
The Effect of Transformational Leadership and Work Environment on Job Satisfaction Through Work Engagement Among Employees

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to examine the effect of Transformational Leadership and Work Environment on Job Satisfaction through the mediating role of Work Engagement. The research employs an explanatory quantitative approach with a causal design using a structural model to examine the relationships among variables. Data were collected from 80 employee respondents using saturated sampling and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM). The findings show that Transformational Leadership, Work Environment, Work Engagement, and Job Satisfaction meet the criteria for internal consistency reliability and convergent validity. The values of Cronbach's Alpha, rho_A, Composite Reliability, and AVE exceed the established thresholds. Furthermore, the R-square results indicate that Work Engagement ($R^2 = 0.771$) and Job Satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.395$) are explained by the predictor variables included in the model. The model fit indices, including SRMR, d_ULS, d_G, Chi-square, and NFI, indicate an acceptable model fit. Hypothesis testing shows that Transformational Leadership and Work Environment have significant effects on Job Satisfaction and Work Engagement, while Work Engagement has a significant effect on Job Satisfaction. Work Engagement significantly mediates the relationship between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction but does not significantly mediate the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction. Overall, the findings support the proposed structural relationships and highlight the role of Work Engagement in explaining employee Job Satisfaction.

Keywords: *Transformational Leadership, Work Environment, Work Engagement, Job Satisfaction.*

INTRODUCTION

The increasingly dynamic changes in the business environment require companies not only to be oriented toward achieving targets, but also to be able to create work experiences that support the sustainability of human resources (Lu et al., 2023). Employees become an important element because company success is greatly influenced by how they perceive work, receive support, and engage in work activities (Sutanto et al., 2025). However, positive work experiences have not yet been fully experienced by all employees (Gallup, 2026). Gallup (2026) reported that only 20% of employees globally are in the *engaged* category, while in Indonesia the level of *employee engagement* reaches 27%. Although higher than the Southeast Asian average of 25% (Gallup, 2026). The comparison of *employee engagement* levels can be seen in Figure 1. Nevertheless, this figure indicates that most employees still have not demonstrated optimal

engagement (Gallup, 2026). This condition is important to consider because employee engagement is related to how they feel, experience, and evaluate their work experience (Prentice, 2022).

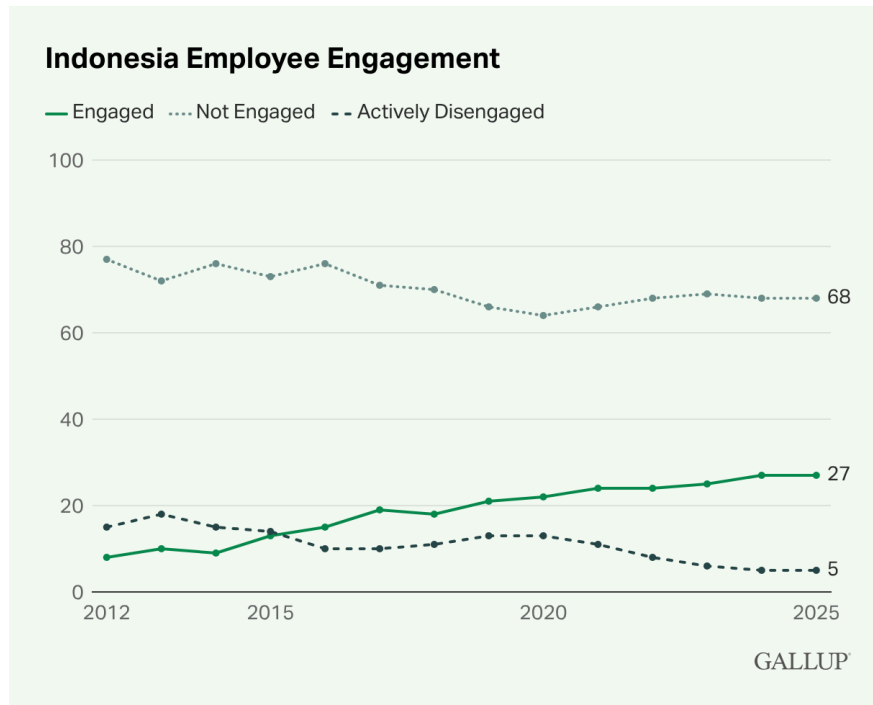


Figure 1. Comparison of Employee Engagement Levels in Indonesia, Southeast Asia, and Globally (Gallup, 2026)

The challenge of creating a positive work experience is also reflected in the results of PwC's *Global Workforce Hopes and Fears Survey 2025*, which involved 812 Indonesian respondents (PwC Indonesia, 2026). A total of 25% of Indonesian workers reported feeling overwhelmed, 41% experienced fatigue, and 18% considered moving to another company (PwC Indonesia, 2026). These findings indicate that some employees still face pressure and discomfort in carrying out their work (PwC Indonesia, 2026). These conditions can influence how employees evaluate their overall work experience (Prentice, 2022). Therefore, job satisfaction becomes an important aspect because it reflects the extent to which employees have a positive assessment of the work and working conditions they experience (Chen et al., 2021).

Job satisfaction that has not yet reached an optimal level can be reflected in reduced enthusiasm, the emergence of discomfort in carrying out tasks, low initiative, and a tendency to consider alternative employment (Prentice, 2022). These conditions can be influenced by various factors perceived by employees within the company environment (Sutanto et al., 2025). Among these factors, transformational leadership and the work environment are important because they are related to the support, comfort, and experiences of employees in carrying out their work, which can subsequently shape job satisfaction.

Transformational leadership emphasizes the ability of leaders to provide inspiration, build a vision, provide individual attention, and encourage employees to develop. Such support can shape positive perceptions of work and increase job satisfaction (Chen et al., 2021). Empirically, (Wijana & Gede Supartha, 2024) found that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. However, different results were found by Maulia, (2023) who showed that transformational leadership has a positive effect on job satisfaction, but the effect is not significant. The study also found that transformational leadership does not have a significant effect on *employee engagement*. These findings indicate that the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' work attitudes may vary across organizational contexts (Wijana & Gede Supartha, 2024).

In addition to leadership, the work environment is also closely related to employees' experiences in carrying out their tasks (Rahayu et al., 2024). The work environment includes physical conditions such as facilities, comfort, and safety, as well as non-physical conditions in the form of communication, relationships with colleagues, cooperation, and the work atmosphere. A conducive environment can provide comfort and help employees carry out their work effectively, thereby encouraging a more positive assessment of their work. Rahayu et al., (2024) found that the work environment has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. In contrast, Trivilanita et al., (2024) found that the direct effect of the work environment on job satisfaction is positive but not significant. These findings indicate that the relationship between the work environment and job satisfaction may differ depending on the employees and organizational context being examined.

The differences in research findings indicate that the effects of transformational leadership and the work environment on job satisfaction does not always occur directly (Trivilanita et al., 2024). In this relationship, work engagement can play a role as a variable that bridges the effects of workplace factors on employee outcomes (Abolnasser et al., 2023). Work engagement describes a condition in which employees have high levels of energy, dedication, and concentration in carrying out their work (Abolnasser et al., 2023). Support and inspiration from leaders can encourage employees to become more enthusiastic and engaged in their work, while a comfortable and conducive work environment can support employees in carrying out their tasks optimally (Sutanto et al., 2025). When work engagement increases, employees tend to obtain more positive work experiences so that job satisfaction can also increase (Hanafi et al., 2026).

The role of work engagement in explaining the relationships among leadership, work environment, and job satisfaction has received increasing empirical attention in recent studies (Trivilanita et al., 2024). Sutanto et al. (2025) found that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement. Furthermore, Hanafi et al. (2026) found that employee engagement has a positive effect on job satisfaction. Trivilanita et al. (2024) showed that the work environment has a positive effect on work engagement and that such engagement subsequently mediates the relationship between the work environment and job satisfaction. These findings provide an empirical basis for further examining work engagement as a mechanism connecting organizational factors with employee job satisfaction (Abolnasser et al., 2023).

Nevertheless, findings regarding the mediating role of work engagement have not been entirely consistent (Pranitasari et al., 2022). Trivilanita et al. (2024) found that work engagement is able to mediate the relationship between the work environment and job satisfaction, but is unable to mediate the relationship between leadership and job satisfaction. Meanwhile, Pranitasari et al. (2022) found that work engagement does not have a significant effect on job satisfaction and is unable to mediate the effect of the work environment on job satisfaction. These differences in findings indicate that the role of work engagement in linking leadership, the work environment, and job satisfaction still requires further examination (Pranitasari et al., 2022).

The inconsistency of previous research findings indicates that the relationship between transformational leadership, the work environment, and job satisfaction still requires further explanation (Trivilanita et al., 2024). In several studies, transformational leadership and the work environment have been proven to have a direct effect on job satisfaction, while other studies have reported non-significant relationships (Sutanto et al., 2025). These differences in results open up opportunities to test work engagement as a mediating variable that can explain the mechanism through which transformational leadership and the work environment contribute to the formation of employee job satisfaction (Pranitasari et al., 2022).

Based on the description above, this study analyzes the effects of transformational leadership and the work environment on job satisfaction through work engagement among employees. This study examines the direct effects of transformational leadership and the work environment on job satisfaction while also examining the role of work engagement as a mediating variable. Thus, this study is expected to provide empirical evidence that clarifies the inconsistencies in previous research and strengthens the understanding of the mechanism through which employee job satisfaction is formed.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership refers to a leadership approach in which leaders influence employees by providing inspiration, building a shared vision, encouraging the development of new ideas, and paying attention to individual needs (Zare & Flinchbaugh, 2026). Through this approach, leaders seek to motivate employees to work beyond their initial expectations and contribute more strongly to organizational goals (Teoh et al., 2022).

Transformational leadership also emphasizes the ability of leaders to create positive changes in employees' attitudes and behavior. Leaders who apply this style do not rely solely on formal authority, but also build trust, provide motivation, encourage employees to think creatively, and support their personal development (Khan et al., 2025). As a result, transformational leadership can strengthen employees' enthusiasm, engagement, and positive perceptions of their work.

Transformational Leadership Indicators

According to Bass and Avolio, transformational leadership consists of four main dimensions (Zare & Flinchbaugh, 2026) :

1. Idealized Influence

Refers to the leader's ability to become a role model who is respected, trusted, and admired by employees. Leaders demonstrate strong values, consistency, and commitment that encourage employees to follow their example.

2. **Inspirational Motivation**

Refers to the leader's ability to communicate an attractive vision, provide encouragement, and inspire employees to achieve organizational goals with optimism and enthusiasm.

3. **Intellectual Stimulation**

Refers to the leader's ability to encourage employees to think critically, generate new ideas, solve problems creatively, and view challenges from various perspectives.

4. **Individualized Consideration**

Refers to the leader's attention to the needs, abilities, and development of each individual employee. Leaders provide guidance, support, and opportunities for employees to develop according to their potential.

Work Environment

The work environment refers to the overall conditions surrounding employees that can influence how they perform their tasks and experience their work (Saputra et al., 2024). The work environment includes not only the physical aspects of the workplace but also psychological and social conditions that can affect employee comfort, satisfaction, and productivity (Tianggur Angelia Pardosi & Ainun Mardhiyah, 2023). Recent studies distinguish the work environment into physical conditions that directly or indirectly surround employees and non-physical conditions related to interpersonal relationships, communication, and interactions within the workplace (Saputra et al., 2024).

The work environment therefore represents both tangible and intangible aspects of employees' daily working conditions. Physical elements may include workspace arrangement, lighting, air circulation, cleanliness, facilities, noise, and workplace safety, while non-physical elements include communication, cooperation, relationships among coworkers, and relationships between employees and superiors (Brenda Arim Melati et al., 2023). A supportive work environment can provide greater comfort for employees and facilitate the effective completion of their responsibilities.

Work Environment Indicators

Based on the physical and non-physical dimensions of the work environment, the indicators used in this study are (Saputra et al., 2024) :

1. **Physical Working Conditions**

Refers to the physical conditions surrounding employees while performing their work, including lighting, air circulation, cleanliness, workspace arrangement, and other conditions that support employee comfort.

2. **Work Facilities**

Refers to the availability and adequacy of equipment, facilities, and supporting infrastructure needed by employees to carry out their tasks effectively.

3. **Workplace Safety and Comfort**

Refers to employees' perceptions of security, protection, and comfort while carrying out their work activities.

4. **Work Relationships and Social Interaction**

Refers to the quality of communication, cooperation, and interpersonal relationships among coworkers as well as between employees and superiors.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to employees' overall evaluation and attitude toward their work. It reflects the extent to which employees experience positive feelings toward various aspects of their jobs (Williams et al., 2024). Job satisfaction can be understood as an aggregate evaluation of several job dimensions, including pay, promotion opportunities, coworkers, supervision, tasks, and the work itself (Landay et al., 2024).

Job satisfaction develops when employees feel that their work and organizational experiences meet their needs and expectations. Employees may assess satisfaction not only from the nature of the work itself, but also from compensation, opportunities for promotion, supervisory support, and relationships with coworkers. These dimensions have been widely used to assess employee job satisfaction in organizational research (Yasmin et al., 2023).

Job Satisfaction Indicators

Recent studies continue to assess job satisfaction through five main dimensions: the work itself, compensation or pay, supervision, promotion opportunities, and coworkers (Yasmin et al., 2023).

1. The Work Itself

Refers to the extent to which employees perceive their work as interesting, meaningful, challenging, and capable of providing opportunities to learn and take responsibility.

2. Compensation

Refers to employees' satisfaction with the financial rewards received and their perceptions of whether the compensation is appropriate and fair in relation to their work.

3. Supervision

Refers to employees' satisfaction with the supervisor's ability to provide direction, technical assistance, attention, and support in carrying out their tasks.

4. Promotion Opportunities

Refers to employees' perceptions of the availability and fairness of opportunities for career advancement within the organization.

5. Coworkers

Refers to employees' satisfaction with the quality of relationships, cooperation, competence, and social support provided by coworkers.

Work Engagement

Work engagement can be defined as the relationship between employees and their organization, in which employees demonstrate positive attitudes and pride toward the values and goals of the organization, along with a willingness to perform behaviors that support coworkers for the benefit of the organization (Dewa, 2023).

Work engagement is a concept that describes the quality of employees in carrying out their tasks. It is often associated with involvement, commitment, enthusiasm, passion, intimacy or absorption, focus on effort, and energy (Rezeki, 2023). According to Surohmat, (2022), work engagement, or employee engagement, is a business management concept that refers to highly engaged employees as those who are truly involved and highly enthusiastic about their work and the long-term activities of the organization.

Work Engagement Indicators

According to Dewa, (2023), there are three indicators of work engagement, namely:

1. Vigor

Defined as a high level of energy and mental resilience while working, accompanied by a willingness to exert effort in tasks and persistence when facing difficulties.

2. Dedication

Defined as deep involvement in work while experiencing enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge.

3. Absorption

Defined as being fully concentrated and happily immersed in one's work.

Hypothesis Development

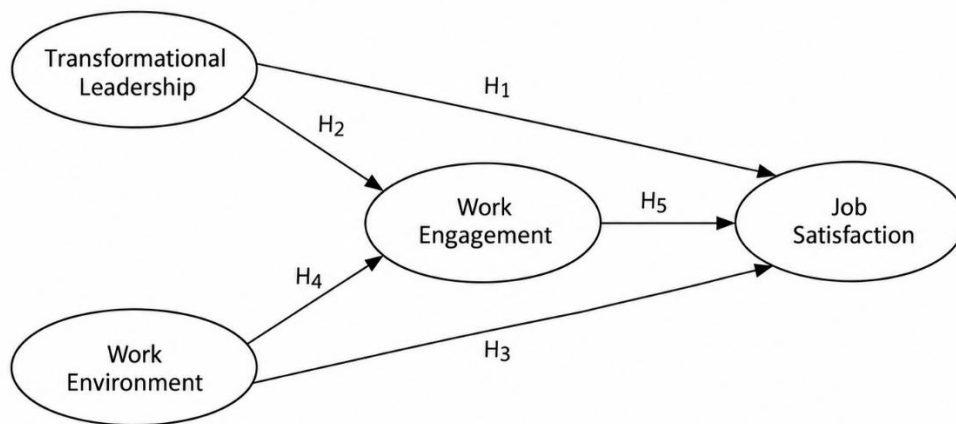


Figure 2 Research Paradigm

H1: Transformational Leadership positively and significantly affects Job Satisfaction.

H2: Transformational Leadership positively and significantly affects Work Engagement.

H3: Work Environment positively and significantly affects Job Satisfaction.

H4: Work Environment positively and significantly affects Work Engagement.

H5: Work Engagement positively and significantly affects Job Satisfaction.

H6: Work Engagement significantly mediates the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction.

H7: Work Engagement significantly mediates the relationship between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction.

RESEARCH METHOD

The type of research used in this study is *explanatory research* with a causal approach, which aims to examine the effects among variables in a structural model. This study uses a quantitative approach that begins with the formulation of hypotheses based on the relationships among variables, followed by systematic data collection, processing, and analysis. This study consists of four variables, namely two independent variables, one mediating variable, and one dependent variable. The first independent variable is Transformational Leadership, the second

independent variable is the Work Environment, the mediating variable is Work Engagement, while Job Satisfaction is the dependent variable. The framework of relationships among variables in this study is transformational leadership and the work environment on job satisfaction, both directly and through work engagement as a mediating variable. The framework of the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable in this study is as follows:

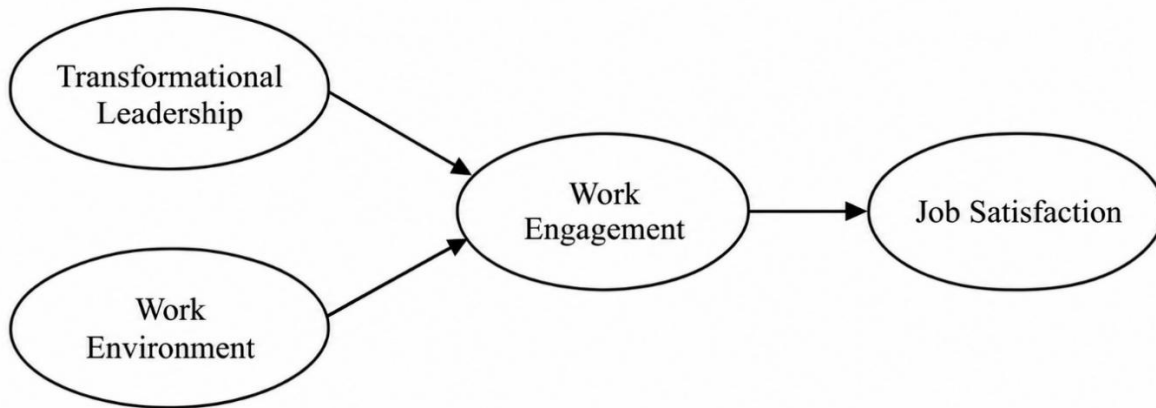


Figure 3. Conceptual Framework of the Study

The population in this study consists of 80 employees. The sampling technique uses a non-probability sampling method with a saturated sampling approach, so that all members of the population are used as the sample. Thus, the sample size in this study is 80 respondents.

This study employs structural analysis using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach. The analysis begins with an evaluation of the outer model, including convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability. Convergent validity is assessed through outer loading values, while reliability is evaluated using Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha. The analysis then proceeds to the evaluation of the inner model through R-squared (R^2), model fit indices including SRMR, Chi-square, and NFI, and path coefficients to determine the strength and significance of the effects among variables. This structural model evaluation is conducted to test the proposed hypotheses and assess the relationships specified in the research model (Haryono, 2017).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

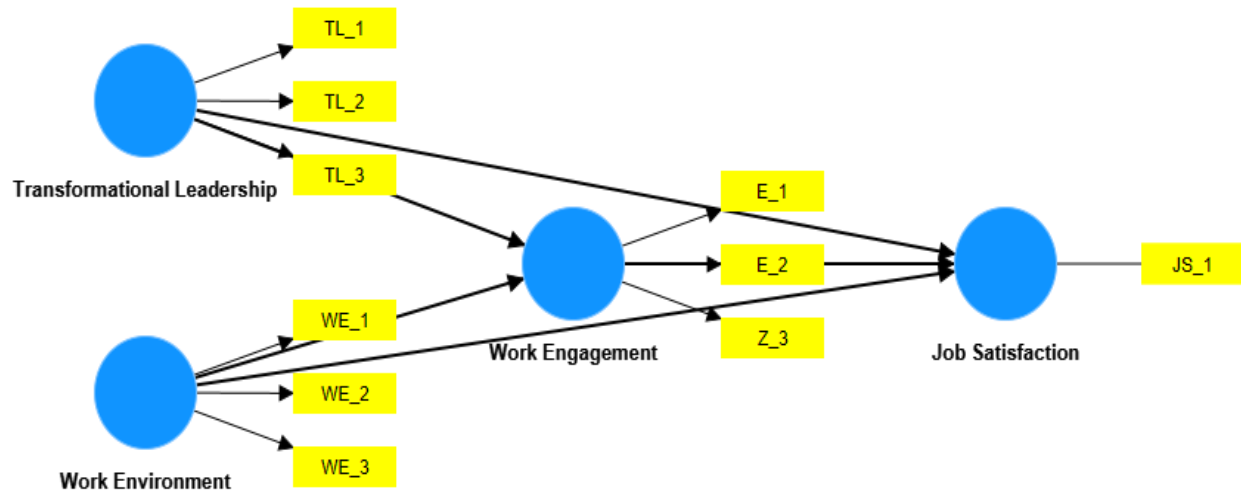


Figure 4. Outer Loading Test Results

According to Figure 2, the validity test results indicate that three indicators of transformational leadership, three indicators of the work environment, three indicators of work engagement, and three indicators of job satisfaction are valid. The validity of these indicators is determined based on their outer loading values, with all retained indicators exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. Therefore, a total of 10 indicators are considered valid and suitable for further analysis in the structural model.

Tabel 1. Construct reliability and validity

	Cronbach's alpha	(rho_A)	(rho_C)	(AVE)
Transformational Leadership	0.862	0.870	0.916	0.785
Work Environment	0.832	0.833	0.900	0.749
Job Satisfaction	0.835	0.840	0.900	0.751
Work Engagement	0.862	0.870	0.916	0.785

Source: Output PLS, 2025

The measurement model was assessed to establish the internal consistency reliability and convergent validity of the constructs. Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, and composite reliability (rho_C), while convergent validity was assessed using the average variance extracted (AVE). Following Hair et al. (2019), reliability coefficients of at least 0.70 and AVE values of at least 0.50 were used as the evaluation criteria.

As presented in Table 1, all four constructs demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency reliability. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.832 to 0.862, rho_A values ranged from 0.833 to 0.870, and composite reliability values ranged from 0.900 to 0.916. These results exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency across all constructs.

Convergent validity was also established, with AVE values ranging from 0.749 to 0.785. Specifically, transformational leadership and work engagement each recorded an AVE of 0.785, while work environment and job satisfaction obtained AVE values of 0.749 and 0.751,

respectively. All values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.50, indicating that each construct explained more than half of the variance in its associated indicators.

Overall, the findings provide evidence of satisfactory internal consistency reliability and convergent validity for all four constructs. However, a comprehensive assessment of the measurement model additionally requires an examination of indicator loadings and discriminant validity, particularly through the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT), before proceeding to the structural model assessment.

Tabel 2. Structural model testing

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Job Satisfaction	0.395	0.372
Work Engagement	0.771	0.765

Based on the results presented in the table, Job Satisfaction and Work Engagement demonstrate different levels of explanatory power within the structural model. The R-square value for Work Engagement is 0.771, with an Adjusted R-square value of 0.765. This indicates that 77.1% of the variance in Work Engagement can be explained by the predictor variables included in the model, while the remaining 22.9% is explained by other factors outside the model.

Meanwhile, Job Satisfaction has an R-square value of 0.395 and an Adjusted R-square value of 0.372. This indicates that 39.5% of the variance in Job Satisfaction can be explained by the predictor variables included in the model, while the remaining 60.5% is explained by other factors outside the model. Overall, these results indicate that the structural model has substantial explanatory power for Work Engagement and relatively moderate explanatory power for Job Satisfaction.

Tabel 3. GoF (Goodness of Fit) Test

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.069	0.069
d_ ULS	0.262	0.262
d_ G	0.218	0.218
Chi-square	103.015	103.015
NFI	0.816	0.816

Based on the results presented in the table, the Estimated Model shows an SRMR value of 0.069, which is identical to that of the Saturated Model. Since the SRMR value is below the commonly recommended threshold of 0.08, this result indicates an acceptable model fit and suggests that the estimated model adequately represents the observed data.

In addition, the d_ ULS value of 0.262 and the d_ G value of 0.218 are identical for both the Estimated Model and the Saturated Model. These results indicate consistency between the two models in terms of discrepancy measures.

The Chi-square values are also identical for both models, amounting to 103.015, indicating no difference between the Saturated Model and the Estimated Model based on this fit measure. Similarly, the NFI (Normed Fit Index) value is 0.816 for both models, showing a consistent level of model fit.

Overall, the results indicate that the Estimated Model demonstrates an acceptable level of model fit, particularly as reflected by the SRMR value of 0.069. The identical fit indices between the Saturated Model and the Estimated Model further indicate consistency between the specified structural model and the observed data.

Tabel 4. Path Coefficients

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Transformational Leadership -> Job Satisfaction	0.325	0.335	0.135	2.406	0.016
Transformational Leadership -> Work Engagement	0.309	0.315	0.095	3.255	0.001
Work Environment -> Job Satisfaction	0.556	0.554	0.205	2.713	0.007
Work Environment -> Work Engagement	0.295	0.289	0.148	1.994	0.046
Work Engagement -> Job Satisfaction	0.636	0.633	0.091	7.015	0.000
Transformational Leadership -> Work Engagement -> Job Satisfaction	0,172	0,177	0,091	1,887	0,059
Work Environment -> Work Engagement -> Job Satisfaction	0,354	0,348	0,135	2,622	0,009

The analysis of the hypothesis testing results provides important insights into the relationships among Transformational Leadership, Work Environment, Work Engagement, and Job Satisfaction. First, Transformational Leadership has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction, with an original sample coefficient of 0.325, a T-statistic of 2.406, and a P-value of 0.016. Since the P-value is below 0.05, the hypothesis is supported. Transformational Leadership also has a positive and significant effect on Work Engagement, with a coefficient of 0.309, a T-statistic of 3.255, and a P-value of 0.001.

Second, Work Environment has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction, as indicated by a coefficient of 0.556, a T-statistic of 2.713, and a P-value of 0.007. Furthermore, Work Environment also has a positive and significant effect on Work Engagement, with a coefficient of 0.295, a T-statistic of 1.994, and a P-value of 0.046. These findings indicate that a supportive work environment contributes to higher levels of both employee engagement and job satisfaction.

Furthermore, Work Engagement has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction, with a coefficient of 0.636, a T-statistic of 7.015, and a P-value of 0.000. This represents the strongest direct relationship in the structural model, indicating that higher levels of Work Engagement are associated with higher Job Satisfaction.

Regarding the mediating effect, the indirect relationship between Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction through Work Engagement is not statistically significant, with a coefficient of 0.172, a T-statistic of 1.887, and a P-value of 0.059. Since the P-value exceeds 0.05, Work Engagement does not significantly mediate the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction.

In contrast, the indirect relationship between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction through Work Engagement is positive and significant, with a coefficient of 0.354, a T-statistic of 2.622, and a P-value of 0.009. Therefore, Work Engagement significantly mediates the relationship between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction. Since the direct effect of Work Environment on Job Satisfaction also remains significant, the results indicate a partial mediating effect of Work Engagement.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that Transformational Leadership, Work Environment, and Work Engagement significantly contribute to Job Satisfaction. Work Engagement also plays an important mediating role in the relationship between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction, although its mediating effect on the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction is not statistically significant.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the measurement instruments are reliable and valid. All constructs, namely Transformational Leadership, Work Environment, Work Engagement, and Job Satisfaction, meet the required criteria for reliability and validity. The structural model analysis shows that Work Engagement and Job Satisfaction can be explained by the predictors included in the model. The results indicate that Transformational Leadership and Work Environment have significant effects on Work Engagement and Job Satisfaction, while Work Engagement also has a significant effect on Job Satisfaction. The mediation analysis reveals that Work Engagement significantly mediates the relationship between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction. However, Work Engagement does not significantly mediate the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction. In addition, the model fit results indicate that the proposed model has an acceptable level of fit. Overall, this study confirms that Transformational Leadership, Work Environment, and Work Engagement play important roles in explaining Job Satisfaction among employees. Work Engagement particularly serves as an important mechanism linking Work Environment to Job Satisfaction.

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