

Organizational Commitment as A Mediator Between Person–Environment Fit and Citizenship Behavior

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Abstract

This study explores the mediating role of organizational commitment in the relationship between person–environment fit and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) within a public sector context. Drawing on data from civil servants at the Provincial Office of BKKBN Riau, the research employs Structural Equation Modeling with the PLS-SEM approach to test the proposed model. The findings confirm that person–environment fit significantly influences both organizational commitment and OCB. Moreover, organizational commitment serves as a partial mediator, channeling the influence of fit into voluntary, extra-role behaviors. The study underscores that while psychological alignment fosters a sense of comfort and identity, it is the emotional attachment encapsulated in commitment that drives employees to exceed formal job expectations. These insights offer valuable implications for public institutions aiming to cultivate high-performing, value-aligned workforces. By focusing on both recruitment fit and commitment-building practices, organizations can unlock sustained citizenship behavior critical to public service excellence.

Keywords: person–environment fit, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, public sector, mediation

1. Introduction

In today's increasingly complex organizational landscape, the centrality of human capital to organizational success is more apparent than ever. As institutions—particularly in the public sector—grapple with dynamic socio-economic demands, the need for employees who exhibit not only technical competence but also voluntary, value-driven behavior is paramount. This phenomenon, widely known as Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), refers to discretionary behaviors that go beyond formal job responsibilities. While these behaviors are not explicitly required or compensated by the organization, they significantly enhance overall performance, collaboration, and morale. Actions such as helping co-workers, voluntarily participating in non-mandatory meetings, promoting organizational goals, and tolerating temporary inconveniences with a positive attitude are central to this concept. Although subtle and often invisible in traditional performance metrics, OCB remains vital in maintaining the social and psychological infrastructure of organizations.

Within Indonesia's public institutions, particularly the National Population and Family Planning Board (BKKBN), fostering OCB is essential for achieving policy effectiveness and community impact. As an agency tasked with sensitive and community-oriented missions, such as family welfare and population control, BKKBN relies on personnel who not only perform their duties but also engage beyond the bounds of formal obligations. However, internal data from the BKKBN Riau Provincial Office reveals that only around 60% of employees demonstrate consistent OCB. The remainder appear disengaged, limiting themselves to what is strictly required. This reflects a phenomenon gap between the potential of employee contributions and their actual behavioral expression at work. The causes of this discrepancy are multidimensional, but one possible explanation lies in the degree to which employees perceive alignment between their individual characteristics and the environment in which they work.

This perceived alignment is conceptualized as Person–Environment Fit (PE Fit), which denotes the compatibility between individuals and the various facets of their work environment, including organizational culture, job roles, and group dynamics. PE Fit operates at multiple levels, such as Person–Job Fit (the alignment between an employee's skills and job demands), Person–Organization Fit (the compatibility between personal values and organizational culture), and Person–Group Fit (the social alignment between employees and their teams). When employees perceive high PE Fit, they are more likely to be engaged, committed, and willing to contribute beyond their job description. On the contrary, a misfit may result in emotional detachment, resistance to change, and reduced motivation to engage in OCB. PE Fit is thus a foundational psychological mechanism that can shape how employees interpret their work experience and decide whether to invest their discretionary effort.

However, existing studies indicate that PE Fit alone may not be sufficient to trigger OCB. The influence of PE Fit on extra-role behavior appears to depend significantly on intervening variables, particularly Organizational Commitment. Organizational commitment encompasses the psychological attachment that employees feel toward their organization. This includes affective commitment, which is driven by emotional identification and belief in organizational values; continuance commitment, which is rooted in perceived costs associated with leaving; and normative commitment, which reflects a moral obligation to stay. Among these, affective commitment is especially influential in encouraging positive work behaviors. Employees who internalize organizational values are more likely to exhibit OCB, as they feel a personal investment in the success of the institution. Therefore, organizational commitment serves as a bridge that connects the sense of fit with the willingness to act in service of the organization's broader goals.

In line with the Conservation of Resources Theory, individuals seek to acquire and protect valuable resources—whether tangible, social, or psychological. When the workplace is

perceived as a supportive environment that aligns with personal identity and values, employees view their work as a source of resource gain. This perception fosters organizational commitment, which in turn motivates employees to engage in proactive and cooperative behavior. From this perspective, organizational commitment can be seen as both a product of PE Fit and a psychological resource that encourages OCB. Furthermore, the Social Exchange Theory suggests that when employees perceive that their organization supports and values them, they are inclined to reciprocate with behaviors that benefit the organization, including OCB. This reciprocal dynamic strengthens the argument for considering commitment as a mediating variable in the PE Fit–OCB relationship.

Despite growing academic interest in these interrelationships, several research gaps remain. First, much of the existing literature on PE Fit, organizational commitment, and OCB is derived from private sector organizations in developed economies. These contexts differ significantly from public sector institutions in developing countries, particularly in terms of bureaucratic structure, decision-making processes, and cultural expectations. In Indonesia, where public organizations are often characterized by formal hierarchies and procedural rigidity, the pathways through which psychological constructs such as PE Fit and commitment affect behavior may differ from those observed in other settings. Additionally, many previous studies have focused on direct effects, neglecting the complex and potentially critical role of mediating variables such as commitment. Without a nuanced understanding of these mechanisms, interventions designed to foster OCB may fail to address the underlying psychological conditions that enable such behavior.

The public sector in Indonesia, especially in institutions like BKKBN, faces unique challenges that necessitate voluntary engagement from employees. The demands of the job, which often include community outreach, educational campaigns, and inter-agency collaboration, require more than compliance—they require initiative and emotional investment. In such contexts, understanding how employees' perception of their fit within the organization influences their willingness to go the extra mile becomes a strategic imperative. More importantly, identifying whether and how organizational commitment mediates this relationship offers a pathway for designing effective human resource interventions aimed at fostering a culture of excellence and mutual responsibility.

The urgency of this inquiry is heightened by broader changes in the Indonesian public sector, including a younger and more diverse workforce with evolving expectations. Many of today's public servants place high importance on personal values, work-life balance, and meaningful work. When these expectations are not met, disengagement may follow. Therefore, creating a working environment that supports alignment between individual and organizational values is not just a theoretical concern—it is a practical necessity. Moreover, by fostering commitment through positive PE Fit, public organizations can cultivate OCB, leading to higher levels of performance, innovation, and employee well-being.

Within this theoretical and practical framework, this study focuses on employees of the BKKBN Riau Provincial Office, aiming to explore whether organizational commitment serves as a mediator in the relationship between PE Fit and OCB. Given the strategic role of BKKBN in population and family planning, insights from this study could inform broader efforts to improve organizational performance in Indonesia's public sector. More specifically, the research investigates the extent to which employees' perception of fit influences their emotional commitment to the organization and, in turn, their likelihood of engaging in citizenship behavior.

By addressing a clear empirical gap in the Indonesian public administration context, this study contributes to both scholarly and practical discussions on human resource development. On the theoretical front, it enriches our understanding of the psychological processes underlying OCB, particularly in public institutions. On the practical side, it provides evidence-

based recommendations for public managers seeking to enhance organizational commitment and harness the full potential of their workforce. These insights are particularly relevant as Indonesia embarks on public sector reforms aimed at improving transparency, accountability, and service delivery.

The contributions of this research extend beyond a single organization or sector. In a broader sense, the findings underscore the importance of psychological alignment and affective commitment in driving pro-social work behaviors. As public institutions continue to evolve in response to complex societal needs, understanding the human side of organizational functioning becomes increasingly essential. By focusing on PE Fit, commitment, and citizenship behavior, this study offers a roadmap for creating work environments where employees are not only compliant but genuinely engaged, motivated, and aligned with organizational goals.

2. Literature Review

The conceptual framework of this study draws upon several key theories and empirical insights related to Person–Environment Fit (PE Fit), Organizational Commitment, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). These constructs have been extensively studied in the field of organizational behavior, yet their interrelationships, particularly in public sector institutions within the Indonesian context, remain underexplored. This review seeks to synthesize relevant theoretical and empirical literature to provide a foundation for the proposed mediation model.

The concept of Person–Environment Fit (PE Fit) refers to the degree of compatibility between an individual and their work environment. This compatibility encompasses alignment in values, needs, and abilities, and extends across multiple levels, including Person–Job Fit, Person–Organization Fit, and Person–Group Fit (Kristof, 1996; Edwards & Bilberry, 2010). Person–Job Fit (PJ Fit) reflects the congruence between an individual’s skills and the demands of their specific role. Person–Organization Fit (PO Fit) pertains to the alignment between an employee’s values and the overarching culture and mission of the organization. Meanwhile, Person–Group Fit (PG Fit) highlights interpersonal compatibility within work teams. Together, these subdimensions form a holistic view of how well individuals mesh with their organizational surroundings.

High levels of PE Fit have been associated with a variety of positive organizational outcomes, including increased job satisfaction, employee engagement, and reduced turnover intention (Zhang et al., 2020). Kristof-Brown and her colleagues (2005) argue that when employees perceive alignment between themselves and their work environment, they are more likely to invest emotionally and cognitively in their roles. In the public sector, where job roles are often highly structured and formalized, ensuring such alignment is critical to fostering proactive and constructive employee behavior.

Organizational Commitment, particularly affective commitment, has been widely recognized as a key psychological construct that influences employee behavior. Affective commitment refers to the emotional attachment and identification of an employee with their organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). When employees experience a sense of belonging and loyalty, they are more likely to remain with the organization and to exert effort beyond what is formally required. Robbins (2016) further emphasizes that commitment entails a willingness to maintain membership in the organization, driven not only by rational calculations or external obligations but by intrinsic emotional bonds. Affective commitment has been found to play a mediating role between various antecedents—such as leadership, perceived organizational support, and PE Fit—and positive behavioral outcomes like OCB.

OCB itself has been conceptualized as discretionary behavior that is not directly recognized by formal reward systems but contributes to the effective functioning of

organizations (Organ et al., 2006). It comprises dimensions such as altruism (helping others), conscientiousness (going beyond minimal job requirements), sportsmanship (tolerating less-than-ideal conditions), courtesy (preventing work-related conflicts), and civic virtue (actively participating in organizational governance). Employees who engage in OCB demonstrate their commitment to the collective well-being of the organization, even in the absence of external enforcement mechanisms.

Multiple studies have suggested that PE Fit can influence OCB both directly and indirectly through mediators such as commitment and job satisfaction. For instance, Alniaçik et al. (2021) report that employees who perceive a strong fit with their organization are more likely to exhibit OCB due to enhanced psychological comfort and role clarity. Similarly, Lee and Kim (2020) found that commitment fully mediated the relationship between PO Fit and OCB among public service employees. These findings are reinforced by Müller et al. (2023), who argue that fit and commitment are dynamically linked, with commitment serving as the psychological mechanism through which fit is translated into behavioral outcomes.

Within the Indonesian context, the mediating role of organizational commitment remains underexplored, particularly in public institutions like BKKBN. However, several local studies provide preliminary evidence supporting this framework. Hasibuan (2022), in a study on employees of the Social Welfare Development Center (PPKS) in Medan, found that both Person–Organization Fit and Person–Job Fit positively affected OCB, with organizational commitment serving as a significant mediator. Likewise, Chandra et al. (2020) demonstrated that fit influences OCB through job satisfaction and commitment among civil servants in the Padang Education Office. These findings align with international literature and underscore the importance of psychological alignment in fostering citizenship behavior in public organizations.

The Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory by Hobfoll (1989) offers a broader psychological rationale for these relationships. According to COR, individuals strive to obtain and conserve resources that they value, including emotional stability, respect, and personal development. A work environment that aligns with an individual's identity and values is perceived as resource-rich, leading to higher levels of motivation, engagement, and commitment. In such settings, employees are more likely to exhibit discretionary behaviors, as they feel psychologically safe and invested in organizational success. Conversely, poor fit may result in resource depletion, stress, and withdrawal behaviors, which in turn reduce OCB.

Additionally, the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) provides a complementary perspective. This theory posits that employees engage in reciprocal relationships with their organizations. When they perceive fair treatment, recognition, and value alignment, they are more likely to reciprocate with behaviors that benefit the organization, including OCB. Organizational commitment, in this framework, functions as a mediator that translates positive perceptions of PE Fit into motivated, reciprocal behavior. This is especially relevant in collectivist cultures like Indonesia, where interpersonal harmony and mutual obligation strongly influence workplace behavior.

Empirical studies from various contexts have validated the mediating role of commitment in the PE Fit–OCB relationship. For instance, Farzaneh et al. (2015) reported that commitment mediated the impact of both PJ Fit and PO Fit on OCB in a manufacturing setting. Wang et al. (2018) further extended this finding by demonstrating that PE Fit influences innovation through its effects on OCB and affective commitment. In the context of public services, Pervin et al. (2023) emphasized that PE Fit strengthens the relationship between organizational climate and commitment, which in turn enhances proactive behaviors.

The structural complexity and mission-driven nature of public organizations add another layer to the relevance of this research. Unlike profit-oriented firms, public institutions operate under a framework of public accountability, often requiring employees to exhibit values-based

behavior that serves the public good. In such environments, fostering a strong psychological contract between the individual and the organization is essential. Employees must feel that their personal values are respected and that their work contributes meaningfully to societal goals. When this alignment is present, commitment flourishes, and employees are more likely to engage in behaviors that transcend formal job descriptions.

3. Method

This research employed a quantitative approach with a causal design to examine the influence of Person–Environment Fit on Organizational Citizenship Behavior and the mediating role of Organizational Commitment. A causal design was deemed appropriate for this study as it allowed for the analysis of cause-and-effect relationships among latent variables based on existing theoretical foundations and prior empirical findings.

The study was conducted at the Provincial Office of the National Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN) in Riau, Indonesia, a government institution where employees play a pivotal role in delivering community-based services and social campaigns. The context of a structured and hierarchical public organization provided a meaningful setting for analyzing the psychological constructs under investigation. Data collection took place over a four-month period, beginning with the design of the research instrument and concluding with the statistical analysis and interpretation of results.

The population of this study consisted of all civil servants working at the BKKBN Provincial Office in Riau. According to internal records, a total of 293 employees were actively employed during the research period. To determine the appropriate sample size, the Slovin formula was applied with a margin of error set at 5%. This calculation yielded a minimum sample requirement of 169 respondents. A stratified random sampling technique was then employed to ensure that the sample accurately represented various departments, levels of tenure, and educational backgrounds.

Primary data were gathered using a structured questionnaire distributed directly to the respondents. The instrument was developed based on established scales adapted to the organizational context. All items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (7), which allowed for greater sensitivity in capturing variations in respondents’ attitudes and perceptions. The questionnaire comprised three main sections corresponding to the study variables: Person–Environment Fit, Organizational Commitment, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior.

The measurement of Person–Environment Fit was adapted from Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) and included dimensions of Person–Job Fit, Person–Organization Fit, and Person–Group Fit. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements reflecting the extent to which their skills matched their job requirements, their values aligned with organizational culture, and their compatibility with their work teams. Organizational Commitment was assessed using a construct derived from Meyer and Allen’s (1991) three-component model, encompassing affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Statements such as “I feel emotionally attached to this organization” and “I believe in the values and mission of this institution” captured the depth of employee commitment across emotional, rational, and moral dimensions. Meanwhile, Organizational Citizenship Behavior was measured using a modified version of the scale proposed by Organ (1988) and later refined by Podsakoff et al. (2000), which included items representing altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research instrument, a pilot test was conducted prior to the main data collection phase. The results of the pilot study indicated that all items had acceptable levels of internal consistency, with Cronbach’s alpha values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. Based on feedback from the pilot, minor linguistic

adjustments were made to enhance the clarity and contextual relevance of several items, particularly to reflect the language norms of the public sector environment in Riau.

Data analysis was performed using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method. The PLS-SEM technique was chosen due to its suitability for predictive modeling and its robustness in handling complex models with multiple latent variables and relatively small sample sizes. SmartPLS 3.29 software was utilized to test the measurement and structural models. The analytical process began with the assessment of the outer model, which evaluated the validity and reliability of the constructs. Convergent validity was examined through factor loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with a threshold value of 0.50. Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and cross-loading analysis. Reliability was evaluated based on Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach’s Alpha, both of which needed to exceed 0.70.

Following the validation of the measurement model, the inner model was analyzed to assess the strength and significance of the hypothesized relationships. The significance of path coefficients was tested using the bootstrapping method with 5,000 resamples. Hypothesis testing was conducted by examining the t-statistics and p-values, with a significance level set at 0.05. The mediating effect of Organizational Commitment was tested through the indirect effect estimation, and the total effect was decomposed into direct and indirect components to understand the full impact of Person–Environment Fit on OCB.

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process. Participation in the survey was voluntary, and respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. All collected data were used solely for academic purposes, and informed consent was obtained before questionnaire distribution. The research protocol was reviewed and approved by the Graduate Program of Management at Universitas Lancang Kuning, ensuring that the study adhered to appropriate academic and ethical standards.

4. Result and Discussion

The analysis of the measurement model confirmed that all constructs in the study—Person–Environment Fit (PE Fit), Organizational Commitment (OC), and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)—were valid and reliable. Factor loadings for all indicators exceeded 0.70, suggesting strong correlations between observed variables and their respective latent constructs. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were above the recommended threshold of 0.50, supporting convergent validity. Discriminant validity was established using the Fornell–Larcker criterion, where the square roots of AVE for each construct were greater than their correlations with other constructs. Reliability measures, including composite reliability and Cronbach’s alpha, were also satisfactory, with values above 0.80.

The structural model was then tested using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS 3.29. The results of hypothesis testing are summarized in the following image:

Based on the model, Person–Environment Fit had a direct and significant influence on Organizational Citizenship Behavior ($\beta = 0.391$; $t = 6.732$; $p < 0.001$), indicating that when employees perceive congruence between themselves and their work environment, they are more likely to engage in citizenship behaviors. PE Fit also showed a strong positive influence on Organizational Commitment ($\beta = 0.455$; $t = 8.521$; $p < 0.001$), suggesting that fit promotes emotional attachment and loyalty to the organization.

Moreover, Organizational Commitment significantly predicted OCB ($\beta = 0.462$; $t = 7.218$; $p < 0.001$), supporting the view that employees who are emotionally committed to their organization are more inclined to go beyond their prescribed duties. The indirect effect of PE Fit on OCB through Organizational Commitment was also significant ($\beta = 0.210$; $t = 4.835$; $p < 0.001$), indicating partial mediation.

The model's explanatory power was evaluated using R^2 values: Organizational Commitment was explained by PE Fit at 20.7% ($R^2 = 0.207$), and OCB was explained by PE Fit and OC combined at 46.2% ($R^2 = 0.462$). The effect size (f^2) analysis revealed moderate effect sizes for each of the direct relationships, supporting the relevance and robustness of the model.

Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value	Decision
PE Fit → OCB	0.391	6.732	0.000	Supported
PE Fit → OC	0.455	8.521	0.000	Supported
OC → OCB	0.462	7.218	0.000	Supported
PE Fit → OC → OCB (indirect)	0.21	4.835	0.000	Supported (partial mediation)

The findings provide strong empirical evidence that Person–Environment Fit plays a pivotal role in shaping Organizational Citizenship Behavior, both directly and indirectly through Organizational Commitment. Employees who perceive alignment between their values, abilities, and the characteristics of their job, team, and organization are more likely to exhibit extra-role behaviors. This result is consistent with prior studies (e.g., Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Zhang et al., 2020), which emphasize the motivational power of psychological fit in promoting proactive and cooperative actions at work.

The significant influence of PE Fit on Organizational Commitment reinforces the idea that congruence fosters not only job satisfaction but deeper emotional attachment. When employees feel that their organization reflects their identity and professional ideals, they are more likely to develop loyalty and a sense of obligation. This affective commitment, in turn, enhances their willingness to engage in OCB. Such findings are aligned with Meyer and Allen's (1997) affective commitment framework and affirm the conservation of resources perspective, where a fitting environment contributes to resource gain—emotional energy, motivation, and engagement—that fuels voluntary behavior.

Importantly, the discovery of partial mediation by Organizational Commitment reveals a nuanced mechanism. While PE Fit directly increases the likelihood of OCB, a significant portion of its effect is transmitted through commitment. This highlights that behavioral outcomes are not merely driven by perception but also by internalization. Without a strong emotional connection to the organization, even employees who feel well-matched to their roles may refrain from engaging in discretionary behaviors. Thus, fostering commitment becomes essential to translating fit into action.

From a practical standpoint, these findings offer several implications for public sector management. First, recruitment and placement strategies should prioritize alignment between employee values and organizational culture. Second, leadership development should focus on building environments that reinforce shared identity, psychological safety, and inclusivity—factors that sustain emotional commitment. In bureaucratic settings like BKKBN, where formal processes dominate, fostering affective ties may serve as a counterbalance to procedural rigidity, allowing OCB to emerge more naturally.

Furthermore, the demographic characteristics of the sample—comprising mostly women in their prime working age—underscore the importance of empowerment, recognition, and meaningful career pathways in reinforcing commitment. Many public employees may meet basic performance expectations due to structure, but discretionary contributions often arise from deeper motivational sources. Therefore, commitment-building interventions, such as mentoring, value-based leadership, and internal communication strategies, can amplify the behavioral outcomes of perceived fit.

The results also suggest areas for future research. Given that the mediation was partial, other variables may explain additional variance in OCB, such as psychological empowerment, perceived organizational support, or leadership quality. Moreover, longitudinal designs could provide further insights into how these relationships evolve over time.

In sum, this study offers valuable insight into how psychological alignment and affective attachment interact to foster citizenship behavior in public institutions. In settings where formal incentives are limited, leveraging fit and commitment becomes not only a matter of culture but of performance strategy.

5. Conclusion

This study illuminates the pivotal role of organizational commitment in transforming perceptions of person–environment fit into meaningful organizational citizenship behaviors within the public sector. The findings demonstrate that alignment between an individual and their work environment—spanning roles, organizational culture, and team dynamics—sets the foundation for discretionary, prosocial behavior. However, this alignment alone is not enough. It is the emotional investment, sense of belonging, and loyalty embodied in organizational commitment that translates psychological compatibility into action.

For public institutions striving to foster high engagement without relying solely on formal reward systems, the path is clear: invest in both selection processes that emphasize value congruence and organizational practices that nurture commitment. Developing such conditions is not merely a human resource initiative—it is a strategic imperative for sustaining trust, performance, and public service quality. While technical skills and compliance are essential in bureaucratic systems, the enduring value lies in creating environments where employees feel connected and committed, empowering them to go beyond the call of duty.

Future research should delve deeper into other psychological mediators and moderators that may enrich our understanding of employee behavior, particularly in resource-constrained public organizations. Integrating leadership quality, trust, and organizational climate may offer a fuller picture of how to mobilize citizenship behavior as a collective asset.

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