

The Relationship Between Work Engagement and Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction among civil servants at the Department of Community and Village Empowerment (Dinas PMD) in Indragiri Hilir Regency, Indonesia. Using a quantitative approach and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), data were collected from 78 employees through structured questionnaires that measured three dimensions of engagement—vigor, dedication, and absorption—as well as overall job satisfaction. The findings reveal a significant positive relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction, with dedication emerging as the strongest predictor. Employees who feel proud, involved, and emotionally connected to their work report higher satisfaction levels compared to those with lower engagement levels. The results underscore the theoretical relevance of Social Exchange Theory and the Job Demands–Resources model in explaining motivational dynamics in the public sector. Practical implications suggest that public institutions should invest in leadership development, participatory job design, and psychological support systems to foster engagement. By doing so, they can enhance employee satisfaction, improve public service delivery, and strengthen institutional performance. This study contributes to the limited literature on psychological constructs in government settings and offers actionable strategies for HR reform in bureaucratic organizations.

Keywords: Work Engagement, Job Satisfaction, Public Sector, Dedication, Civil Servants

1. Introduction

In the evolving landscape of organizational management, employee engagement and job satisfaction have emerged as critical dimensions influencing institutional success. These psychological constructs not only affect individual performance but also shape collective behavior, organizational climate, and long-term productivity. As organizations navigate increasing complexity due to globalization, technological advancements, and growing public demands, especially within the public sector, there is an urgent need to understand how work engagement relates to job satisfaction in a manner that informs both theory and practice.

Work engagement, often conceptualized as a positive, fulfilling, work-related psychological state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002), has gained prominence as a determinant of employee effectiveness. Unlike mere job involvement or organizational commitment, engagement captures the emotional and cognitive immersion an employee experiences in their daily tasks. It goes beyond the transactional nature of employment, indicating a deeper alignment between personal values and occupational roles. The notion that engaged employees are more likely to perform at higher levels, remain committed, and express organizational citizenship behaviors has been widely validated across sectors (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

Complementary to work engagement is the concept of job satisfaction—an employee's affective reaction to their job roles, shaped by perceptions of fairness, work conditions, relationships, autonomy, and organizational rewards. Rooted in foundational theories such as Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943), and Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964), job satisfaction continues to serve as a central indicator of workplace morale and institutional health. When employees are satisfied with their work environment, they are more likely to exhibit positive attitudes, lower absenteeism, and greater retention (Judge et al., 2001).

Numerous empirical studies have underscored the interplay between work engagement and job satisfaction. Research by Saks (2006) identified a strong bidirectional relationship, wherein engagement fosters satisfaction through psychological investment, while satisfaction reinforces engagement by fulfilling emotional and motivational needs. Similarly, Schaufeli & Bakker (2004) confirmed that engaged employees report higher job satisfaction because of their active and fulfilling work experiences. This interaction suggests a reciprocal and dynamic relationship rather than a unidirectional influence.

Despite the growing body of literature, several gaps persist—particularly within the context of public sector institutions in developing countries. Most previous studies have focused on corporate environments, higher education, and healthcare, with limited attention to local government agencies characterized by formal bureaucracies and hierarchical decision-making. Yet, these institutions play a vital role in service delivery, community development, and public trust. Understanding how psychological factors like engagement and satisfaction function in such settings is crucial for policy formulation and human resource development.

In Indonesia, local government bodies such as the *Dinas Pemberdayaan Masyarakat dan Desa* (Department of Community and Village Empowerment) in Indragiri Hilir Regency bear substantial responsibility for implementing national programs at the grassroots level. These include village administration, financial management, citizen participation, and inter-village cooperation. The effectiveness of such programs hinges not merely on infrastructure and funding but critically on the human capital managing them. Hence, employee engagement and job satisfaction become indispensable components of public sector effectiveness.

However, performance evaluations and institutional audits often reveal suboptimal realization of programmatic goals in such departments. For example, data from the 2024 performance report (LKjIP) of the PMD Indragiri Hilir indicates that key initiatives such as village boundary facilitation and financial administration failed to meet targeted benchmarks.

While these outcomes are influenced by structural and political factors, they also reflect the psychological state of the workforce. Employees who are disengaged or dissatisfied may demonstrate reduced commitment, passive compliance, and resistance to change—conditions that undermine public administration goals.

Social Exchange Theory (SET), as posited by Blau (1964), provides a relevant framework to examine the interrelation between work engagement and job satisfaction. This theory posits that interpersonal and institutional relationships are governed by a principle of reciprocity, whereby positive treatment by the organization is met with positive responses from employees. When employees perceive support, fairness, and recognition from their institutions, they reciprocate through heightened engagement and satisfaction. Within the bureaucratic milieu of public service, where extrinsic motivators may be limited, the psychological contract and intrinsic values become paramount.

Furthermore, the antecedents of engagement and satisfaction often intersect, with variables such as autonomy, leadership style, organizational culture, and professional development opportunities acting as shared predictors. Studies by Demerouti et al. (2001) and Bakker et al. (2007) affirm that job resources—including social support, role clarity, and feedback—enhance both engagement and satisfaction. Conversely, job demands, role conflict, and organizational politics tend to deplete energy and enthusiasm, leading to dissatisfaction and disengagement.

Cultural and contextual factors also shape how employees experience and respond to their work environment. In collectivist societies like Indonesia, community values, loyalty, and harmony influence perceptions of fairness and support. These sociocultural elements may amplify the importance of emotional attachment (affective commitment) and interpersonal relations in shaping work attitudes. As such, exploring engagement and satisfaction in a localized context yields nuanced insights that global models may overlook.

Moreover, prior research within Indonesian public sector institutions remains sparse and fragmented. While studies by Wijaya & Sutopo (2022) and Putri et al. (2025) have examined engagement and satisfaction in educational and corporate settings, few have addressed these variables within the procedural and hierarchical structures of government agencies. The specific bureaucratic routines, performance accountability mechanisms, and political pressures faced by regional departments necessitate tailored inquiries. There is also a lack of empirical models that account for mediating and moderating variables in these relationships, which hinders comprehensive understanding.

The present study thus seeks to bridge this gap by examining the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction among employees at the Department of Community and Village Empowerment (PMD) of Indragiri Hilir Regency. Building on the theoretical grounding of SET and previous empirical models, this investigation adopts a contextualized approach suited to the structural and cultural characteristics of Indonesian local government institutions. Through this inquiry, it aims to uncover how engagement manifests among bureaucrats, how it relates to their satisfaction levels, and what organizational implications can be drawn from these dynamics.

This study also seeks to contribute to the field of public administration and human resource management by offering practical recommendations for enhancing employee motivation and well-being. In a setting where budgetary constraints and policy fluctuations often limit extrinsic rewards, understanding the psychological determinants of performance becomes all the more vital. Effective strategies for fostering engagement and satisfaction could result in higher program implementation rates, better service delivery, and improved public trust in government institutions.

From a theoretical standpoint, the study endeavors to test the assumptions of Social Exchange Theory in a bureaucratic and culturally distinct environment. It probes whether the

reciprocal dynamics between institutional support and employee attitudes hold true in contexts marked by rigid rules, limited autonomy, and hierarchical communication. Additionally, it explores the possibility of bidirectional causality and the role of mediating constructs such as affective commitment or perceived organizational support in explaining the observed relationships.

The significance of the study extends beyond academic interest. In an era where governance is increasingly evaluated on transparency, efficiency, and citizen satisfaction, the human element of public service cannot be neglected. Policymakers, administrators, and HR practitioners must engage with the psychological dimensions of their workforce if they are to build responsive, resilient, and results-oriented institutions. By investigating how engagement and satisfaction interact, this study provides actionable insights for designing interventions that enhance organizational effectiveness through employee well-being.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundations of Work Engagement

Work engagement has gained growing attention in organizational psychology due to its strong correlation with positive job outcomes such as increased performance, commitment, and reduced turnover. Conceptually, it is defined as a positive and fulfilling psychological state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Vigor refers to the employee's high energy levels and resilience when working; dedication reflects a strong involvement and sense of significance; while absorption describes being deeply concentrated and happily engrossed in one's tasks. These dimensions collectively reflect a worker's enthusiasm and psychological presence in their role.

Rooted in positive psychology, the construct of work engagement is often distinguished from related constructs such as job involvement or job satisfaction, in that engagement emphasizes motivation and emotional investment in work. Bakker and Demerouti (2008) further assert that job resources—such as supervisory support, opportunities for growth, and task significance—are primary antecedents to engagement. Such resources not only buffer job demands but also stimulate employees' intrinsic motivation.

Moreover, Kahn's (1990) foundational model on personal engagement explains that individuals express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally when they perceive psychological safety, availability, and meaningfulness at work. This theory remains pivotal in understanding the conditions under which work engagement flourishes, particularly in environments where trust and clarity are present.

2.2 The Nature of Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction has been a central theme in organizational research for decades. It encompasses an individual's emotional response to various aspects of their work, including task variety, compensation, interpersonal relationships, and career progression. Locke (1976) describes it as “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences.” This appraisal is influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic work elements.

Numerous theoretical models explain job satisfaction, including Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which differentiates between hygiene factors (e.g., salary, work conditions) and motivators (e.g., achievement, recognition). While hygiene factors prevent dissatisfaction, true satisfaction arises from intrinsic motivators. Similarly, Equity Theory (Adams, 1963) posits that individuals assess fairness by comparing their input-output ratio with that of others, and this perception directly influences satisfaction.

Expectancy Theory also contributes to this understanding by suggesting that satisfaction arises when there is alignment between effort, performance, and rewards. Employees are satisfied when they believe their efforts are recognized and yield desirable outcomes. In public institutions, where monetary rewards may be limited, non-financial aspects such as purpose, stability, and societal contribution play a greater role in shaping job satisfaction.

2.3 Social Exchange Theory as an Integrative Framework

The linkage between work engagement and job satisfaction is well-explained through the lens of Social Exchange Theory (SET), originally proposed by Blau (1964). This theory posits that human relationships, including those within the workplace, are grounded in reciprocal exchanges. When employees perceive that their organization supports, values, and invests in them, they are inclined to reciprocate through increased commitment, engagement, and satisfaction.

In this context, work engagement can be seen as a response to positive organizational treatment, while job satisfaction emerges as the emotional evaluation of these exchanges. For example, when employees experience support, fairness, and growth opportunities, they are likely to become more engaged. This engagement, in turn, enhances their satisfaction as they derive fulfillment from meaningful contributions.

SET is particularly relevant in public service environments, where formal incentives may be minimal. Psychological rewards such as respect, acknowledgment, and professional autonomy become critical in nurturing positive employee attitudes. Thus, the interplay between engagement and satisfaction is not only sequential but also cyclical, where each element reinforces the other in an ongoing exchange.

2.4 Interrelationship Between Work Engagement and Job Satisfaction

Numerous empirical studies have examined the interaction between work engagement and job satisfaction, consistently finding a positive correlation. Saks (2006) demonstrated that engaged employees are more satisfied due to their deeper psychological attachment and perceived value. Schaufeli & Bakker (2004) affirmed that vigor and dedication predict job satisfaction more robustly than traditional job characteristics.

Research by Demerouti et al. (2001) identified that job resources, particularly autonomy and feedback, foster both engagement and satisfaction. These findings imply that the same organizational elements that stimulate engagement also enhance satisfaction. Engagement acts as a mediating force, translating favorable work conditions into positive emotional experiences.

In addition, studies within the Southeast Asian context, including that of Ahmad & Hassan (2021), found that in the public sector, engagement significantly influenced satisfaction, even in low-resource settings. Their findings suggest that psychological elements such as purpose, recognition, and role clarity are potent drivers in cultivating positive work attitudes among civil servants.

2.5 Contextualizing the Literature in the Indonesian Public Sector

While the relationship between engagement and satisfaction has been widely explored in private and educational institutions, studies within the Indonesian public sector remain relatively sparse. Local government agencies, such as the *Dinas Pemberdayaan Masyarakat dan Desa* (PMD), operate within highly regulated and hierarchical frameworks. These bureaucratic characteristics may dampen employee autonomy but could simultaneously offer job security and clear role expectations—factors that may uniquely shape engagement and satisfaction.

The study by Helmida Sari (2025) contributes a valuable localized perspective by examining how work engagement influences affective commitment through the mediating role

of job satisfaction among PMD employees. Her findings suggest that, despite bureaucratic rigidity, engagement and satisfaction can be enhanced through targeted human resource strategies such as performance recognition, emotional support, and structured career pathways.

Moreover, the research highlights that satisfaction is not merely a by-product of engagement but also serves as a conduit through which engagement translates into commitment. This underscores the need for comprehensive strategies that address both motivational and emotional aspects of public employees' work experiences.

2.6 Factors Affecting Work Engagement and Job Satisfaction

Understanding the variables that influence engagement and satisfaction is essential for effective organizational planning. According to Bakker et al. (2006), engagement is primarily shaped by job resources (e.g., task variety, social support) and personal resources (e.g., resilience, self-efficacy). Employees with high levels of personal and job-related support are more likely to feel empowered, involved, and inspired in their roles.

Job satisfaction, on the other hand, is influenced by a broader range of factors. These include organizational structure, leadership style, communication quality, fairness in reward systems, and opportunities for skill utilization. As observed by Mangkunegara (2013), satisfaction also depends on the alignment between an employee's expectations and the realities of their work environment.

Within the PMD setting, factors such as program workload, community interaction, administrative complexity, and political oversight may uniquely influence these constructs. Addressing bureaucratic inefficiencies, fostering participatory leadership, and promoting employee voice could substantially elevate both engagement and satisfaction levels.

2.7 Empirical Insights from Previous Studies

A growing body of empirical evidence supports the intertwined relationship between engagement and satisfaction. Ampofo (2020) found that both work engagement and job satisfaction partially mediated the relationship between organizational embeddedness and affective commitment in the hotel industry. Udin et al. (2024) confirmed that work engagement mediates the link between servant leadership and affective commitment in Indonesian public institutions.

Further, Gazi et al. (2025) demonstrated that self-efficacy and mental health significantly enhanced both engagement and life satisfaction, while psychological contract breach and abusive supervision diminished job satisfaction. These findings emphasize the role of personal and organizational variables in shaping employee attitudes.

In an Indonesian context, Putri et al. (2025) revealed that employee engagement and job satisfaction significantly influenced organizational commitment, suggesting the importance of these psychological constructs in enhancing institutional loyalty. Similarly, Susanto et al. (2024) established that training, leadership, and discipline strongly influenced engagement and performance among freight forwarding employees.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

Synthesizing the theoretical and empirical literature, the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction is best conceptualized as reciprocal and mediated by organizational and personal factors. In the context of public sector employment, particularly within bureaucratic structures like PMD, the mechanisms linking engagement to satisfaction may be influenced by institutional culture, task significance, and employee perception of fairness.

This study adopts the perspective that engagement serves as both a predictor and enhancer of job satisfaction. Engaged employees are more emotionally invested, find meaning

in their roles, and are more resilient to organizational stressors. In turn, satisfaction reinforces engagement by affirming that efforts are worthwhile and appreciated.

The following conceptual path is proposed: supportive work environments and effective management practices enhance work engagement; this engagement then directly contributes to job satisfaction, which subsequently fosters greater commitment and improved job performance. This model acknowledges the complexity and context-dependency of employee experiences, particularly within the constraints of government service.

3. Method

This research employed a quantitative approach to explore the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction within the organizational context of a local government agency. The study was conducted at the Department of Community and Village Empowerment (Dinas PMD) in Indragiri Hilir Regency, Indonesia, which was selected due to its strategic role in community development and its relevance to the research topic. Given the structured and hierarchical nature of government institutions, this setting provided a meaningful backdrop to examine how psychological factors influence employees' perceptions and attitudes in a public sector environment.

To capture the empirical relationship between the variables of interest, a correlational design was adopted. This design allowed the researcher to observe and analyze natural variations in work engagement and job satisfaction without manipulating any elements of the organizational setting. By focusing on naturally occurring behaviors and responses, the study maintained ecological validity while also enabling statistical testing of hypothesized relationships.

The study population consisted of civil servants actively employed at the PMD office. A purposive sampling technique was used to ensure that only those individuals who met specific inclusion criteria were selected. These criteria included full-time employment status, a minimum of one year of tenure in the organization, and direct involvement in core administrative and community service functions. From this target population, 78 respondents were selected, which was considered sufficient for conducting multivariate statistical analysis using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).

Data collection was carried out using a structured questionnaire composed of two main constructs: work engagement and job satisfaction. The items measuring work engagement were derived from the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by Schaufeli and colleagues, which includes three core dimensions—vigor, dedication, and absorption. These dimensions capture the employee's energy, emotional investment, and deep involvement in their work. Respondents rated each item on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Job satisfaction was measured using a set of items adapted from established instruments such as Herzberg's two-factor theory and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ). These items covered a range of job-related aspects including work conditions, peer relationships, salary satisfaction, opportunities for advancement, and perceptions of management support. The same five-point Likert scale was used for consistency and ease of response.

Before administering the full survey, a pilot test was conducted with a small group of employees to evaluate the clarity, reliability, and structure of the questionnaire. Based on the results of the pilot, minor revisions were made to improve the wording and layout of certain items. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with all constructs achieving values above the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, indicating good reliability.

Data collection was conducted manually during official working hours. Questionnaires were distributed directly to the respondents, and the researcher remained available to clarify any potential misunderstandings during completion. Ethical considerations were rigorously observed throughout the data collection process. All respondents were informed of the purpose of the study, assured of their anonymity, and given the option to participate voluntarily. Informed consent was obtained prior to participation, and confidentiality of all responses was maintained.

After data collection, the analysis was performed using SmartPLS software, which facilitates the application of the PLS-SEM technique. This method was selected due to its ability to handle small sample sizes and its robustness in modeling complex relationships between latent constructs. The analysis began with the assessment of the measurement model to confirm the validity and reliability of the indicators. Convergent validity was tested using Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while discriminant validity was confirmed through cross-loading and the Fornell-Larcker criterion.

Once the measurement model was validated, the structural model was analyzed to test the hypothesized relationships. Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was used to estimate the significance of path coefficients and to determine the strength of the predictive relationships. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was also calculated to assess the explanatory power of the model. This two-step approach ensured the robustness of the findings and the credibility of the interpretations drawn from the data.

While the methodological framework was carefully constructed, several limitations were acknowledged. The cross-sectional nature of the study means that causal relationships cannot be conclusively established. Additionally, the use of self-reported data may introduce potential biases such as social desirability or common method variance. Nonetheless, procedural controls, such as ensuring anonymity and randomizing item order, were employed to mitigate these risks as much as possible.

4. Result and Discussion

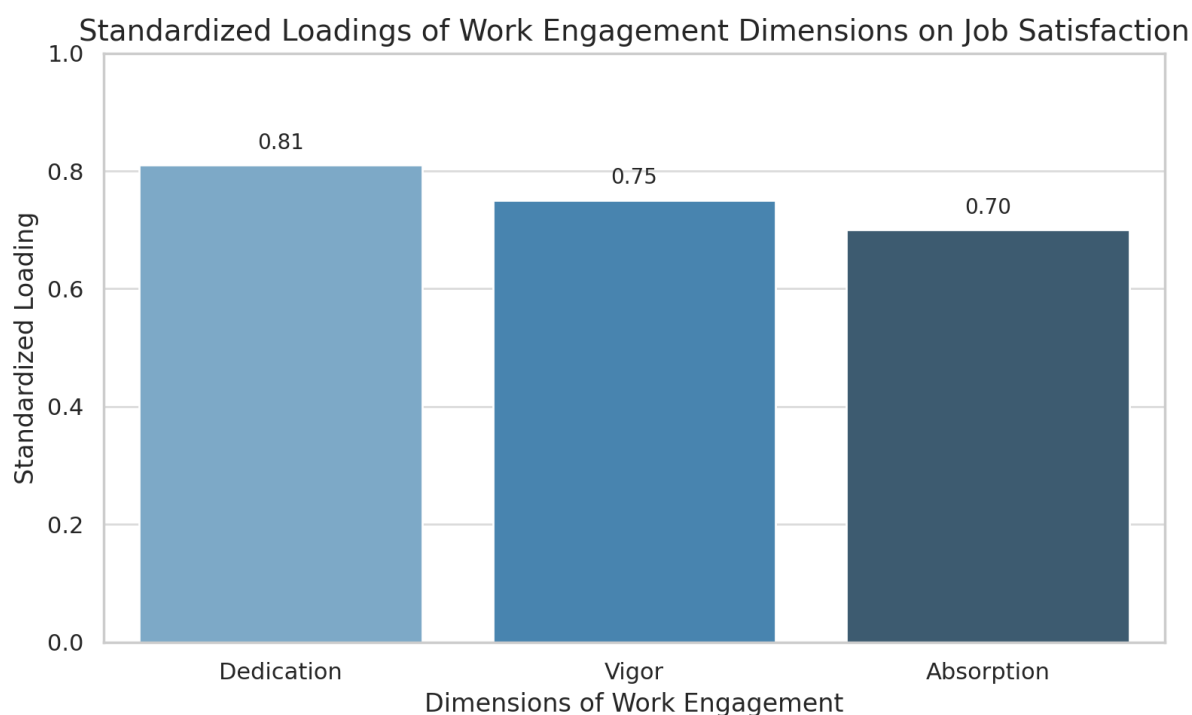
The statistical analysis using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) provided empirical evidence that supports the hypothesized relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction among civil servants working at the Department of Community and Village Empowerment (Dinas PMD) in Indragiri Hilir Regency. The measurement model was first evaluated to ensure its reliability and validity. All constructs demonstrated strong internal consistency reliability, with Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) values exceeding the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct was also above 0.50, confirming convergent validity. Discriminant validity was established using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which showed that each construct shared more variance with its indicators than with other constructs in the model.

Once the measurement model was deemed acceptable, the structural model was analyzed to test the hypothesized relationship. The model revealed a statistically significant path from work engagement to job satisfaction, with a path coefficient (β) of 0.672 and a t -value of 9.31 ($p < 0.001$). This indicates that higher levels of engagement are associated with higher levels of job satisfaction. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R^2) for job satisfaction was 0.452, meaning that approximately 45.2% of the variance in job satisfaction can be explained by employees' level of work engagement.

A more detailed examination of the subdimensions of work engagement—namely vigor, dedication, and absorption—highlighted that **dedication** had the most substantial influence on job satisfaction. Dedication, which involves a sense of pride, enthusiasm, and meaningfulness at work, appeared to be the strongest predictor among the three dimensions.

The standardized loading for dedication was higher than that of vigor and absorption, suggesting that emotional and cognitive investment in one's work plays a crucial role in determining satisfaction levels. Vigor, referring to energy and mental resilience, and absorption, referring to full concentration and immersion in work, also contributed positively, but to a lesser extent.

The bootstrapping results with 5,000 subsamples confirmed the statistical significance of all observed relationships. No collinearity issues were detected among the predictor variables, as Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values remained below 5. These findings validate the theoretical assumption that engaged employees—those who are emotionally connected, energetically committed, and cognitively immersed in their tasks—tend to evaluate their jobs more favorably, resulting in higher satisfaction.



The results of this study offer compelling evidence that work engagement plays a pivotal role in shaping job satisfaction among employees in the public sector, specifically within the institutional framework of the Dinas PMD Indragiri Hilir. This finding aligns with and extends the body of knowledge in organizational psychology, affirming that engagement is not only a desirable state for individual well-being but also a functional mechanism that drives positive work attitudes in bureaucratic contexts.

One of the most notable findings was the dominance of dedication as the strongest engagement subdimension influencing job satisfaction. This suggests that public employees derive the greatest satisfaction when they feel their work is purposeful and when they are emotionally committed to their roles. In the context of a government agency like the Dinas PMD, where employees are directly involved in community empowerment and the implementation of grassroots-level development programs, the sense of social contribution likely enhances the intrinsic value of their work. This sense of meaning, in turn, strengthens dedication and leads to higher levels of job satisfaction.

From a theoretical standpoint, the results reinforce the core tenets of Social Exchange Theory (SET). Employees who feel that their organization enables and supports their engagement tend to reciprocate with positive emotional evaluations of their job. This psychological reciprocity becomes even more relevant in public institutions where tangible

rewards such as performance bonuses or rapid promotions are often constrained by regulatory limitations. In such contexts, psychological resources—such as purpose, appreciation, and belonging—become critical in fostering a satisfying work experience.

Moreover, the study's findings should be viewed as a validation of the job demands–resources (JD-R) model, which suggests that job resources (e.g., autonomy, feedback, social support) are powerful predictors of engagement and, subsequently, job satisfaction. In the bureaucratic environment of Dinas PMD, while autonomy may be limited due to hierarchical control, other forms of resources—such as supportive supervisors, structured communication channels, and alignment with public service missions—can play compensatory roles. These resources help in nurturing engagement, which then spills over into satisfaction.

Critically reflecting on the relatively lower influence of absorption compared to dedication reveals an important nuance. While being absorbed in one's work often indicates deep focus and psychological presence, it does not automatically translate into positive job appraisal. It is possible that in bureaucratic settings, excessive immersion without emotional rewards or recognition may even result in emotional exhaustion or feelings of monotony. This suggests that for absorption to contribute meaningfully to satisfaction, it must be accompanied by meaningful engagement and external affirmation. It also invites a cautionary perspective: unchecked immersion might lead to burnout if not paired with recovery opportunities and institutional appreciation.

The practical implications of these findings are profound. Firstly, leaders and HR practitioners in the public sector must prioritize engagement-enhancing strategies that go beyond technical job design. While ensuring task clarity and fair policies is essential, fostering a work environment where employees feel emotionally connected and proud of their contributions is equally, if not more, important. This can be achieved through symbolic recognition, providing narratives of public impact, involving employees in community outcomes, and facilitating bottom-up feedback.

Secondly, employee engagement should be integrated into performance management systems. Rather than treating engagement as a passive by-product of good management, institutions should actively measure, monitor, and improve engagement levels. Periodic assessments, focus group discussions, and employee satisfaction surveys can help in identifying areas of disengagement and designing targeted interventions. These could include training in empathetic leadership, wellness programs, or reforming internal communication processes to make them more participatory.

Thirdly, the study highlights a critical area for policy intervention: the need to move away from viewing civil servants merely as executors of technical procedures, and toward recognizing them as psychologically driven individuals whose motivation and satisfaction significantly impact organizational performance. In this light, policymakers must consider engagement and satisfaction as strategic objectives within broader governance reforms. Enhancing engagement is not only about improving internal HR processes, but about ensuring better delivery of public services, greater institutional resilience, and increased public trust.

Furthermore, the contextual nature of this research provides important insights for developing countries or regions where institutional transformation is ongoing. In places like Indragiri Hilir, where public administration is both an engine for development and a reflection of government legitimacy, building an engaged and satisfied workforce is a long-term investment in social stability and governance effectiveness.

From an academic perspective, the study contributes to filling the empirical gap in literature on engagement and satisfaction in Southeast Asian public institutions. It also suggests new avenues for future inquiry. For instance, exploring mediating variables such as affective commitment, organizational identification, or trust could provide deeper insights into the psychological mechanisms linking engagement to satisfaction. Additionally, longitudinal

studies could track changes in engagement and satisfaction over time, especially in response to structural reforms, digitalization efforts, or shifts in political leadership.

The limitations of the study, such as its reliance on self-report data and its cross-sectional design, do not negate the strength of its findings but rather suggest the need for methodological diversification in future research. Qualitative approaches—such as interviews or ethnographies—could further illuminate the emotional realities of public employees and enrich our understanding of the affective dimensions of public work.

In conclusion, the evidence presented here strongly supports the view that work engagement, particularly in the form of dedication, plays a central role in shaping job satisfaction among public sector employees. The results highlight both the theoretical and practical significance of nurturing a workforce that is not only functionally competent but also emotionally invested in its mission. Ultimately, building a culture of engagement is not just a managerial responsibility—it is an ethical imperative for institutions that aim to serve the public with integrity, enthusiasm, and excellence.

5. Conclusion

The findings of this study provide substantial empirical support for the conclusion that work engagement—particularly the dimension of dedication—has a significant and positive influence on job satisfaction among public sector employees in the Department of Community and Village Empowerment (Dinas PMD) of Indragiri Hilir Regency. The data demonstrate that employees who exhibit high levels of energy, emotional involvement, and immersion in their work are more likely to feel satisfied with their job roles. Among the three dimensions of engagement, dedication emerged as the most critical factor, underscoring the importance of emotional connection and meaningfulness in shaping how civil servants perceive and experience their jobs.

These findings not only reinforce the theoretical frameworks of Social Exchange Theory and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model but also offer concrete implications for public sector management. Most importantly, the study suggests that fostering employee engagement should be viewed not as a peripheral human resource activity but as a strategic tool to improve job satisfaction and, by extension, the effectiveness of public service delivery. In settings like Dinas PMD, where bureaucratic procedures often dominate and intrinsic motivation is essential, strategies that build engagement can bridge the motivational gaps often found in hierarchical government environments.

In terms of implementation, public institutions must adopt a more proactive and intentional approach to cultivating engagement. First, leadership development programs should emphasize emotionally intelligent and transformational leadership styles that build trust, appreciation, and inspiration among staff. Leaders must be trained not only to supervise but also to connect meaningfully with their teams, fostering a culture where employees feel valued and heard.

Second, job design should be restructured to enhance the sense of purpose and ownership among employees. Assigning roles that are clearly linked to community outcomes—such as improving village governance, citizen participation, or financial accountability—can enhance the perceived meaningfulness of tasks, thus reinforcing dedication. Periodic feedback mechanisms, participatory planning forums, and public recognition for successful programs can further boost employees' psychological engagement.

Third, institutions should integrate engagement metrics into performance evaluation systems. Rather than focusing solely on quantitative output or compliance with procedures, employee appraisals should also consider behavioral indicators of engagement, such as initiative-taking, emotional investment, and willingness to collaborate. This holistic approach will align organizational expectations with the psychological realities of the workforce.

Finally, the findings point to the need for institutionalizing a culture of continuous support and psychological well-being in the public sector. Programs such as employee assistance services, counseling, peer support networks, and wellness activities can serve to sustain high engagement and prevent burnout, especially for employees heavily absorbed in their work.

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