

## The Antecedents of Intention to Stay among Millenials: Work Engagement as Mediator

### Anteseden Intensi Menetap pada Generasi Milenial: Keterikatan Kerja sebagai Mediator

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#### **Abstract**

*Study on millennial generation is essential to conduct since in the near future the millenials will dominate the workforce and hold strategic positions in industry. According to references, millenials are well-known for their reluctance to stay working in one place for a long-time period. Many speculations have arisen to explain the issue, whether it is caused by their positive as well as the negative characteristics. This study aimed to investigate the factors affecting millennial's intention to stay. Three levels of context were involved as researched variables, namely work passion, quality of work life, and work engagement as mediator. Quantitative and non-experimental study was applied to test the hypotheses. Using convenience sampling technique, 125 millennial workers in Jakarta, Indonesia, were recruited and completed the online questionnaires. The questionnaires to measure the researched variables are Intention to Stay Scale, Work Passion Scale, Quality of Work Life Scale, and Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES). Regression analysis reported that intention to stay was significantly affected by work passion and quality of work life. Moreover, work engagement was also proven to be a significant mediator that bridged the association between intention to stay and both of independent variables, namely work passion and quality of work life.*

**Keywords:** *intention to stay, millenials, quality of work life, work engagement, work passion*

#### **Abstrak**

Penelitian mengenai generasi milenial dinilai penting untuk dilakukan mengingat dalam beberapa tahun ke depan angkatan kerja akan didominasi oleh generasi milenial dan mereka akan menduduki posisi-posisi strategis di dunia industri. Menurut berbagai referensi, generasi milenial dikenal dengan keengganannya untuk bekerja di satu tempat dalam waktu yang lama. Banyak dugaan yang muncul berkaitan dengan faktor penyebab dari fenomena ini, terutama mengenai karakter generasi milenial, baik yang positif maupun negatif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi *intention to*

*stay* karyawan generasi milenial, dengan melibatkan tiga variabel sebagai prediktor bagi terbentuknya *intention to stay*, yaitu *work passion*, *quality of work life*, dan *work engagement* sebagai mediator. Metode kuantitatif non-eksperimental diaplikasikan untuk menguji hipotesis yang diajukan. Teknik sampling *convenience* digunakan dan berhasil merekrut 125 orang partisipan, yaitu karyawan generasi milenial yang bekerja di Jakarta, Indonesia. Kuesioner yang digunakan untuk mengukur variabel-variabel penelitian yaitu Intention to Stay Scale, Work Passion Scale, Quality of Work Life Scale, dan Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES). Hasil analisis regresi menghasilkan kesimpulan bahwa *intention to stay* dipengaruhi secara signifikan oleh peran *work passion* dan *quality of work life*. Selanjutnya, *work engagement* juga terbukti secara signifikan dapat berperan sebagai mediator yang menjembatani *intention to stay* dengan kedua variabel independen, yaitu *work passion* dan *quality of work life*.

**Kata Kunci:** generasi milenial, intensi menetap, keterikatan kerja, kualitas kehidupan kerja, *work passion*,

## Introduction

In the era of VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity), organisations strive even harder to achieve their success. Consequently, organisations are required to exhibit an outstanding performance to stay competitive. This objective can only be attained if the organisations are able to retain their high performing employees. The implementation of excellent human resource management is one of the ways to ensure the retention of their employees. This practice has been conducted for quite a long time to prevent the high cost of employees leaving the organisation. Presenting the fact, it was stated that the loss of organisation productivity can reach up to \$1.8 trillion per year when employees leave (Charaba, 2023). Moreover, the impact of employee turnover also includes high costs of recruiting, hiring, training and acquiring new employees, productivity loss during the search of replacement and retraining, loss of high performers, and disruption of social and communication structures (Mobley, 1977). Aside of financial loss, it reduces employees' morale in essence that losing colleagues tends to cause frustration, anger, and burnout (Heinz, 2022). The organisation will have to re-organize its resources so that business plans and goals will continue to stay the course. These issues will lead to poor individual performance and will affect severely on the achievement of organisational success.

It was recorded that in 2020 Indonesia had a total of 270,02 million citizens. Moreover, it stated that 26% of its population is generation of millennial. Generation of millennial is defined as individuals born in 1977 to 1997 (W et al., 2020). Millennials are often described as individuals who are always familiar and in contact with the advance technology, such as smartphone, social media, electronic mails, and text messages (Freeman, 2022). In addition, they also opt not to work under-pressure and prefer not to make any complication. Other references added that one of millennial's characteristics is low attachment towards organisations (Prayitno et al., 2022). This is supported by Dale Carnegie's finding that there were 75% millennial employees who chose not to be involved with their organisation (Carnegie, 2018).

The findings above imply that millennials have low intention to stay and they are prone to leave organisation more frequently compared to other generations. It is a serious concern as leavers will cause organisations a severe loss, financially as well as morally (Charaba, 2023; Heinz, 2022). Hence, a study to investigate the factors that enhance millennial's intention to stay working in a long term basis, specifically in the context of their contribution towards organisational performance, is necessary to be conducted as the result of the study will benefit any organisation in Indonesia.

According to Ajzen and Fishbein (Shahid, 2018), intention is an accurate predictor of one's actual behaviour. In other words, intention refers to one's willingness to perform certain behaviour. Regarding employee's behaviour in workplace setting, intention to stay is defined as one's high enthusiasm to remain in their workplace based on their experience (Uraon, 2018). This experience is mainly correlated with their positive evaluation towards the organisational situation and process. The result of this evaluation will lead to their decision whether to stay or leave the organisation. Intention to stay was defined as the degree of how likely the employee is willing to continue their membership in the organization (Price & Mueller, 1981). Intention to stay is employee's intention to remain working at the organisation on a long-term basis (Shahid, 2018). Intention was also defined as to stay as employees' high enthusiasm to remain in their workplace based on their experience (Uraon, 2018). This perception was developed through their positive or negative understanding of organisational situation and process, hence, influencing them to remain or quit from the workplace (Bellamkonda et al., 2020). The emotional connection between an employee and their organization, or even an employee identifying with their organizations, directly and markedly affects the employee's intention to stay (Valeau et al., 2021).

It is well-known among industrial psychology practitioners that employee retention is one of important agendas in human resource management due to its unquestionable contribution for organisation's success. It happens because of the skill that the employees possess is beneficial to help organisation to grow and attain their business goals. Without the employee's capability, it will be impossible for organisation to deliver business outcomes and accomplish their objectives (Shahid, 2018). Hence, it is important to investigate the factors that may influence this evaluation.

Many psychology literatures explained that there are two factors that influence human's behaviour, namely internal and external factors (Bergland, 2022). Another researcher supported this statement by classified the predictors into three categories. They believed that the factors of intention to stay among employees should be classified into individual-related, work-related, organisation-related or exterior environment-related. Therefore, in order to investigate the antecedents comprehensively, those three factors will be involved in the current study as antecedents (Naim & Lenka, 2017).

Firstly, the internal factor to be measured is work passion. Work passion refers to a strong inclination toward an activity that people like, that they find important, and in which they invest time and energy (R. J. Vallerand et al., 2019). Work passion was proposed as an individual's persistent, emotionally positive, meaning-based, state of well-being stemming from reoccurring cognitive and affective appraisals of various job and organisational situations that result in consistent, constructive work intentions and behaviours (Peyton & Zigarmi, 2021). Most of the studies that have been conducted to measure the effect of work passion towards turnover intention (Houlihan et al., 2014) and intention to quit (Burke et al., 2015). Both of them concluded that work passion was a significant negative predictor to each dependent variable. Align with the current study, another study was conducted to investigate how both variables correlated. They found a significant impact of work passion towards intention to stay among remote workers ( $t\text{-stat}=3.254 > t\text{-table } 1.660$ ) (Elison & Purba, 2021).

Second antecedent to be included is quality of work life, an external factor which is provided by the organisation. Quality of work life was defined as the process in which the organisation realizes its responsibility to provide and foster working conditions so that employees find their interests and needs (Diana et al., 2020). Quality of work life is also described as the extent to which an employee is satisfied with his personal and working conditions through participation in the workplace while achieving organisation's goals (El Badawy et al., 2018). It was discovered in prior study that quality of work life influenced intention to stay significantly ( $p=0.001$ ) (Trimurni et al., 2021). With a different dependent variable, quality of work life also affected employee's turnover intention (Astrianti et al., 2020; Rostiana, 2017). To summarize, quality of work life is capable to leverage the chance for employee's to remain working in organisation and prevent them to develop an intention to find another opportunity outside the organisation.

As suggested in job demands-resources (JDR) model, it has been proven through large scale of empirical studies that work engagement is a significant mediator in the occurrence of positive organisational outcomes (Bakker & Leiter, 2012). Work engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working. Dedication refers to sense of significance, enthusiasm, and challenge. Absorption is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work. In short, engaged employees have high levels of energy and are enthusiastic about their work. Moreover, they are often fully immersed in their work so that time flies (Schaufeli, 2018).

Engaged employees show high levels of energy and self-efficacy. They experience their work as fun and may lose track of time at work. Additionally, they also display enhanced levels of well-being and report a healthier work-life balance (van Tuin et al., 2020). Another outcome of work engagement is commitment which is an indicator of employee's inclination to remain working in the organisation. An explanation of this statement lies on the understanding that work engagement is a motivational process due to employee's being "energized" by the

positive feeling they experience at work that, in this case, is work passion and quality of work life. Hence, employees will be motivated to contribute more by keeping their membership in the organisation. An addition to the reason to include work engagement as mediator in this study is that it has been proven in many studies that work engagement is significantly affected by work passion (Purba & Ananta, 2018) quality of work life (Kanten & Sadullah, 2012; Sahni, 2019). And according to job demands-resources (JDR) model, work engagement was confirmed as a mediator of the correlation between job resources and organisational outcomes.

Based on the description above, we can summarize that employee's intention to stay is an important aspect that undoubtedly adds contribution to the organisational goals attainment. For practical reason in human resources management, figuring out the factors that influence it is necessary. Thus, the result of this study will be beneficial for top managers to develop a comprehensive retention program that puts many contexts, including internal, external, and work context, into consideration.

**Hypotheses Development.** Previous studies found that employee's intention to stay is influenced by many factors, classified into internal and external ones. One of the personal factors is work passion (Elison & Purba, 2021). This finding indicated that when employees do something that they really like and find essential for them personally, they tend to enjoy and be attracted to do it eagerly. Also, they are willing to go extra mile to complete their tasks by voluntarily spending more time and energy on it (Vallerand et al., 2019). Furthermore, they will seek for the environment which supports and allows them to keep doing what they are passionate about. In regards of this situation, when the employee is assured that the tasks are in the area of their interest, they will show an inclination to stay in the environment. Shortly, work passion will promote the employee's intention to stay in the organisation.

H1 : Work passion affects millenial's intention to stay.

Social exchange theory stated that individual's behaviour is based on the cognitive evaluation of how much cost and benefit one may obtain from their interaction with other parties (Homans, 1958). This theory is also applicable to explain the employee's behaviour towards their relationship with the employer. In this case, when they feel decently supported with job and other facilities provided by the organisation, they will exhibit more engagement with their work and organisation. Regarding the support and facilities, quality of work life plays an essential role for employee to build a perception about benefit that they obtain from their relationship with the organisation. When they perceive it positively, they will likely to give something in return, such as decision to remain working for the organisation for a longer time. This will lead to the enhancement of their intention to stay.

H2 : Quality of work life affects millennial's intention to stay.

Work engagement is the result of pleasant feeling that employees experience at work (Birkeland & Buch, 2015). According to appraisal theory, when an individual perceives something as a threat without any capabilities to overcome, she/he will tend to experience stress (Lazarus, 1993). As concluded in numerous studies, long-term stress will cause burnout, which is the antipode of work engagement (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Work passion is developed by the enjoyment while finishing tasks at work. Instead of burnout, this enjoyment creates a pleasant experience which nurtures the development of work engagement. Therefore, it is proposed that work passion will likely be the predictor of employee's engagement towards their work.

H3 : Work passion affects work engagement.

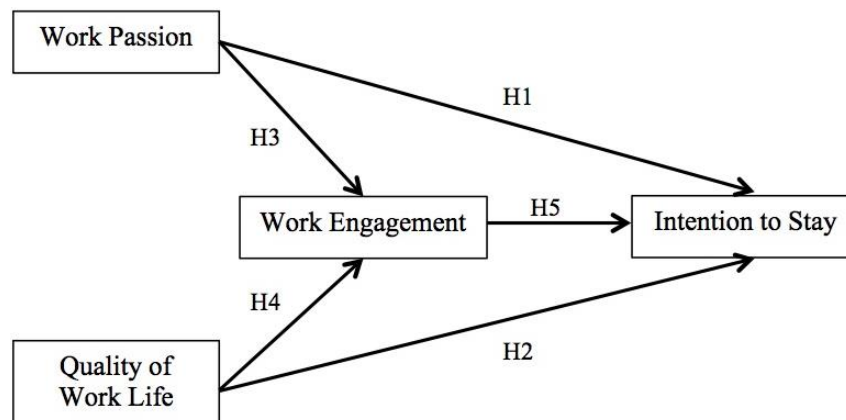
Job demands-resources (JDR) model is often used to describe the development of work engagement. This model emphasizes that the most essential factor promoting work engagement is job resources. In work setting, job resources refer to the working condition which provides resources for employee. To be more comprehensive, job resources are those physical, psychological, social, or organisational aspects of the job that may (a) reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs, (b) are functional in achieving work goals, and (c) stimulate personal growth, learning and development (Bakker & Leiter, 2012). Revisiting the definition of quality of work life, we can summarize that quality of work life is a form of job resources provided for employees. Moreover, when employees perceive it positively and feel that they are in a pleasant work situation, their engagement will be increasing as well.

H4 : Quality of work life affects work engagement.

Reviewing the job demands-resources (JDR) model, work engagement has been proven as a significant mediator that strengthens the association between job resources and organisational outcomes (Bakker & Leiter, 2012). Work passion and quality of work life are positioned to be job resources while intention to stay is the organisational outcome that we put into the frame of the present research. To increase the quality of their correlation, work engagement will function as mediator.

H5 : Work engagement plays a role in mediating the effect of work passion and quality of work life towards intention to stay.

As summary, the current research model is shown in the Figure 1 below.



**Figure 1:** Research Model

## Methods

The convenience sampling technique was used to recruit the participants of this research. They consisted of 125 employees who work in Jakarta, Indonesia. All the participants were born in between the year of 1981 to 1996, thus they were classified as millennial generation. The demographic data is described as follows: (a) 50.4% were male; (b) 88.8% were undergraduate; (c) 78.4% were not married; (d) 90.4% were working at Staff level; and (e) the average of year of service was 2.84 years.

This research adopted a quantitative, non-experimental, and cross-design research design. The current study involved one dependent variable of intention to stay, two independent variables of work passion and quality of work life, and one mediating variable of work engagement.

All participants were required to fill up an online form, which was distributed through a link via mobile application. There were six sections on this form. The first section was the page in which the introduction, instruction of the questionnaire, as well as the informed consent was informed to participants. Specifically, in the informed consent page, the participants are required to click the “yes” button if they agreed to continue their participation. The second until fifth section consisted of four scales to measure each variable which was measured in this study. Lastly, in the sixth section, participants were requested to provide their personal data, such as gender, educational background, marital status, position at work, and years of service.

The dependent variable was measured using the six-item Intention to Stay Scale developed by Wang et al. All of the items in this scale were favorable. Some examples were “*terlepas dari situasi yang tidak dapat diprediksi, saya akan tetap bekerja di perusahaan ini*” and “*saya tidak memiliki rencana untuk pindah kerja dari perusahaan ini*”. The first independent variable, namely work passion, was measured using Work Passion Scale which was developed by Vallerand et al. This scale also had 11 favorable items. Consisted of two dimensions, harmonious

passion was measured by five items while obsessive passion six items. Example item of harmonious passion dimension was “*aktivitas kerja saya memungkinkan saya untuk menjalani berbagai pengalaman*”. Then an example item of obsessive passion was “*saya tidak bisa hidup tanpa bekerja*”. The second independent variable, namely quality of work life, was measured using Quality of Work Life Scale based on the concept that was proposed by Walton. This scale consisted of 23 favorable items and the examples were “*fasilitas jaminan kesehatan*” and “*peluang mengembangkan diri*”. The fourth scale, namely Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), was used to measure the mediator. The three-item UWES was developed by Schaufeli et al. and the example of the item was “*saya bekerja dengan penuh energi*”.

All items used a five-point Likert scale ranging from (1) highly not compatible to me (*sangat tidak sesuai*), (2) not compatible to me (*tidak sesuai*), (3) neutral to me (*netral*), (4) compatible to me (*sesuai*), (5) highly compatible to me (*sangat sesuai*). High score exhibited in all scales indicates that the participant has high level of intention to stay, work passion, quality of life, and work engagement respectively. All items were translated to Indonesia language by the researchers who have a strong language competency in both English and Indonesian languages.

The conceptual model shown in Figure 1 is analyzed through the PROCESS Model 4. This model has been used widely in psychology literature to investigate the relationship in holistic and systematic approaches. In the first step, the analysis was started with the exploratory factor analysis to ensure that measurement items are part of the underlying construct. And in the second step, once the construct was formed, we then utilized PROCESS Model 4 twice for both of independent variables to understand the mediation analyses.

## Result and Discussion

The Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted through analysing the principal axis factoring analysis for all latent constructs, namely work passion, quality of work life, work engagement, and intention to stay. The analysis suggested: (1) 11 items for work passion (combination of harmonious passion and obsessive passion), (2) 23 items for quality of work life, (3) 3 items for work engagement, and (4) 6 items for intention to stay. The full result for the EFA can be found in Table 1. Note that any values below 0.4 have been suppressed.

**Table 1.** Result of EFA

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
Work engagement 1	0.895				
Work engagement 2	0.916				
Work engagement 3	0.520				
Harmonious passion1		0.496			
Harmonious passion2		0.453			
Harmonious passion3		0.613			
Harmonious passion4		0.403			
Harmonious passion5		0.601			
Obsessive passion1			0.702		



Obsessive passion2	0.740	
Obsessive passion3	0.649	
Obsessive passion4	0.502	
Obsessive passion5	0.597	
Obsessive passion6	0.555	
Intention to stay1		0.747
Intention to stay2		0.837
Intention to stay3		0.828
Intention to stay4		0.822
Intention to stay5		0.848
Intention to stay6		0.732
Quality of work life1		0.480
Quality of work life2		0.452
Quality of work life3		0.515
Quality of work life4		0.470
Quality of work life5		0.570
Quality of work life6		0.588
Quality of work life7		0.542
Quality of work life8		0.598
Quality of work life9		0.528
Quality of work life10		0.493
Quality of work life11		0.592
Quality of work life12		0.454
Quality of work life13		0.490
Quality of work life14		0.579
Quality of work life15		0.522
Quality of work life16		0.515
Quality of work life17		0.541
Quality of work life18		0.605
Quality of work life19		0.551
Quality of work life20		0.592
Quality of work life21		0.600
Quality of work life22		0.480
Quality of work life23		0.464

Furthermore, we also tested the reliability score through Cronbach Alpha for these loadings and the results can be found in Table 2. As we can see, the coefficient of all measurements is above 0.65, indicating that the constructs are consistent and reliable.

**Table 2.** Reliability score

Factors	Cronbach Alpha
Work engagement	0.672
Harmonious passion	0.773
Obsessive passion	0.824
Intention to stay	0.887
Quality of work life	0.874

AMOS 28 is used to perform confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The model has fitted the data reasonably well (CMIN/DF = 1.834,  $p < 0.001$ ) and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .082 given multiple items under quality of work life. Furthermore, the average variance extracted (AVE) is above the threshold of 0.5, thus providing support for discriminant validity. Refer to Table 3 for the full factor loading and AVE score.

**Table 3.** Full factor loading and AVE score

Items	Factor Loading	AVE
Quality of work life1	0.572	
Quality of work life2	0.439	
Quality of work life3	0.487	
Quality of work life4	0.538	
Quality of work life5	0.644	
Quality of work life6	0.536	
Quality of work life7	0.466	
Quality of work life8	0.614	
Quality of work life9	0.65	
Quality of work life10	0.578	
Quality of work life11	0.601	
Quality of work life12	0.418	0.516
Quality of work life13	0.533	
Quality of work life14	0.684	
Quality of work life15	0.549	
Quality of work life16	0.58	
Quality of work life17	0.56	
Quality of work life18	0.693	
Quality of work life19	0.614	
Quality of work life20	0.591	
Quality of work life21	0.648	
Quality of work life22	0.505	
Quality of work life23	0.492	
Work engagement1	0.812	
Work engagement2	0.934	0.577
Work engagement3	0.322	
Intention to stay1	0.684	
Intention to stay2	0.783	
Intention to stay3	0.794	0.677
Intention to stay4	0.79	
Intention to stay5	0.817	
Intention to stay6	0.678	
Harmonious passion1	0.403	
Harmonious passion2	0.474	
Harmonious passion3	0.281	0.588
Harmonious passion4	0.479	
Harmonious passion5	0.192	
Obsessive passion1	0.725	
Obsessive passion2	0.889	0.418
Obsessive passion3	0.706	
Obsessive passion4	0.517	

Obsessive passion <sup>5</sup>	0.511
Obsessive passion <sup>6</sup>	0.555

Next step is analysing the mediating effect by using PROCESS Model. Below is the result of the analysis.

**Effect of work passion on intention to stay.** The effect of work passion on work engagement is positive and statistically significant under 5% level (0.428 (0.080);  $p < 0.001$ ). Furthermore, the effect of work passion (0.281(0.080);  $p < 0.001$ ) and work engagement (0.259 (0.08);  $p = 0.002$ ) on intention to stay is positive and statistically significant as well. This indicates that work engagement mediate the relationship of work passion on intention to stay. In order to establish mediation, we also conducted bootstrapping of sample size 5,000 and the indirect effect result shows an effect of 0.111 (0.055) and the effect is statistically significant (bootstrapping confidence interval: 0.020 – 0.235). This shows that the mediation is present. The full result is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Result on simple mediation of work passion

Bootstrapping	Coefficient Estimate	Standard Error	P Value
Work passion → work engagement	0.428	0.080	0.000
Work engagement → intention to stay	0.259	0.081	0.002
Work passion → intention to stay	0.281	0.080	0.001
Index of indirect estimate effect	0.111	0.055	[0.020-0.235]

**Effect of quality of work life on intention to stay.** The effect of quality of work life on work engagement is positive and statistically significant under 5% level (0.20. (0.177);  $p = 0.004$ ). Furthermore, the effect of quality of work life (0.747(0.146);  $p < 0.001$ ) and work engagement (0.289 (0.072);  $p < 0.001$ ) on intention to stay are positive and statistically significant as well. This indicates that work engagement mediates the relationship of quality of work life on intention to stay as well. In order to establish mediation, we also conducted bootstrapping of sample size 5,000 and the indirect effect result shows an effect of 0.148 (0.086) and the effect is statistically significant (bootstrapping confidence interval: 0.015 – 0.349). This shows that the mediation is present. The full result is presented in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Result on simple mediation of quality of work life

Bootstrapping	Coefficient Estimate	Standard Error	P Value
Quality of work life → work engagement	0.513	0.177	0.004
Work engagement → intention to stay	0.289	0.072	0.001
Quality of work life → intention to stay	0.747	0.146	0.000
Index of indirect estimate effect	0.148	0.086	[0.015-0.349]

## Discussion

The current result support the first hypothesis that work passion affects intention to stay. This implies that when employees are passionate with their work and do not feel pressurised in completing the task, they do not have any idea to depart from the organisation and that means they tend to remain working in the organisation. This finding is consistent with previous studies (Peyton & Zigarmi, 2021; Thibault-Landry et al., 2018).

The result also supports the second hypothesis that the quality of work life affects intention to stay. This suggests that when employees are in favour with the facilities, benefits or rewards that provided by the organisation, they will stay in the organisation and thinking not to leave the organisation. This is line with the previous research that there is an impact of quality of work life towards intention to stay among nurses and employees in Malaysia and Australia (Agus & Selvaraj, 2020; Cheng et al., 2019).

The third hypothesis is work passion affects work engagement. This means that when employees are passionate about the work and do not feel guilty, worry, anxiety during its completion, they tend to be engaged with their works as well. Besides, they will take pride on their work as well. This is consistent with another research in Indonesia research which involved 58 millennial workers as participants (Purba & Ananta, 2018).

The fourth hypothesis of this study is quality of work life affects work engagement. This indicates that when they perceive their work life is favourable, they tend to be energetic especially when they need to come to the office everyday, feels pride on their work, and having a full concentration when completing any task given by the organisation. This finding is congruent with the findings of previous research (Rita Perangin-Angin et al., 2020; Sahni, 2019) who reported that there is an effect of quality of work life on work engagement.

Lastly, the fifth hypothesis is also proven, that work engagement mediates between quality of work life and intention to stay. This is in line with the social exchange theory. Social exchange theory explains that human action is the product of an exchange between two individuals in which its action is entirely based on one's cognitive evaluation of cost and benefit. When employees evaluate that they have perceived that they have been highly supported by the organisation (by providing employees with a good facilities), they feel contented as the effort that has been given by the employees to the organisation is matches with what the organisation provides to them (e.g., facilities or benefits of employees that gotten from organisation). Once these employees perceive that they have been fairly treated, based on social exchange theory, they would return their favour (as part of an exchange) by behaving in such a way that this behaviour would eventually benefit the organisation. In this case, when employees perceive their quality of work life is high, they would return their favour by having positive action and that is to be engaged with whatever tasks that have been assigned to them by the organisation and eventually they will remain and not having idea to depart from the organisation (Homans, 1958)

This result can also be explained with the combination of two theories, and they were (a) the dualistic model of passion, and (b) the job-demands and resources model. The dualistic model of passion suggests that passion towards work consists of affective component (feeling love to work) and internalization component (work has been an individual's self of identity). This internalization component can be either autonomous or controlled. In this way, it results in two different types of passion and namely (a) harmonious passion (autonomous internalization), and (b) obsessive passion (controlled internalization). When employees have harmonious passion, they would willingly engage in completing any works that they have given by the organisation. In short, they will not be pressurized in doing the tasks. On the other hand, when employees have obsessive passion, they will feel pressured when completing the task and as a result, they would feel guilty and anxiety. Consequently, they will not feel engaged when completing works that given from the organisation (Vallerand et al., 2003).

Another approach to explain this finding is by putting the job-demands and resources model in the frame. The job-demands and resources model explains how job characteristics (job demands and resources) affect employee well-being. Job demands refer to any element of the job that requires continuous effort, whereas job resources refer to any element of the job that aids to achieve the goals, and eliminates the job demands. This model concludes that work engagement mediates the roles of work-related resources and demands towards employee's outcomes. This means that the work-related resources and demands affect work engagement and eventually affect the employees' outcomes (De Lange et al., 2008; Demerouti et al., 2001).

In this case, work passion acts as a work-related resource and demands which have two opposite outcomes of intention to stay through work engagement as a motivational and an impairment process. Harmonious work passion acts as personal resource that can escalate intention to stay through motivational process. This implies that when employees feel love and enjoy for work, they tend not feeling pressurised when completing any task given. This feeling of enjoyment and love will motivate them to be engaged in completing any work. Once they are engaged with their work, this engagement will then result in having an intention to remain working in the organisation. On the contrary, obsessive work passion acts as personal demands and that can reduce the intention to stay through impairment process. This implies that when an employee's internalization is being controlled, they do not willingly want to complete the task as they are feeling pressurized. As a result, that employee does not have any interest in completing the task and that cause disengagement towards any work assigned to them. This disengagement will ultimately cause that person to have a lower intention to stay.

Work engagement mediates both quality of work life and work passion towards intention to stay can also be explained by cognitive mediation theory of emotions in the workplace. This theory suggests that employees' behaviour is caused by the positive emotions that are induced by the their psychological belief, expectancies, and appraisal (Lazarus, 1993). In this case, when employees perceive that their quality of work life is high and/or they are passionate with their work, they will feel very happy (positive emotion). This happiness will then cause the

employees to be engaged with any work given by the organisations and eventually these employees will remain in the organisation and not thinking to leave the organisation.

This current result supports the conservation of resources (COR) theory as well. This theory states that individuals are motivated to obtain, keep, and protect their resources (something that they are valued). Moreover, these individuals are trying to accumulate their resources to gain additional resources. In this case, quality of work life and work passion act as resources. According to COR theory, employees are needed to motivate themselves to obtain, protect and keep these resources. This motivation results these employees to be engaged with their works in which they need to have the energy, pride with their works, and focus in completing any task. Once they are engaged with their works, these employees will keep doing it continuously (accumulate their resources) and eventually they will remain to stay at the organisation, not wanting to leave or getting a laid off from the organisation (gain additional resources) (Hobfoll et al., 2018).

This result also supports the long debate in psychology of nature versus nurture. Nature refers to biological elements that affect one's human trait, which is physical, emotional, and intellectual, whereas nurture refers to the effect of surroundings or environmental factors towards the human trait (Katch, 2022). This debate focuses on whether nature or nurture that affect human behaviour. This debate has gone very long time and some experts say that the focus of the debate has gone wrong. It is similar like asking whether the area of a rectangle is based on width or height (Kimble, 1993). Consequently, all researchers conclude that both nature and nurture play their roles in affecting the human behaviour. With that, this current research supports the conclusion of this debate that both work passion (nature) and quality of work life (nurture) affect work engagement and eventually affect intention to stay. However, it was reported that the debate of nature versus nurture has formulated its question to be how much each nature and nurture has contributed to affect human behaviour (Zaky, 2015).

The current research provides an answer to the new revised question of the debate question that quality of work life (nurture) plays a bigger role than work passion (nature) in affecting the work engagement. This finding is line with the recent study which examined the effect of psychological capital (nature) and perceived organisational support (nurture) on burnout among 58 teachers (Faiz Fairuz & Hadi, 2023). On the contrary, another study reported a different conclusion. They examined the effect of perceived organisational support (nurture) and psychological capital (nature) on flourishing among 400 employees in workplace. Regression analysis suggests that psychological capital (nature) plays a bigger role than perceived organisational support (nurture) (Ho & Chan, 2022). These conflicting findings provide evidence to support Zaky's argument regarding the new formulated debate question as to how much nature and nurture contribute to shape human's behaviour, and hence this could be the reason on why the debate between the nature versus nurture is still ongoing until today (Zaky, 2015).

Following up the study result, we also propose a practical implication. As seen in Table 5, quality of work life is proven to be a greater antecedent for intention to stay compared to work passion. Hence, it will be beneficial to dig deeper by involving factors that might determine the quality of work life experienced by the millennial workers. Previous research suggested that one of the factors to promote quality of work life is communication in the organization. An open communication among employees and supervisors is believed to be a significant aspect that may cause employee to experience a positive and satisfying work environment (Sutiyatno, 2022). To be more specific, organization is suggested to foster the organizational communication as it plays an important role in enhancing several dimensions of quality of work life, such as co-woker, supervisory, and social relevance of employer dimension.

## **Conclusion**

The findings of this study contributes to the field of industrial and organizational psychology by giving another evidence that work engagement can act as a mediator. This could be the first study in the literature to test out whether work engagement can mediate both work passion (internal factor – nature) and quality of work life (external factor – nurture) on intention to stay simultaneously. This current result shows that when employees are engaged with their work, it indirectly improves intention to stay that influenced by both work passion and quality of work life.

Although the result of this research supports the hypotheses, it has several limitations. First, the data collection is based on participants self-administered and hence it is rather difficult to make sure whether their responses are based on their real experience. Researchers have attempted to eliminate the issue by stating clearly on the instruction section that there are no right and wrong answer, and they were required to answer all those questions honestly as all the data are kept confidential. Second, the data is only collected entirely on the participants themselves and that means the information collected is entirely based on that individual perspective only (one sided). This means the data can be biased. It is recommended if the data can be collected from different sources, not solely based on the participant's evaluation.

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