon. Following Andreassen et al. (2018) consider workaholism as a synonym for work addiction. Furthermore, a consensus has been reached that workaholism is a genuine and persistent problem whose main feature is compulsive hard work. In fact, earlier concepts of workaholism also included work enjoyment (Spence & Robins, 1992). Workaholism is commonly described as “a tendency to work excessively and be obsessed with work” (Schaufeli et al., 2009). In general, previous research has shown that workaholism is primarily associated with adverse outcomes (Clark et al., 2016a), such as reduced job satisfaction (Dordoni et al., 2019), increased job burnout (Schaufeli et al., 2008), decreased work-related health (Langseth-Eide, 2019), and greater marital discord (Robinson et al., 2001). However, more recently, researchers have questioned the prevailing belief that workaholism is bad, suggesting that it can positively affect employees. For example, Ng et al. (2007) have hinted at possible positive effects of workaholism, such as increased productivity and career success. Oates (1971) defined workaholism as the phenomenon of working beyond reasonable expectations, leading to workaholism, while Schaufeli et al. (2009) defines it as “a tendency to work too hard and be obsessed with work, which manifests itself in compulsive working.

### **Employee Performance**

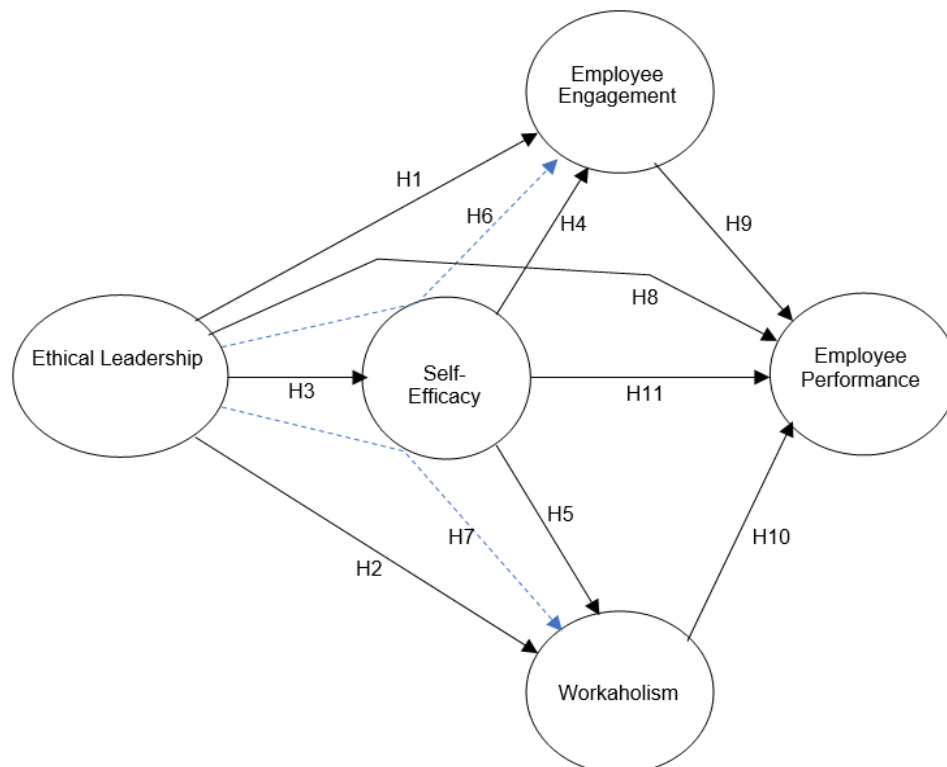
According to Robbins & Judge (2018) that performance is a combination of effectiveness and efficiency in carrying out core job tasks. All of these types of performance relate to the core tasks and responsibilities of a job and are often directly related to the functions listed in the formal job description. According to Benardin and Rusell (1998) performance is the recording of the impacts produced on specific job functions or activities during a certain period of time. According to Wood et al (2011) performance is a concise measurement of the quantity and quality of contributions of

tasks performed by individuals or groups to the work of a unit or organization. Performance is the level of success in carrying out tasks and the ability to achieve predetermined goals (Gibson et al (2012). According to Mathis & Jackson (2011) performance is the achievement or achievement of work results achieved by employees based on predetermined standards and assessment measures. Rivai (2004) stated that performance is the willingness of a person or group of people to do an activity and perfect it according to their responsibilities with the expected results. Moehariono (2009) stated that performance is a description of the level of achievement of the implementation of a program or policy in realizing targets, objectives, visions and missions. Mangkunegara (2000) stated that employee performance (work achievement) is the result of work in terms of quality and quantity achieved by an employee in carrying out his duties according to the responsibilities given to him. Effective performance appraisal focuses on work results that are directly related to the organization's mission and objectives so that they can later support the implementation of business strategies. This will be realized if employees understand the dimensions being evaluated, the aspects being assessed from their positions, and they view the assessment as being carried out openly and validly. In this case, interaction is needed between the assessor and the individual being assessed in the process of determining the dimensions of activities, assessment standards and assessment methods play a very important role.

### **Hypothesis**

- H1: Ethical leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement
- H2: Ethical leadership has a positive and significant effect on workaholism
- H3: Ethical leadership has a significant and positive influence on self-efficacy
- H4: Self-efficacy has a significant and positive effect on employee engagement
- H5: Self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on workaholism
- H6: Self-efficacy plays a role in mediating the influence of ethical leadership on employee engagement
- H7: Ethical leadership has a positive and significant effect on workaholism mediated by self-efficacy
- H8: Ethical leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance
- H9: Employee engagement has a positive and significant effect on employee performance
- H10: Workaholism has a positive and significant effect on employee performance
- H11: Self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on employee performance





**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted at the Regional Apparatus Organization of Southeast Sulawesi Province. The reason for choosing this location is because the Provincial Regional Apparatus is an element that assists the Regional Head in organizing Regional Government consisting of the Regional Secretariat, DPRD Secretariat, Regional Services, Regional Agencies and Regional Technical Institutions of Southeast Sulawesi Province which are seen as a reflection of the implementation of government administration in Southeast Sulawesi.

The research design is a survey research (explanatory survey). The sampling technique uses stratified random sampling. With a sample size of 377 respondents. The data analysis technique used is SmartPLS (Partial Least Square) version 4.0.

### Operational Definition of Variables

Ethical leadership (X) is a way for leadership elements to motivate subordinates by providing services to subordinates, empowering subordinates, helping to develop the capacity of subordinates to achieve common goals. Self-efficacy (Z) is the assessment of Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Government employees regarding their ability or competence to carry out tasks, achieve goals, or overcome obstacles.

Employee involvement (Y.1) is employee participation by using all of the worker's abilities aimed at increasing their role in their work; working and expressing themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally while carrying out their role so that they are able to understand their role in working.

Workaholism (Y.2) is the tendency of employees to work too hard, work long hours, work beyond expectations and be constantly obsessed with work, often driven by work

success. Employee performance (Y.3) is a measurement of the work results of each employee based on aspects of quantity, quality within a certain period of time as well as every behavior, attitude or action carried out by the employee which is in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations.

## RESEARCH RESULT

### Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

After all indicators are declared valid, the next step in testing convergent validity is to look at the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value where the value must be above 0.5 (Ghozali, 2012). The results of the AVE value calculation are presented in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: AVE**

Variable	AVE
Self Efficacy (Z)	0.761
Workaholism (Y.2)	0.711
Ethical Leadership (X)	0.750
Job Engagement (Y.1)	0.760
Performance (Y.3)	0.695

Source: Data processing results via Smart PLS 4, 2024

Table 1 shows that the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for all variables is above 0.5 so that the requirements for convergent validity testing have been met.

### Reliability Test

Model measurement is also carried out by testing the reliability of a construct (Ghozali, 2012). According to Ghozali (2012), reliability measurement can be done by looking at the Composite Reliability value in the SmartPLS output where the Composite Reliability value must be greater than 0.7. If the composite reliability value of the construct gives results above 0.7, it can be said that the indicators of each construct are reliable and can represent the actual measurements (Ghozali, 2012).

The results of the composite reliability between constructs and their indicators can be seen in Table 2 as follows:

**Table 2: Composite Reliability**

Variable	Composite Reliability
Ethical Leadership (X)	0.842
Self-Efficacy (Z)	0.862
Employee Engagement (Y.1)	0.862
Workaholism (Y.2)	0.874
Employee Performance (Y.3)	0.868

Source: Data processing results via Smart PLS 4, 2024

The composite reliability value as seen in table 5.14 above shows that each construct has good reliability, which is above 0.7. Where according to Ghozali (2012) a construct is said to have good reliability if its value is above 0.7.

In table 5.14 above, it can be seen that the value for the composite reliability of the ethical leadership construct is 0.842, the self-efficacy construct is 0.862, the employee involvement construct is 0.862, the workaholism construct is 0.874, and the employee

performance construct is 0.868. Referring to Ghozali's opinion (2012), the results of the composite reliability of each construct are considered good and can be used in the analysis process because they have met the reliability requirements.

### Q-Square Value

Goodness of fit Model is used to determine the extent of the ability of endogenous variables to explain the diversity of exogenous variables, or in other words to determine the extent of the contribution of exogenous variables to endogenous variables. Goodness of fit model in PLS analysis is carried out using Q-Square predictive relevance (Q<sup>2</sup>). The results of the Goodness of fit Model have been summarized in Table 3 below:

**Table 3: R Square**

Variabel	R-Square
Efikasi Diri (Z)	0,806
Keterlibatan Pegawai (Y1)	0,569
Workaholism (Y2)	0,721

Source: Data processing results via Smart PLS 4, 2024

$$Q^2 = 1 - (1 - R_1^2) * (1 - R_2^2)$$

The calculation of Q-square using the R-square data in the two models above can be done as follows:

$$Q2 = 1 - (1 - 0.806) * (1 - 0.569)$$

$$Q2 = 1 - (0.194) * (0.431)$$

$$Q2 = 1 - 0.084$$

$$Q2 = 0.916$$

$$Q2 = 1 - (1 - R_{12}) * (1 - R_{32})$$

The calculation of Q-square using the R-square data in the two models above can be done as follows:

$$Q2 = 1 - (1 - 0.806) * (1 - 0.721)$$

$$Q2 = 1 - (0.194) * (0.279)$$

$$Q2 = 1 - 0.054$$

$$Q2 = 0.946$$

The role model of self-efficacy in mediating the influence of ethical leadership on workaholism provides a Q-square value of 0.946 which can be interpreted that the workaholism variable can be explained by the direct influence of ethical leadership and the mediating role of self-efficacy of 94.6% while the remaining 5.4% is explained by other variables outside the model.

### Direct Hypothesis Testing

Based on the results of the bootstrapping process, the direct effect coefficient value for this research model is obtained, which is presented in the following table 4:



**Table 4: Summary of Results of Direct Influence Path Analysis**

Research Variables			Original Sample	P-Value	Information
Ethical Leadership (X)	→	Employee Engagement (Y1)	0,195	0,001	Accepted
Ethical Leadership (X)	→	<i>Workaholism</i> (Y2)	0,130	0,011	Accepted
Ethical Leadership (X)	→	Self Efficacy (Z)	0,216	0,000	Accepted
Self Efficacy (Z)	→	Employee Engagement (Y1)	0,273	0,000	Accepted
Self Efficacy (Z)	→	<i>Workaholism</i> (Y2)	0,194	0,001	Accepted
Ethical Leadership (X)	→	Employee Performance (Y3)	0,062	0,243	<b>Not Accepted</b>
Employee Engagement (X2)	→	Employee Performance (Y3)	0,144	0,003	Accepted
<i>Workaholism</i> (Y2)	→	Employee Performance (Y3)	0,250	0,000	Accepted
Self Efficacy (Z)	→	Employee Performance (Y3)	0,283	0,000	Accepted

Source: Data processing results via Smart PLS 4, 2024

### Indirect Hypothesis Testing (Mediation)

This study, in addition to analyzing the direct influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables and moderating variables, also analyzes the indirect influence through the mediating role of job satisfaction variables on the influence of training on employee performance and competence on employee performance. The results of the indirect influence analysis can be presented in the following table 5:

**Table 5: Results of Indirect Influence Analysis (Mediation)**

Research Variables				Original Sample	P-Value	Information	
Ethical Leadership (X)	→	Self Efficacy (Z)	→	Employee Engagement (Y1)	0,059	0,000	Accepted
Ethical Leadership (X)	→	Self Efficacy (Z)	→	<i>Workaholism</i> (Y2)	0,042	0,009	Accepted

Source: Data processing results via Smart PLS 4, 2024

## DISCUSSION

### Ethical Leadership Has a Significant Influence on the Engagement of Government Employees in Southeast Sulawesi Province

The results of the analysis show that ethical leadership has a positive and significant influence on employee engagement in the Regional Government of Southeast Sulawesi Province. This can be seen from the positive path coefficient value, indicating a unidirectional relationship between ethical leadership and employee engagement, as well as job satisfaction. Ethical leadership that creates and supports ethical behavior in the work environment is an important factor in increasing employee engagement. The majority of respondents in this study agreed that their leaders exercise fair leadership, are objective in evaluation, and are responsible and caring towards subordinates. In addition, ethical leadership that emphasizes fairness, integrity, and caring behavior also encourages employee enthusiasm to be more actively involved in their work. According to Brown and Mitchell (2010), ethical

leadership style is very important in encouraging ethical behavior in the workplace and transmitting the ethical values of the institution. Research also supports the view that integrity and fair treatment of employees are the foundation of ethical leadership, which has an impact on increasing employee trust and engagement (Brown, Treviño, and Harrison, 2005). The results of this study are consistent with the findings of various previous studies, such as those conducted by Wibawa and Takahashi (2021), Agha et al. (2017), Lama et al. (2019), and Endang Prihatin et al. (2021), all of whom concluded that ethical leadership has a positive effect on employee engagement. Overall, the implementation of ethical leadership in the Regional Government of Southeast Sulawesi Province has been going well, but still needs to be improved to reach the very good category.

### **Ethical Leadership Has a Significant Influence on Workaholism of Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Government Employees**

This discussion highlights the importance of the role of ethical leadership in organizations, especially in influencing workaholism, which is the tendency to work excessively and compulsively. Research shows that ethical leadership involving ethical guidelines, fairness, integrity, and caring behavior can increase the tendency of workaholism among employees. This study also highlights that most respondents expressed satisfaction with the implementation of ethical leadership, with good average values on various indicators such as fairness, integrity, and caring behavior. The fairness indicator has the highest score, indicating that the leadership element is considered capable of implementing justice well. Ethical leadership has been shown to create a work environment that supports work-life balance, which in turn can reduce the tendency for excessive workaholism and maintain positive workaholism.

This study supports the view that ethical leadership is not only adhering to a formal code of ethics, but also reflects attitudes, values, and daily behaviors that demonstrate a consistent commitment to high moral standards. This is in accordance with Bandura's (1977, 1986) social learning theory which states that individuals learn by imitating the behavior of attractive and credible models, in this case ethical leaders. Ethical leaders, through their attractiveness and credibility, become role models who influence subordinates to behave ethically and set high performance standards, which in turn can increase the tendency for workaholism.

The results of this study are consistent with the research of Mahran et al. (2023), which found that ethical leadership has a positive and significant effect on workaholism, where ethical leaders tend to encourage subordinates to work harder and longer, thereby increasing the risk of workaholism. However, this result contradicts the research of Wibawa & Takahashi (2021), which concluded that ethical leadership has a positive but insignificant effect on workaholism. This finding suggests that strong ethical leadership can minimize the risk of excessive workaholism and create a healthy balance between work and personal life.

### **Ethical Leadership Has a Significant Influence on the Self-Efficacy of Government Employees in Southeast Sulawesi Province**

Ethical leadership is an approach that emphasizes integrity and the application of strong ethical standards, which not only affects leaders but also subordinates. This type of leadership has been shown to have a positive and significant impact on employee self-efficacy at various levels of the organization. Ethical leaders tend to make decisions based on moral values and correct principles, which in turn increases

employee confidence in supporting and implementing these decisions, because they feel their contributions are in line with the moral goals of the organization (Brown et al., 2005; Bandura, 1986). The results of the study showed that in the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Government, ethical leadership had a positive effect on employee self-efficacy, with a path coefficient of 0.216 and a P-Value of 0.000, indicating a significant effect at the 95% confidence level. This shows that fair, integrity-based, and caring leadership practices have a significant impact on increasing employee self-efficacy, because they feel more supported in making decisions and facing challenges (Laschinger et al., 2015). According to the social learning theory explained by Brown et al. (2005), for leaders to be seen as ethical, they must be attractive and credible role models for their followers. The majority of respondents in this study showed a positive perception of ethical leadership, with an average score of 4.16, where fairness and integrity of leaders were the highest indicators (Kouzes et al., 2002). This finding implies that organizations need to promote and support ethical values-based leadership practices to enhance employee self-efficacy, which will ultimately contribute to the achievement of organizational goals (Baghestani et al., 2019; Zarezadeh et al., 2021).

### **Self-Efficacy Has a Significant Influence on the Engagement of Government Employees in Southeast Sulawesi Province**

Self-efficacy is an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in achieving goals, overcoming challenges, and dealing with difficult situations, which includes aspects of initiative, effort, and persistence. High self-efficacy plays a significant role in increasing work engagement or \*employee engagement\*. As stated by McKeown and Cochrane (2017 in Pratomo, 2022), self-efficacy is a significant predictor of work engagement. An individual's belief in their ability to cope with tasks and achieve goals contributes to increased motivation, resilience, and consistency in the workplace, which ultimately strengthens their engagement. The results of a study in the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Government showed that self-efficacy had a positive and significant effect on employee engagement with a path coefficient value of 0.273 and a P-Value of 0.000, indicating that an increase in self-efficacy is significantly related to an increase in employee engagement. In addition, dimensions of self-efficacy such as initiative, effort, and persistence have also been shown to have a significant positive impact on employee engagement. The self-efficacy theory proposed by Bandura (1977, 1986, 1997) explains that efficacy beliefs influence the types of activities chosen, the level of effort expended, and persistence in the face of difficulties. Strong perceptions of self-efficacy support proactive motivation and work behavior, as well as resilience in the face of challenges. This study emphasizes the importance of developing self-efficacy as part of a human resource management strategy to increase employee engagement, which in turn will increase productivity and work quality in the organization. Previous studies conducted by Mäkikangas et al. (2013) and Devina and Sito (2022) also support these findings, showing that self-efficacy has a positive and significant relationship with work engagement.

### **Self-Efficacy Has a Significant Influence on Workaholism of Government Employees in Southeast Sulawesi Province**

The theory of self-efficacy developed by Albert Bandura emphasizes that an individual's belief in their ability to complete a task or achieve a goal has a significant influence on various aspects of life, including in the work environment. Research

shows that high self-efficacy can increase workaholism, which is a person's tendency to be excessively involved in work. High self-efficacy is reflected through three main indicators, namely initiative, effort, and persistence. These three indicators contribute positively to workaholism, especially among Civil Servants in the Regional Government of Southeast Sulawesi Province. In this context, the efforts made by employees to complete their tasks play an important role in increasing their involvement in work. Employees with high self-efficacy tend to be more proactive, persistent, and have a strong belief in their ability to overcome challenges. However, it is important to remember that although high self-efficacy can support performance, wise time management and support for work-life balance are essential to prevent the negative impacts of workaholism, such as fatigue and excessive stress. This research is supported by previous theories and findings that show a positive relationship between self-efficacy and workaholism (Bandura, 1997; Burke, 2006; Turner et al., 2002).

### **Ethical Leadership Has No Significant Influence on the Performance of Government Employees in Southeast Sulawesi Province**

This discussion describes ethical leadership, which is defined as a leadership style that motivates subordinates by providing service, empowering, and helping to develop the capacity of subordinates to achieve common goals. This leadership emphasizes behavior that is consistent with high moral and ethical values, such as transparency, fairness, and integrity. However, the results of the study indicate that ethical leadership in the Regional Apparatus environment of Southeast Sulawesi Province has a positive but insignificant effect on employee performance. This can be seen from the test results which show a path coefficient of 0.062 with a P-Value of 0.243, which is greater than the significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ , indicating that the effect is not statistically significant.

Several factors that cause this insignificance include individual factors, where intrinsic motivation, technical expertise, and work environment have a more dominant role in influencing performance. In addition, the organizational context such as organizational culture and leadership structure also influence the extent to which ethical leadership impacts employee performance. In this context, the equalization of administrative positions into functional positions in Southeast Sulawesi Province based on the Regulation of the Minister of PAN-RB Number 17 of 2021 is considered one of the factors affecting performance. This equalization was carried out in a hurry so that many functional officials were appointed to positions that did not match their competencies and educational backgrounds, which ultimately caused dissatisfaction and confusion in the field.

Ethical leadership is also considered to have less impact because of the gap between structural officials who have served for a long time and those who have just been appointed, who are both given the same credit points. In addition, the absence of a counseling forum for functional officials resulting from the equalization of positions also worsens the situation, increases injustice, and gives rise to the term "functional officials who feel structural" because many are still carrying out structural work. This shows that although ethical leadership is important, its implementation in organizations does not always go well, which ultimately reduces its impact on employee performance.

This study supports the results of Kumalasari et al. (2023) which found that ethical leadership has a positive but insignificant effect on performance. In addition, these results reject previous studies that stated that ethical leadership has a significant effect on performance, such as research by Al Khajeh (2018), Ahmad (2018), and AlShehhi et al. (2021). These results are also consistent with research by Tanoto and Tangkawarow (2023) and Sugianingrat et al. (2023), which stated that ethical leadership does not have a significant effect on performance.

### **Self-Efficacy Mediates the Effect of Ethical Leadership on Employee Engagement in Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Government**

Self-efficacy is a person's belief in their ability to measure, organize, and carry out tasks entrusted to them, which in turn increases employee engagement in work. Mumford et al. (2000) mention three key leadership competencies, namely problem solving, social judgment, and knowledge skills. This skill approach is different from the trait approach, which provides a broader perspective on leadership. Self-efficacy is closely related to employee engagement in the Regional Government of Southeast Sulawesi Province, which is measured by indicators of initiative, effort, and persistence. Based on the analysis of Hypothesis 1, self-efficacy has a significant effect on employee engagement, while the results of the analysis of Hypothesis 3 show that ethical leadership also has a significant effect on self-efficacy, which then affects employee engagement. Ethical leadership, which emphasizes moral values, integrity, and fairness, has a positive effect on self-efficacy, which in turn increases employee engagement. Leaders who practice ethical behavior tend to be role models for subordinates, which can increase employee trust and engagement. According to trait theory, as outlined by Carlyle (1840) and Harrison (2018), characteristics such as initiative, tenacity, energy, and charisma are important in leadership. In addition, ethical leadership can facilitate employees to take initiative and responsibility, which increases their self-efficacy. Self-efficacy also functions as a mediator between ethical leadership and employee engagement. However, the results of the analysis showed that the indirect effect of ethical leadership on employee engagement through self-efficacy was still smaller than its direct effect, indicating that self-efficacy is only a pseudo-mediator. The results of this study are consistent with Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory which states that self-efficacy beliefs influence individual motivation and actions, as well as other empirical studies showing that high self-efficacy results in greater effort and persistence (Consiglio et al., 2016; Llorens et al., 2007; Salanova et al., 2011). Although self-efficacy mediation is not a full mediation, the role of self-efficacy is still significant in strengthening the relationship between ethical leadership and employee engagement (Ashfaq et al., 2021).

### **Self-Efficacy Mediates the Effect of Ethical Leadership on Workaholism of Government Employees in Southeast Sulawesi Province**

Ethical leadership in the Regional Government of Southeast Sulawesi Province has a significant influence on employee workaholism. The application of the principles of justice, ethical guidelines, integrity, and concern for the welfare of subordinates by leaders can create a work environment that encourages employees to work harder. However, this can also increase the tendency for employees to experience workaholism if it is not balanced with clear boundary settings. The results of the study indicate that although self-efficacy has not been the main mediator between ethical leadership and workaholism, this variable has a significant direct influence on



employee workaholism. In addition, the application of the core values of ASN BerAKHLAK which include aspects of service, accountability, competence, harmony, loyalty, adaptability, and collaboration by leaders is considered quite good and plays a role in increasing employee dedication and commitment. Although the analysis shows that the influence of ethical leadership on workaholism through self-efficacy is not a full mediation, the overall influence is still significant. These results differ from previous research by Wibawa & Takahashi (2021), which concluded that self-efficacy does not moderate the relationship between ethical leadership and work engagement or workaholism.

### **Employee Engagement Has a Significant Influence on the Performance of Employees in the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Government**

Employee engagement refers to the active participation of employees by utilizing their full physical, cognitive, and emotional capabilities to improve performance and contribution at work. High engagement is closely related to improving overall organizational performance, because engaged employees tend to be more motivated, eager to innovate, and committed to achieving organizational goals. Research shows that employee engagement has a positive effect on employee performance through several indicators, namely enthusiasm, dedication, and absorption. The path coefficient shows a positive value, with a p-value of 0.003, which means that employee engagement is significant in improving employee performance at the Regional Government of Southeast Sulawesi Province (Byrne, 2015). Research also found that enthusiasm is related to achieving work goals, dedication increases consistency of achievement, and absorption facilitates task efficiency (Parker & Griffin, 2011). The results of the study showed that dedication scored the highest, indicating high employee commitment to work and the organization, while absorption showed the lowest score, indicating a need to strengthen employees' emotional and cognitive connections with their work (Truss et al., 2013; Memon et al., 2020). These results support the theory that employee engagement drives higher performance by creating positive emotions and increasing motivation (Rothbard, 2001; Saks, 2006). In addition, fair performance appraisals, participation in decision-making, career development opportunities, and recognition and rewards also play an important role in increasing employee engagement and their performance (Eschleman et al., 2014; Gheisari et al., 2014). Previous studies also support these findings, showing that employee engagement has a positive and significant effect on performance, as stated by Stairs and Galpin (2010), Bakker and Bal (2010), and Gorgievski et al. (2010).

### **Workaholism Has a Significant Influence on Employee Performance**

Workaholism, or the tendency to work excessively and be obsessed with work, has a complex impact on employee performance. In the context of human resource management, workaholism is often described as the tendency to work excessively hard with long working hours and be obsessed with work. High involvement in work can improve employee performance through high persistence, consistency, and dedication. Employees who experience workaholism tend to show strong commitment and high productivity in the short term. However, the long-term impacts can be risky, including chronic fatigue, high stress, and decreased quality of life. Research shows that workaholism can have a positive effect on employee performance by increasing work goal achievement and positive work behaviors. Conversely, if not managed properly, workaholism can lead to decreased quality of work, creativity, work-life

balance, and mental health. Therefore, it is important for organizations to implement policies that support a healthy work-life balance and promote a culture that cares about employee well-being. The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Schaufeli et al. (2009) which shows that workaholism can have positive and negative effects on employee performance, as well as operant learning theory which states that workaholism can be formed through operant conditioning (Skinner, 1974). Previous research also supports the view that workaholism can have a positive effect on employee performance, as shown by Mahran et al. (2022) and Al-Mado & Mohsin Elewe (2019).

### **Self-Efficacy Has a Significant Influence on the Performance of Government Employees in Southeast Sulawesi Province**

Self-efficacy, which is a person's belief in their ability to achieve goals and overcome challenges, plays a crucial role in employee performance. According to Bandura (1986) and Locke & Latham (2004), self-efficacy includes initiative, effort, and persistence, which positively affect employee performance. Research shows that employees with high self-efficacy are more confident and effective in facing complex tasks and achieving organizational goals. The results of research at the Regional Government of Southeast Sulawesi Province revealed that self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, with a path coefficient estimate of 0.283 and a P-Value of 0.003. Employees who have high initiative tend to be more proactive in completing tasks and setting ambitious work goals. Consistent efforts improve work results and goal achievement, while persistence helps employees stay committed despite difficulties. Research also confirms that high self-efficacy is related to better employee performance, in accordance with leadership expectations (Bosscher & Smith, 1997; Sherer et al., 1982). This is in line with previous findings showing that self-efficacy has a positive effect on employee performance (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1997; Judge et al., 2007; Carter et al., 2018; Yagil et al., 2023; Pratomo, 2022; Darmawan et al., 2021). Self-efficacy that includes initiative, effort, and persistence has been shown to improve employee performance by meeting or exceeding standards set by leaders.

### **CONCLUSION**

Ethical leadership has been shown to have a positive and significant effect on employee engagement, workaholism, and self-efficacy in the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Government. Ethical leadership, which involves ethical guidelines, fairness, integrity, and caring behavior, increases employee engagement with the main indicators being fairness in assignments, performance evaluations, and rewards. Ethical leadership also strengthens workaholism, which is the tendency to work excessively and compulsively. Self-efficacy, which involves initiative, effort, and persistence, has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement and workaholism. However, self-efficacy does not function as a significant mediator in the relationship between ethical leadership and employee engagement and workaholism. In addition, ethical leadership does not show a significant effect on employee performance, indicating that ethical leadership has a weak impact in this context. In contrast, employee engagement and workaholism have been shown to have a positive and significant effect on employee performance, with dedication and the tendency to work compulsively as key indicators. Self-efficacy also contributes significantly to employee performance, especially through the effort indicator, which reflects

confidence in the ability and willingness to overcome challenges. Because the ethical leadership variable has an insignificant influence on performance, this variable is the main one in this study, but it was found that it did not affect performance improvement. Therefore, it is recommended for further researchers who will conduct research on the influence of ethical leadership to develop this research variable on different objects by adding other variables including work commitment, motivation, competence and job satisfaction variables. For further researchers, it is suggested that they can develop this research model by adding several exogenous variables as well as intervening or moderating variables.

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