

The Effects of Perceived Organizational Support and Job Meaningfulness on Employee Engagement among Employees of the Cirebon Regency Trade and Industry Office

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Abstract

This study analyzes the individual and joint effects of perceived organizational support and job meaningfulness on employee engagement among employees of the Cirebon Regency Trade and Industry Office. The study adopted a quantitative associational approach with a causal design. The entire population of 150 employees participated as respondents through total population sampling. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed through descriptive statistics, validity testing, reliability testing, residual normality testing, multiple linear regression, t-tests, an F-test, and the coefficient of determination. The results show that perceived organizational support was rated as good (mean 3.57), job meaningfulness was rated as good (3.50), and employee engagement was rated as good (3.70). Perceived organizational support had a positive and significant effect on employee engagement ($B = 1.275$; $\beta = 0.495$; $t = 8.893$; $p < 0.001$). Job meaningfulness also had a positive and significant effect ($B = 0.444$; $\beta = 0.505$; $t = 9.079$; $p < 0.001$). Jointly, the two variables explained 54.3% of the variation in employee engagement (adjusted $R^2 = 0.543$; $F = 89.414$; $p < 0.001$). Job meaningfulness made a slightly stronger relative contribution based on standardized beta coefficients. The findings emphasize that organizational support needs to be accompanied by stronger connections among daily tasks, organizational goals, and the benefits of public service.

Keywords

perceived organizational support; job meaningfulness; employee engagement; public sector employees; organizational



I. Introduction

Employee engagement is a positive psychological state reflected in energy, dedication, and focused attention at work. For public sector organizations, engagement is associated not only with individual productivity but also with service consistency, responsiveness, and employees' ability to connect administrative tasks with benefits for the community. Recent literature shows that engagement develops when employees have adequate job resources, feel valued by the organization, and regard their work as meaningful (Albrecht et al., 2021; Sihag, 2021; Opoku & Boateng, 2024).

Perceived organizational support (POS) describes employees' belief that the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. Within the social exchange framework, this support creates a reciprocal motivation to contribute to the organization through greater involvement, persistence, and effort. Positive relationships between POS and engagement have been found across various organizational contexts (Claudianty & Suhariadi, 2021; Kumar & Punitha, 2022; Saputra et al., 2023; Umbara & Dwarawati, 2024). However, formal support is not always sufficient when working

conditions, leadership communication, and employees' daily experiences are not perceived as comfortable and fair.

Job meaningfulness explains the extent to which work is perceived as valuable, purposeful, and contributing significantly to oneself and others. Meaningful work serves as a source of intrinsic motivation, helps employees cope with demands, and strengthens dedication. Recent studies link meaningful work to engagement, performance, commitment to change, and retention (Hasan et al., 2022; Merdiaty, 2024; Faisaluddin et al., 2024; Samudra et al., 2025; Holúbek et al., 2026). In public agencies, work meaningfulness is particularly relevant because employees need to see tangible connections between routine procedures and their effects on the community.

The research gap addressed by this study concerns the joint examination of resources provided by the organization and resources derived from the meaning of work within a single local government agency. Some previous studies examine POS or meaningful work separately, use performance or retention as outcomes, or focus on business organizations. This study aims to: (1) test the effect of POS on employee engagement; (2) test the effect of job meaningfulness on employee engagement; and (3) test the joint effect of these two variables among employees of the Cirebon Regency Trade and Industry Office.

II. Review of Literature

2.1 Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Engagement

POS develops through employees' experiences of appreciation, concern for their well-being, assistance when facing problems, recognition of their contributions, and the working conditions provided by the organization. When support is perceived as sincere, employees are more likely to develop a sense of obligation to help the organization achieve its goals. Findings by Sihag (2021), Sulistiyani et al. (2022), Saputra et al. (2023), and Augusty and Hurriyati (2025) demonstrate a consistent relationship between POS and engagement. Based on this argument, H1 proposes that perceived organizational support has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement.

2.2 Job Meaningfulness and Employee Engagement

Job meaningfulness encompasses positive meaning, meaning-making through work, and the contribution of work to the greater good. Employees who understand the social value and purpose of their work tend to invest greater cognitive, emotional, and physical energy. This relationship is supported by Albrecht et al. (2021), Hasan et al. (2022), Anggraini et al. (2024), and Fajriah et al. (2025). Accordingly, H2 proposes that job meaningfulness has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement.

2.3 The Joint Effect of POS and Job Meaningfulness

POS provides external resources in the form of care, recognition, and a supportive environment, while job meaningfulness provides internal resources in the form of purpose and personal value. Their combination is expected to strengthen engagement because employees not only feel supported but also understand the important reasons behind their work. H3 proposes that perceived organizational support and job meaningfulness jointly have a positive and significant effect on employee engagement.

III. Research Methods

The study adopted a quantitative associational approach examining causal relationships. The research was conducted at the Cirebon Regency Trade and Industry Office. The population comprised 150 employees, all of whom were included in the sample through total population sampling, or a census. Primary data were collected using a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire. POS was measured using six statements, job meaningfulness using ten statements, and employee engagement using 17 statements representing vigor, dedication, and absorption.

The analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics. Instrument quality was assessed through item-total correlations using a critical r-value of 0.1603 and Cronbach's alpha reliability with a threshold of 0.70. Residual normality was tested using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Hypotheses were tested using multiple linear regression at a 5% significance level. Decisions on individual effects were based on t-tests, decisions on the joint effect on the F-test, and the model's explanatory power on adjusted R square.

IV. Result and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 1. Descriptive Summary of the Variables

Variable	Number of Items	Mean	Category	Highest-Rated Item	Lowest-Rated Item
Perceived organizational support	6	3.57	Good	Leadership care and support (3.93)	Pleasant, comfortable, and conducive working conditions (3.03)
Job meaningfulness	10	3.50	Good	Valuable and meaningful work (3.75)	Work as part of a broader purpose (3.21)
Employee engagement	17	3.70	Good	High enthusiasm and energy (3.98)	Happy when working intensely (3.07)

Source: Processed research data, 2026.

Table 1 shows that all three variables were rated as good, although patterns across items reveal specific areas for improvement. For POS, the high rating for leadership care indicates that interpersonal support was clearly perceived. In contrast, the score of 3.03 for working conditions indicates that support at the physical and psychosocial environment level was not as strong as leadership support. Improving POS therefore requires more than verbal appreciation; the organization also needs to improve facility comfort, workload clarity, communication, and the collaborative atmosphere.

For job meaningfulness, employees acknowledged that their work was valuable (3.75), but were less able to connect their tasks to a broader purpose (3.21). This gap indicates that personal meaning had developed, while the line of sight among daily work, agency objectives, and public benefits still needed clarification. For employee engagement,

work energy was the strongest aspect (3.98), while happiness when working intensely was the lowest (3.07). This means that employees could demonstrate vigor, but work intensity was not always accompanied by positive affective experiences. This finding matters because sustained engagement requires both energy and healthy work experiences.

4.2 Instrument Validity and Reliability

Table 2. Summary of Validity Testing

Variable	Range of Calculated r	Critical r	Number of Valid Items	Decision
Perceived organizational support	0.710-0.769	0.1603	6 of 6	All items valid
Job meaningfulness	0.637-0.762	0.1603	10 of 10	All items valid
Employee engagement	0.601-0.755	0.1603	17 of 17	All items valid

Source: Processed research data, 2026.

All item correlation coefficients in Table 2 exceeded the critical r-value of 0.1603. The lowest coefficient was 0.601 for employee engagement and remained well above the criterion, while the highest coefficient was 0.769 for POS. These results indicate that each statement had an adequate relationship with its construct's total score and could be retained in the analysis.

Table 3. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Threshold	Decision
Perceived organizational support	0.837	0.70	Reliable
Job meaningfulness	0.892	0.70	Reliable
Employee engagement	0.931	0.70	Reliable

Source: Processed research data, 2026.

Table 3 shows that all Cronbach's alpha values exceeded 0.70. Employee engagement had the highest internal consistency (0.931), followed by job meaningfulness (0.892) and POS (0.837). The instrument therefore provided stable and consistent measurement. These high values also support the use of composite scores for each variable in the regression.

4.3 Residual Normality

Table 4. Kolmogorov–Smirnov Normality Test Results

N	Mean Residual	Standard Deviation	Test Statistic	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
150	0.000	5.588	0.049	0.200	Normally distributed residuals

Source: Processed research data, 2026.

The significance value of 0.200 in Table 4 exceeded 0.05, providing no basis for rejecting the assumption of residual normality. The correct test statistic was 0.049, not 0.49. This result supports the suitability of parametric testing in the regression model. The normality test concerned the distribution of the model's residuals, rather than questionnaire validity.

4.4 Multiple Linear Regression and Hypothesis Testing

Table 5. Regression Coefficients and Individual Significance Tests

Variable	B	Std. error	Beta	t	Sig.	Decision
Constant	20.039	3.397	-	5.900	<0.001	-
Perceived organizational support	1.275	0.143	0.495	8.893	<0.001	H1 accepted
Job meaningfulness	0.444	0.049	0.505	9.079	<0.001	H2 accepted

Source: Processed research data, 2026.

Based on Table 5, the regression equation was $Y = 20.039 + 1.275X_1 + 0.444X_2 + e$. The POS coefficient of 1.275 means that a one-unit increase in the POS score was estimated to increase the employee engagement score by 1.275 units, controlling for job meaningfulness. The job meaningfulness coefficient of 0.444 means that a one-unit increase in this variable was estimated to increase engagement by 0.444 units, controlling for POS. Both coefficients were positive, consistent with the hypotheses.

POS had a calculated t-value of 8.893, exceeding the critical t-value of 1.976, with $p < 0.001$. H1 was therefore accepted. This result strengthens the social exchange explanation: the care and appreciation employees receive encourage reciprocal contributions in the form of energy, dedication, and work focus. The finding is consistent with Claudianty and Suhariadi (2021), Sihag (2021), Kumar and Punitha (2022), Opoku and Boateng (2024), and Nathalia et al. (2025). In this study's context, leadership support was an established strength, but the quality of working conditions needed improvement to make perceived support more consistent.

Job meaningfulness had a calculated t-value of 9.079, exceeding the critical t-value of 1.976, with $p < 0.001$; H2 was therefore accepted. The standardized beta coefficient for job meaningfulness (0.505) was slightly greater than that for POS (0.495). Comparing beta coefficients, rather than B coefficients measured on different scales, indicates that meaningfulness made a slightly stronger relative contribution. This finding is consistent with Albrecht et al. (2021), Hasan et al. (2022), Merdiaty (2024), Anggraini et al. (2024), Samudra et al. (2025), and Holúbek et al. (2026). The implication is that regular explanations of programs' effects on the community can strengthen employees' sense of meaning and engagement.

Table 6. Model Significance and Coefficients of Determination

R	R square	Adjusted square	R	Std. error	F	df	Sig.
0.741	0.549	0.543		5.626	89.414	2; 147	<0.001

Source: Processed research data, 2026.

Table 6 shows a strong combined relationship between the predictors and employee engagement ($R = 0.741$). The R square value of 0.549 indicates that the model explained 54.9% of the variation in engagement before adjustment, while the adjusted R square value of 0.543 indicates explanatory power of 54.3% after accounting for the number of predictors and sample size. The remaining 45.7% was associated with factors outside the model, such as leadership, workload, organizational justice, development opportunities, compensation, psychological capital, and work-life balance.

The F-value of 89.414, with degrees of freedom of 2 and 147 and $p < 0.001$, indicates that the regression model was significant overall; H3 was accepted.

Substantively, employee engagement can be strengthened more readily through a dual strategy. Organizational support creates a sense of security and being valued, while meaningfulness ensures that employees' energy is directed toward understood goals. Because the lowest scores concerned working conditions, the connection between tasks and broader goals, and happiness when working intensely, interventions need to focus on these three areas.

4.5 Managerial Implications

First, leaders need to translate support into improvements in work experiences through the evaluation of facilities, workload distribution, access to assistance, feedback, and consistent recognition. Second, each unit needs to connect individual targets with program indicators and public service benefits through briefings, performance dialogues, and accounts of the impact achieved. Third, the organization needs to monitor engagement periodically across the dimensions of vigor, dedication, and absorption to ensure that work energy does not develop into exhausting intensity. Fourth, involving employees in process improvements can strengthen both POS and meaningfulness because employees feel heard and see their contributions to organizational outcomes.

V. Conclusion

Perceived organizational support had a positive and significant effect on employee engagement. Job meaningfulness also had a positive and significant effect, with a slightly stronger relative contribution based on standardized beta coefficients. Jointly, the two variables had a significant effect and explained 54.3% of the variation in engagement. These results indicate that public sector employee engagement rests on two complementary experiences: feeling supported by the organization and understanding the value of one's work.

The Office is advised to maintain the leadership support already rated as good while improving the comfort of working conditions. Unit leaders also need to explain the connection between each task, strategic objectives, and public benefits, provide feedback based on impact, and involve employees in service improvements. Future research could include leadership, workload, organizational justice, psychological capital, and work-life balance, and use a longitudinal design to assess causal relationships more robustly.

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