



Work Engagement as a Mediator between Perceived Organizational Support and Job Satisfaction among Local Government Employees in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to examine the effect of perceived organizational support on job satisfaction and to analyze the mediating role of work engagement among employees of the Community and Village Empowerment Office (DPMD) of Padang Pariaman Regency, Indonesia. This research employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory design. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to all 36 employees using a census sampling technique. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3, including measurement model assessment, structural model evaluation, and mediation analysis. The results indicate that perceived organizational support has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.480$, $p = 0.002$) and work engagement ($\beta = 0.809$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, work engagement positively influences job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.362$, $p = 0.030$) and significantly mediates the relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.293$, $p = 0.047$). The study concludes that organizational support enhances employee satisfaction by strengthening psychological engagement. The findings imply that public sector organizations should prioritize supportive leadership, employee recognition, and engagement strategies to improve employee well-being and organizational effectiveness.

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INTRODUCTION

Public sector organizations play a fundamental role in maintaining effective governance, accountability, and the delivery of quality public services (Bakhtiar et al., 2024; Zamroni et al., 2023). The increasing complexity of government administration requires civil servants to demonstrate professionalism, responsiveness, and commitment because employee performance directly influences the quality of services received by society (Ismail et al., 2023; Muchtar et al., 2025). Human resource management has therefore become a strategic priority in strengthening public sector effectiveness, as

employees are the key actors who translate organizational objectives into public outcomes (Falát et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2024). Evidence from organizational studies indicates that supportive work environments contribute to positive employee attitudes, higher productivity, and stronger organizational performance (Falát et al., 2023; Karoso et al., 2024; Noor et al., 2025). Conversely, poor human resource practices may reduce employee motivation and weaken institutional effectiveness. Therefore, understanding factors that enhance employees' positive work experiences, particularly job satisfaction, is essential for improving public service quality and strengthening public trust in government institutions (Dangaiso & Tsvere, 2025; Najiburrahman et al., 2025).

Despite continuous efforts to improve public sector performance, many government institutions still face challenges related to employee attitudes and workplace experiences (Maulana et al., 2025). One major problem is the presence of suboptimal job satisfaction among public employees, which may negatively affect motivation, commitment, and service effectiveness. Job satisfaction reflects employees' evaluation of their work experiences, including compensation, career opportunities, supervision, relationships with colleagues, and the nature of their tasks (ERTÜRK, 2022; Hemsworth et al., 2026; Maas et al., 2022). When employees perceive their work conditions as inadequate, they may experience reduced enthusiasm, lower productivity, and decreased willingness to contribute beyond minimum requirements (Chen et al., 2024; Cunnington et al., 2023). In public organizations, these problems may become more critical because employee dissatisfaction can influence the implementation of government programs and the achievement of community-oriented goals (Wardhani et al., 2025). Therefore, identifying organizational factors that shape job satisfaction has become an important issue in improving public sector management.

A similar issue appears in the Community and Village Empowerment Office (Dinas Pemberdayaan Masyarakat dan Desa/DPMD) of Padang Pariaman Regency, an institution responsible for supporting village governance, managing empowerment programs, and facilitating regional development initiatives. Based on preliminary interviews conducted in March 2026 with employees from the Village Government Development Division, Community Empowerment Division, Village Finance and Assets Division, and Secretariat, several indications of job satisfaction problems were identified (Kharismasyah et al., 2026; Pan et al., 2025). Employees reported that financial rewards were not fully proportional to increasing responsibilities, career development opportunities remained limited, interdepartmental coordination was sometimes ineffective, and supervisory support was insufficient during urgent assignments (Rini & Sudadio, 2026; Sodik et al., 2024). Additionally, increasing administrative demands created pressure in daily work activities. These conditions suggest that employee dissatisfaction occurs across multiple dimensions, indicating the need to examine organizational factors that may improve job satisfaction within DPMD.

Previous studies have identified perceived organizational support (POS) as an important factor influencing employee attitudes and behaviors. POS refers to employees' perceptions regarding the extent to which organizations value their contributions and care about their well-being (Abbasi et al., 2024). Based on Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 2017), employees who perceive stronger organizational support tend to reciprocate through positive attitudes, including greater job satisfaction. Empirical studies have generally confirmed that POS positively affects job satisfaction (Avdiel & Blau, 2025). However, most previous research has focused on private-sector organizations or general employee populations, while limited attention has been given to local government institutions with complex administrative responsibilities (Agyapong et al., 2022; Rini & Sudadio, 2026). Furthermore, previous studies have often examined direct relationships without sufficiently explaining the psychological mechanisms through which organizational support influences employee satisfaction.

Work engagement has emerged as another important variable in explaining employees' positive workplace experiences. Schaufeli (2021) conceptualized work engagement as a psychological state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Anapah et al., 2026; Mishra, 2024; Pabba & Kumar, 2022). Employees with higher engagement levels tend to demonstrate stronger enthusiasm, persistence, and commitment, which may enhance their satisfaction with work. Several studies have suggested that work engagement mediates the relationship between organizational support and job satisfaction (Humairah et al., 2023). Chen (2025) found that POS influences job satisfaction both directly and indirectly through work engagement, while Mascarenhas et al. (2022) demonstrated that supportive organizational practices strengthen engagement and subsequently improve satisfaction (Abbasi et al., 2024; Liu & Hu, 2025). However, inconsistent findings remain, as Setiawan et al. (2024) reported an insignificant relationship between POS and job satisfaction. These inconsistencies indicate the need for further investigation of work engagement as a mediating mechanism, particularly in public sector contexts (Irfan et al., 2023).

This study contributes to organizational behavior research by examining work engagement as a mediator between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction among local government employees. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on DPMD Padang Pariaman Regency, a public institution characterized by complex responsibilities related to village administration, financial management, and community empowerment. Unlike previous studies that predominantly explored organizational support and job satisfaction in private organizations, this research investigates how psychological mechanisms operate within a government setting where employee performance directly affects public service outcomes. By integrating POS, work engagement, and job satisfaction into a single model, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of employee satisfaction formation. Addressing this issue is

important because improving employee satisfaction may strengthen organizational effectiveness and enhance the quality of public services.

Based on the identified phenomena and theoretical gaps, this study seeks to answer whether perceived organizational support influences job satisfaction and whether work engagement functions as a mediating mechanism in this relationship among DPMD Padang Pariaman Regency employees. The main argument of this research is that organizational support alone may not be sufficient to generate higher job satisfaction; instead, employees must psychologically engage with their work to transform organizational support into positive workplace experiences. Therefore, employees who perceive stronger organizational support are expected to develop higher work engagement, which subsequently increases their job satisfaction. By testing this argument, the study aims to provide empirical evidence regarding the role of psychological processes in public sector human resource management. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically and practically to improving employee well-being, organizational performance, and public service effectiveness.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design to examine the relationships among perceived organizational support, work engagement, and job satisfaction. The quantitative method was selected because it enables objective measurement of variables, hypothesis testing, and statistical analysis of causal relationships. A cross-sectional design was applied to capture employees' perceptions at a specific period under existing organizational conditions. The research was conducted at the Community and Village Empowerment Office (DPMD) of Padang Pariaman Regency, Indonesia, selected due to its strategic role in village governance, community empowerment, and regional development. The complexity of its responsibilities and preliminary findings regarding limited career opportunities, workload pressures, insufficient supervisory support, and recognition issues make DPMD a relevant research setting. The population consisted of all 36 employees, and a census sampling technique was applied to include the entire population as research respondents.

Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire distributed directly to all employees of DPMD Padang Pariaman Regency. The questionnaire was selected because it enables systematic measurement of employees' perceptions and facilitates quantitative analysis of relationships among research variables. Data were collected included perceptions of organizational support, work engagement, and job satisfaction, provided the data were all 36 DPMD employees. The data were collected was at DPMD Padang Pariaman Regency, Indonesia. The data collection was conducted was during the research period in 2026. Data were collected was to examine the influence of

perceived organizational support on job satisfaction through work engagement; and data were collected was through a five-point Likert scale questionnaire ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Perceived organizational support was measured using fifteen items adapted from the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS) developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986). Work engagement was measured using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9) developed by Schaufeli et al. (2006), consisting of vigor, dedication, and absorption dimensions. Job satisfaction was measured using twenty items adapted from Cellucci and DeVries (1978), covering pay, promotion opportunities, coworkers, supervision, and the work itself (Sajja et al., 2025).

The collected data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3 software. The data analysis process consisted of several stages, including data reduction, data presentation, and data verification. Data reduction was conducted through data screening, coding, and preparation processes to ensure that questionnaire responses were complete, consistent, and suitable for statistical analysis. Data display was performed by presenting descriptive statistics, measurement model results, and structural model outputs in the form of tables and statistical indicators. The measurement model was evaluated through convergent validity, internal consistency reliability, and discriminant validity. Convergent validity was assessed using outer loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while reliability was evaluated through Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha. Discriminant validity was examined using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). Data verification was conducted by interpreting the structural model results, including path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and hypothesis testing through bootstrapping procedures. Mediation analysis was performed to determine the role of work engagement in the relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction based on the mediation approach proposed by Zhao et al. (2010).

The validity and reliability of the research instruments were examined to ensure the accuracy and consistency of measurement results. Instrument validity was assessed through construct validity testing, including convergent validity and discriminant validity analysis. Convergent validity was confirmed when indicator loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values met the recommended criteria, indicating that measurement items adequately represented their respective constructs (Ji et al., 2024; Maslakci, 2026). Discriminant validity was evaluated to ensure that each construct was empirically distinct from other variables in the research model. Meanwhile, reliability testing was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values to confirm the internal consistency of the measurement instruments. In addition, bootstrapping analysis was applied in hypothesis

testing with a significance level of 5%, where relationships were considered statistically significant when t-statistics exceeded 1.96 and p-values were below 0.05. These procedures ensured that the research findings were statistically valid, reliable, and appropriate for drawing conclusions regarding the relationships among perceived organizational support, work engagement, and job satisfaction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Respondent Profile

Data were collected from all employees of the Community and Village Empowerment Office (Dinas Pemberdayaan Masyarakat dan Desa/DPMD) of Padang Pariaman Regency. Following the census sampling technique, questionnaires were distributed to all 36 employees. All questionnaires were returned and completed without missing responses, resulting in 36 valid questionnaires for analysis. Accordingly, the study achieved a response rate of 100 percent, indicating excellent respondent participation and providing complete population coverage for subsequent statistical analyses.

Table 1. Respondent Profile

Demographic Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	11	30.6
Female	25	69.4
Total	36	100.0
Age		
< 30 years	2	5.6
30–39 years	14	38.9
40–50 years	11	30.6
> 50 years	9	25.0
Total	36	100.0
Length of Service		
< 5 years	9	25.0
5–9 years	11	30.6
10–20 years	9	25.0
> 20 years	7	19.4
Total	36	100.0
Employment Status		
Civil Servant (PNS)	17	47.2
Government Contract Employee (PPPK)	13	36.1
Part-Time Government Contract Employee	5	13.9
Outsourcing Staff	1	2.8
Total	36	100.0
Highest Education		
Senior High School	7	19.4

Diploma	1	2.8
Bachelor's Degree	24	66.7
Master's Degree	4	11.1
Total	36	100.0

Source: Processed data (2026)

As summarized in Table 1, female employees constituted the majority of respondents (69.4%), while male employees accounted for 30.6%. Most respondents were between 30 and 39 years of age (38.9%), followed by employees aged 40–50 years (30.6%), indicating that the workforce was predominantly within the productive working-age group. Regarding tenure, the largest proportion of employees had 5–9 years of service (30.6%), whereas employees with less than five years and those with 10–20 years of service each represented 25.0% of the respondents. Employees with more than 20 years of service accounted for 19.4%, suggesting a relatively balanced distribution of work experience across the organization.

With respect to employment status, Civil Servants (PNS) represented the largest employment group (47.2%), followed by Government Contract Employees (PPPK) (36.1%), Part-Time Government Contract Employees (13.9%), and outsourcing staff (2.8%). In terms of educational attainment, the majority of respondents held a bachelor's degree (66.7%), while 19.4% had completed senior high school, 11.1% possessed a master's degree, and 2.8% held a diploma qualification. Overall, the respondents demonstrated an educational profile that is generally appropriate to support the implementation of administrative and community empowerment functions within a local government institution.

Measurement Model Assessment

Prior to evaluating the structural model, the measurement model was assessed to ensure the validity and reliability of all latent constructs. The assessment was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3, covering convergent validity, internal consistency reliability, and discriminant validity.

Table 2. Convergent Validity and Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Job Satisfaction	0.937	0.947	0.666
Perceived Organizational Support	0.950	0.957	0.668
Work Engagement	0.940	0.949	0.676

Source: Processed data using SmartPLS 3 (2026)

As presented in Table 2, all constructs achieved Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values above the recommended threshold of 0.50, indicating

satisfactory convergent validity. Specifically, the AVE values were 0.666 for Job Satisfaction, 0.668 for Perceived Organizational Support, and 0.676 for Work Engagement. Furthermore, Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values for all constructs exceeded the recommended value of 0.70, confirming excellent internal consistency reliability. These findings indicate that the measurement indicators adequately represent their respective latent constructs and satisfy the recommended criteria for convergent validity and reliability. Discriminant validity was subsequently evaluated using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).

Table 3. Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

Variable	Job Satisfaction	Perceived Organizational Support	Work Engagement
Job Satisfaction	0.816		
Perceived Organizational Support	0.774	0.818	
Work Engagement	0.751	0.809	0.822

Source: Processed data using SmartPLS 3 (2026)

The diagonal values in Table 3 represent the square roots of the AVE for each construct. All diagonal values are greater than the corresponding inter-construct correlations, indicating that each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with other constructs. Therefore, the Fornell–Larcker criterion confirms satisfactory discriminant validity.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

Variable	Job Satisfaction	Perceived Organizational Support	Work Engagement
Job Satisfaction			
Perceived Organizational Support	0.809		
Work Engagement	0.791	0.841	

Source: Processed data using SmartPLS 3 (2026)

As shown in Table 4, all HTMT values were below the recommended threshold of 0.90. The HTMT value between Perceived Organizational Support and Job Satisfaction was 0.809, while the values between Work Engagement and Job Satisfaction and between Work Engagement and Perceived Organizational Support were 0.791 and 0.841, respectively. These findings indicate that the three constructs are empirically distinct and satisfy the HTMT criterion for discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2019).

Overall, the results demonstrate that the measurement model meets the recommended standards for convergent validity, discriminant validity, and

internal consistency reliability. Accordingly, all constructs were considered valid and reliable, allowing further evaluation of the structural model and hypothesis testing.

Coefficient of Determination and Predictive Relevance

The adequacy of the structural model was evaluated based on its explanatory power and predictive relevance using the coefficient of determination (R^2) and Stone–Geisser's predictive relevance (Q^2). The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. R Square and Q Square

Variable	R Square	Category	Q Square	Category
Job Satisfaction	0.644	Moderate	0.397	Strong
Work Engagement	0.654	Moderate	0.419	Strong

Source: Processed data using SmartPLS 3 (2026)

As presented in Table 5, Job Satisfaction obtained an R^2 value of 0.644, indicating that 64.4% of its variance can be explained by the predictor variables included in the structural model, representing a moderate level of explanatory power. Meanwhile, Work Engagement achieved an R^2 value of 0.654, showing that Perceived Organizational Support explains 65.4% of the variance in employees' work engagement. Furthermore, Table 5 indicates that both endogenous constructs have strong predictive relevance, with Q^2 values of 0.397 for Job Satisfaction and 0.419 for Work Engagement. Since both Q^2 values exceed zero, the model demonstrates adequate predictive capability. These findings confirm that the proposed structural model has satisfactory explanatory power and is appropriate for further hypothesis testing.

Structural Model Assessment

The hypothesized relationships were evaluated using the bootstrapping procedure within the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) framework. Statistical significance was determined based on t-statistics greater than 1.96 and p-values below 0.05, following the recommendations of Hair et al. (2019). The results of the direct effect analysis are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Direct Hypothesis Testing

Path	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values
Perceived Organizational Support → Job Satisfaction	0.480	3.080	0.002
Perceived Organizational Support → Work Engagement	0.809	16.160	0.000
Work Engagement → Job Satisfaction	0.362	2.178	0.030

Source: Processed data using SmartPLS 3 (2026)

Table 6 shows that all direct relationships proposed in the research model are positive and statistically significant. Perceived Organizational Support exerts a positive and significant influence on Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.480$, $t = 3.080$, $p = 0.002$), indicating that employees who perceive greater organizational support tend to experience higher levels of job satisfaction. Perceived Organizational Support also exhibits a strong positive influence on Job Engagement ($\beta = 0.809$, $t = 16.160$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that supportive organizational practices substantially increase employees' psychological engagement with their work. Furthermore, Job Engagement has a positive influence on Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.362$, $t = 2.178$, $p = 0.030$), confirming that employees who are more engaged in their work tend to report greater job satisfaction. Thus, all direct hypotheses proposed in this study are supported.

The mediating role of Work Engagement in the relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Job Satisfaction was subsequently examined by assessing the significance of the indirect effect. The mediation analysis results are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7. Mediation Testing

Path	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values
Perceived Organizational Support → Work Engagement → Job Satisfaction	0.293	1.990	0.047

Source: Processed data using SmartPLS 3 (2026)

As shown in Table 7, the indirect effect of Perceived Organizational Support on Job Satisfaction through Work Engagement is positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.293$, $t = 1.990$, $p = 0.047$). These findings indicate that Work Engagement significantly mediates the relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Job Satisfaction.

Because both the direct effect of Perceived Organizational Support on Job Satisfaction and the indirect effect through Work Engagement are statistically significant and operate in the same positive direction, the mediation can be classified as complementary mediation according to the typology proposed by Zhao et al. (2010). This finding suggests that organizational support enhances employees' job satisfaction both directly and indirectly by fostering higher levels of work engagement. Therefore, Work Engagement serves as an important psychological mechanism that partially explains how perceived organizational support contributes to employees' job satisfaction in the Community and Village Empowerment Office of Padang Pariaman Regency.

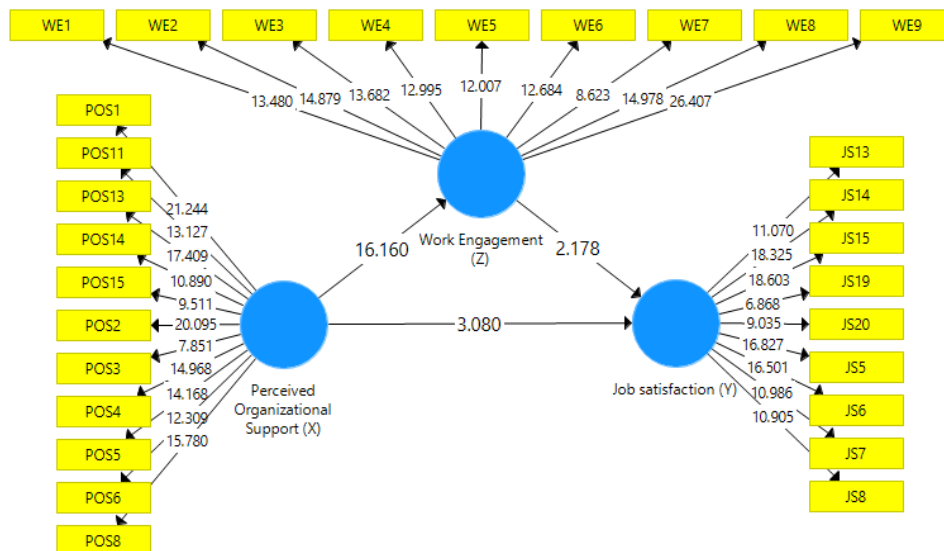


Figure : 1. Structural Model Assessments

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that perceived organizational support has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction among DPMD Padang Pariaman Regency employees ($\beta = 0.480$, $t = 3.080$, $p = .002$). This result confirms previous studies by Chen (2025), Mascarenhas et al. (2022), Taşova et al. (2023), and Novita et al. (2022), which consistently identify organizational support as an important determinant of employee satisfaction. The finding also aligns with Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 2017), suggesting that employees respond positively when organizations provide appreciation, assistance, and concern for their welfare. Theoretically, this study reinforces the relevance of social exchange mechanisms in explaining employee attitudes within public sector organizations. Practically, DPMD should strengthen recognition systems, supervisory support, and employee welfare programs to improve job satisfaction.

The study further reveals that perceived organizational support strongly influences work engagement ($\beta = 0.809$, $t = 16.160$, $p < .001$). This finding supports previous research conducted by Tiarani and Utami (2025), Ashfaq et al. (2023), Purba et al. (2023), and Mascarenhas et al. (2022), which emphasize organizational support as a critical resource for encouraging employee engagement. The result is also consistent with Job Demands–Resources Theory (Demerouti & Bakker, 2023), which explains that organizational resources stimulate employees' motivational processes and enhance vigor, dedication, and absorption. The strong relationship found in this study indicates that supportive organizational practices are particularly important in public institutions where employees face complex administrative demands. This research contributes theoretically by confirming that organizational support functions as a psychological resource that strengthens employee engagement in the local government context.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that work engagement has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.362$, $t = 2.178$, $p = .030$). This result is consistent with previous studies by Jimoh (2025), Ibrahim and Hussein (2024), Nafe and Alizadeh (2022), and Mascarenhas et al. (2022), which demonstrate that engaged employees generally experience higher satisfaction because they perceive their work as meaningful and rewarding. The finding supports Schaufeli's (2021) conceptualization of work engagement as a positive psychological state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Theoretically, this study extends existing knowledge by demonstrating that employee satisfaction is not only influenced by external organizational conditions but also by internal psychological involvement. Practically, DPMD can enhance employee satisfaction by developing strategies that increase meaningful work experiences, motivation, and employee involvement in organizational activities.

The mediation analysis shows that work engagement significantly mediates the relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.293$, $t = 1.990$, $p = .047$), indicating complementary mediation. This finding supports previous studies by Chen (2025), Novita et al. (2022), Taşova et al. (2023), and Mascarenhas et al. (2022), which suggest that organizational support improves satisfaction through increased employee engagement. However, this study extends previous research by demonstrating this mechanism within an Indonesian local government institution rather than primarily private-sector organizations. Theoretically, the finding integrates Social Exchange Theory and Job Demands–Resources Theory by showing that organizational support creates psychological resources that encourage engagement and generate positive work outcomes. This contribution highlights work engagement as an important mechanism explaining how organizational practices influence employee attitudes.

Overall, this study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence that perceived organizational support, work engagement, and job satisfaction are interconnected within the public sector context. The results indicate that improving employee satisfaction requires more than providing organizational resources; institutions must also foster psychological engagement among employees. For DPMD Padang Pariaman Regency, the findings imply the importance of strengthening supportive leadership, improving communication, recognizing employee contributions, and creating opportunities for professional development. These practices may enhance employee enthusiasm, commitment, and satisfaction while supporting more effective public service delivery. From a theoretical perspective, this study expands organizational behavior research by validating the mediating role of work engagement in the relationship between organizational support and job satisfaction within a local government setting.

Therefore, the study provides both theoretical advancement and practical guidance for public sector human resource management.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that perceived organizational support is a crucial factor in enhancing employees' job satisfaction, particularly through the strengthening of work engagement. The main insight gained is that organizational support should be viewed as a strategic approach that encourages employees to develop positive psychological connections with their work. Theoretically, this study contributes to organizational behavior literature by extending Social Exchange Theory and the Job Demands–Resources model through empirical evidence from an Indonesian local government context, highlighting work engagement as an important mediating mechanism. However, the study is limited by its cross-sectional design, single institutional setting, and small sample size. Future research should apply longitudinal approaches, larger samples, and additional variables such as leadership, organizational culture, and commitment to broaden understanding.

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