

The Effect of Psychological Contract, Perceived Organizational Support, And Empowering Leadership on Work Engagement Through Psychological Capital in The Public Sector

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Keywords:	Abstract
Psychological Contract; Perceived Organizational Support; Empowering Leadership; Psychological Capital; Work Engagement	This study examines the influence of psychological contract, perceived organizational support, and empowering leadership on work engagement through psychological capital as a mediating variable among State Civil Apparatus (ASN) employees at the Ministry of Administrative Reform and Bureaucratic Reform (PANRB), Indonesia. The study was motivated by findings from the Ministry's 2025 Mental Health and Well-Being Assessment Survey, which indicated psychological vulnerability and suboptimal well-being among First Expert Functional Position employees, raising concerns regarding their level of work engagement. This study employed a quantitative causal research design using purposive sampling to collect data from 178 First Expert Functional Position employees through an online questionnaire. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4. The results indicate that psychological contract, perceived organizational support, and empowering leadership each have a positive and significant effect on both work engagement and psychological capital. Furthermore, psychological capital has a positive and significant effect on work engagement and partially mediates the relationship between each of the three exogenous variables and work engagement. These findings demonstrate that fulfilling psychological contracts, strengthening organizational support, and implementing empowering leadership practices can enhance employee engagement both directly and indirectly by developing employees' psychological capital, including self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. This study contributes theoretically by integrating these three variables into a single mediation model within the context of Indonesian public sector bureaucracy and provides practical implications for public sector human resource management strategies aimed at strengthening psychological capital and sustaining civil servants' work engagement.

INTRODUCTION

State Civil Apparatus (ASN) represents a strategic national resource that plays a vital role in government operations, public policy implementation, and public service delivery. Within the context of bureaucratic reform and increasingly complex strategic environmental changes, ASN employees are required not only to possess technical competencies and professional work ethics but also adaptive capabilities, innovativeness, and high levels of engagement in performing organizational responsibilities. Changing public expectations regarding service quality require public sector organizations to manage human resources more strategically, with

a focus on sustainable performance. Consequently, modern human resource management perspectives in the public sector no longer emphasize solely administrative functions, regulatory compliance, and formal supervision but also focus on how organizations can create work environments that support sustainable employee engagement, motivation, and psychological attachment to work (Boselie et al., 2021; Fredericksen et al., 2015; Olowu, 2024; Rosenbloom et al., 2022).

In recent years, work engagement has become a critical focus in human resource development across both private and public sectors. High employee engagement is associated with increased enthusiasm, dedication, and involvement in organizational tasks. Work engagement serves as an essential factor supporting productivity, service quality, organizational innovation, and goal achievement (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018). Within government bureaucracy, ASN work engagement has become increasingly important because it directly influences governance effectiveness, public service quality, and the success of national bureaucratic reform initiatives (OECD, 2023). Engaged employees generally demonstrate greater responsibility toward their work, intrinsic motivation, and a stronger tendency to contribute meaningfully to organizational objectives (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). Conversely, low work engagement may lead to organizational challenges, including decreased productivity, reduced work motivation, declining public service quality, increased burnout, and higher levels of employee disengagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

Work engagement does not develop automatically but emerges through continuous reciprocal relationships between employees and organizations (Saks, 2006). When employees perceive that organizations provide support, recognition, psychological security, healthy work relationships, development opportunities, and empowering leadership, they are more likely to demonstrate greater energy, dedication, and involvement in their work (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Schaufeli, 2018). Conversely, excessive work demands, limited organizational support, unclear employment relationships, and inadequate psychological conditions may negatively affect work engagement (Albrecht et al., 2018). In this context, the Ministry of Administrative Reform and Bureaucratic Reform (PANRB) conducted a Mental Health and Well-Being Assessment Survey in 2025 involving 250 ASN employees. The survey served as an initial assessment to identify employees' psychological conditions, well-being levels, and organizational needs, considering that modern organizations must not only focus on achieving performance targets but also ensure that employees maintain adequate psychological conditions and well-being to perform their duties effectively.

The survey results indicated persistent psychological vulnerabilities and suboptimal levels of employee well-being, as reflected by employees experiencing stress, anxiety, and depression symptoms at moderate to very severe levels. The highest level of psychological vulnerability was observed in anxiety-related aspects, indicating significant psychological pressure among several ASN employees. Continuous psychological pressure may affect work concentration, emotional stability, motivation, and employee involvement in organizational tasks. Specifically, employees in First Expert Functional Positions and Executors/Skilled Functional Positions demonstrated higher levels of psychological vulnerability compared with other position groups. The findings indicate that employees at early career stages may face greater psychological challenges in managing work demands, adapting to organizational changes, and navigating career development processes. These challenges may subsequently

influence work engagement because prolonged psychological pressure can reduce employees' energy, enthusiasm, and dedication toward their organizations. Alev (2022) explains that psychological well-being is closely associated with employee engagement, as healthy psychological conditions can strengthen employee dedication and involvement.

The Well-Being Survey, which consisted of Employee Well-Being, Financial Well-Being, and Physical Wellness components, revealed variations across different dimensions (Voordt & Jensen, 2023). Overall, Employee Well-Being showed that 56% of employees were categorized as having High and Very High levels, while 44% remained in the Low and Very Low categories (Al-Jubari et al., 2022). Financial Well-Being varied among position groups, with First Expert Functional Positions and Executors/Skilled Functional Positions appearing most frequently in the Low category (Kutebayev et al., 2024). Physical Wellness also demonstrated variations, with Executors/Skilled Functional Positions and First Expert Functional Positions predominantly categorized as adequate, although some employees remained in poor condition. The Employee Evaluation and Needs Survey further indicated that employees considered health facilities, work flexibility, competency development, work appreciation, and family support as important aspects of their employment experience (Rai & Chawla, 2022). However, several challenges remained, including limited facilities, inadequate career development opportunities, restricted access to training, and perceptions of insufficient compensation and benefits. Based on these findings, First Expert Functional Position employees were identified as the most vulnerable group compared with other positions, as their vulnerability appeared across multiple dimensions, including mental health, financial well-being, physical wellness, and overall employee well-being (Okojie et al., 2023). These conditions indicate that employees face psychological, economic, and occupational demands that may affect their well-being and work engagement (Lee & Jo, 2023).

Although OECD (2023) emphasizes organizational flexibility, incentive systems, and leadership quality as important factors in maintaining public sector employee engagement, effective public sector human resource management is no longer determined solely by employment security and formal administrative systems. Instead, it increasingly depends on organizations' ability to establish flexible, supportive, and meaningful employment relationships with employees. The empirical conditions among First Expert Functional Position ASN employees at the Ministry of PANRB indicate psychological vulnerabilities and well-being concerns that require strategic attention from a human resource management perspective. Based on preliminary survey results involving 32 First Expert Functional Position employees, four variables were identified as the most relevant factors perceived by respondents: Psychological Contract (96.7%), Perceived Organizational Support (75%), Psychological Capital (96.9%), and Empowering Leadership (96.9%). These variables are also supported by previous literature indicating that perceived organizational support, psychological capital, and leadership styles influence psychological well-being and employee engagement. However, research inconsistencies remain regarding the relationships among these factors, particularly within public sector organizations characterized by bureaucratic systems, hierarchical structures, and service-oriented demands that differ from private sector contexts (Yao, 2022).

Several studies have reported inconsistent findings regarding these relationships. Nordin et al. (2019) found that not all dimensions of Psychological Capital (PsyCap) significantly influenced Work Engagement, while Akter et al. (2021) and Khoiriah & Viranda (2024)

demonstrated that PsyCap may have weak or negative relationships with engagement under certain conditions. These findings indicate that the relationship between PsyCap and Work Engagement requires further investigation, particularly within Indonesian public sector organizations and ASN bureaucracy, which possess unique organizational characteristics, work cultures, and psychological dynamics. Most previous studies have been conducted in private sector organizations, educational institutions, healthcare settings, or other national contexts with organizational characteristics different from Indonesian government bureaucracy. Furthermore, studies integrating Psychological Contract, Perceived Organizational Support, and Empowering Leadership simultaneously within a single mediation model through Psychological Capital remain limited, especially among ASN employees as public policy implementers. This research gap provides the primary foundation for the novelty of this study. Empirically, this research is based on indications of ASN employee psychological vulnerability reflected in the 2025 survey findings, which demonstrated suboptimal well-being and potential declines in work engagement. Theoretically, this study expands existing literature by integrating Psychological Contract, Perceived Organizational Support, and Empowering Leadership into a structural model with Psychological Capital as a mediating mechanism, particularly within the Indonesian ASN context. Furthermore, research in the Indonesian public sector remains limited in explaining how organizational resources are transformed into work engagement through personal psychological resources within long-term employment relationships governed by state regulations.

As an institution with a strategic mandate to formulate and oversee ASN management policies and national bureaucratic reform, the Ministry of PANRB occupies a central position in shaping the direction, standards, and human resource management practices within Indonesia's public sector. The Ministry not only functions as a regulator but also serves as a role model in implementing merit systems, performance management, competency development, and the strengthening of public sector work culture. Work engagement at the Ministry of PANRB represents an important reflection of policy effectiveness and serves as an indicator of HRM practices across other ministries/agencies and local governments (Adha, 2026; Aji & Fitriani, 2026; Fitriyani & Salomo, 2025; Manurung & Desiana, 2025; Sudewo & Amini, 2025). This approach is essential because ASN employee engagement influences not only individual performance but also public service quality, bureaucratic legitimacy, and the sustainability of administrative reform. Therefore, examining a model that integrates psychological contract, perceived organizational support, empowering leadership, and psychological capital within the context of Ministry of PANRB ASN employees is theoretically and strategically relevant. Based on these considerations, this research examines "The Influence of Psychological Contract, Perceived Organizational Support, and Empowering Leadership on Work Engagement through Psychological Capital in the Public Sector" using a quantitative approach involving ASN employees at the Ministry of PANRB.

Based on the background explanation, this research aims to examine whether psychological contract influences work engagement, whether perceived organizational support influences work engagement, whether empowering leadership influences work engagement, whether psychological contract influences psychological capital, whether perceived organizational support influences psychological capital, whether empowering leadership influences psychological capital, whether psychological capital influences work engagement,

and whether psychological capital mediates the relationships between psychological contract and work engagement, perceived organizational support and work engagement, and empowering leadership and work engagement.

The objectives of this research are to identify, test, and analyze the influence of psychological contract on work engagement; to identify, test, and analyze the influence of perceived organizational support on work engagement; to identify, test, and analyze the influence of empowering leadership on work engagement; to identify, test, and analyze the influence of psychological contract on psychological capital; to identify, test, and analyze the influence of perceived organizational support on psychological capital; to identify, test, and analyze the influence of empowering leadership on psychological capital; to identify, test, and analyze the influence of psychological capital on work engagement; and to identify, test, and analyze the mediating role of psychological capital in the relationships between psychological contract, perceived organizational support, empowering leadership, and work engagement.

This research provides theoretical contributions to human resource management knowledge by integrating psychological contract, perceived organizational support, empowering leadership, psychological capital, and work engagement into a single mediation model within the Indonesian public sector. This study extends the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model and Social Exchange Theory by explaining how organizational resources are transformed into work engagement through individual psychological resources. Practically, this research provides insights for the Ministry of PANRB to enhance ASN work engagement through strengthening psychological contracts, organizational support, empowering leadership practices, and psychological capital development through competency development programs, employee well-being initiatives, leadership training, and organizational culture strengthening. Furthermore, this research may serve as a reference for policymakers and future researchers examining similar topics in broader public sector contexts.

METHOD

Time and Place of Research

This research was conducted in the second quarter of 2026 at the Ministry of Administrative Reform and Bureaucratic Reform (Ministry of PANRB), located in South Jakarta, DKI Jakarta. The Ministry of PANRB was selected as the research location based on conceptual and practical considerations. Conceptually, the Ministry is a government institution responsible for formulating State Civil Apparatus (ASN) management policies. Practically, the Ministry represents an organizational context where employees face challenges in maintaining optimal work engagement amid dynamic policy changes, increasing performance demands, and limited organizational resources. The study focused on First Expert Functional Position employees at the Ministry of PANRB who had worked for at least one year and represented various work units. Through this research, the researcher aimed to obtain accurate and representative data that could contribute to the development and implementation of human resource management policies in the public sector.

Research Design

This research employs a quantitative approach with a causal research design aimed at testing relationships between variables and examining both direct and indirect effects among predetermined constructs (Bougie & Sekaran, 2020). This approach was chosen because the

research not only seeks to describe phenomena but also to understand the extent to which Psychological Contract, Perceived Organizational Support, and Empowering Leadership influence Work Engagement, while simultaneously testing the role of Psychological Capital as a mediating variable. According to Sugiyono & Lestari (2021), quantitative methods are research procedures grounded in positivism focused on hypothesis testing through statistical analysis of data obtained from samples or populations using measurable research instruments. Data collection utilizes questionnaires or direct measurement as research instruments, employing numerical data analyzed statistically to provide objective and measurable descriptions. The analytical model used is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS). According to Hair et al. (2017), PLS-SEM is a multivariate technique combining factor analysis and regression aspects, allowing researchers to simultaneously examine relationships between measured variables and latent variables as well as among latent variables. PLS-SEM was selected because it does not require normally distributed data, making it more flexible for non-ideal data conditions, and is suitable for research with complex models containing both reflective and formative latent variables simultaneously. PLS-SEM also prioritizes predictive aspects, enabling this research to not only test theory but also provide practical contributions for public sector HR managers in formulating ASN employee management policies oriented toward psychological well-being and work engagement.

Population and Sample

Population refers to the entire group of people, events, or objects that are the target of scientific investigation, determined based on suitability with the research objectives and scope (Bougie & Sekaran, 2020). In this research, the population comprises First Expert Functional Position employees at the Ministry of PANRB. This population selection was based on the 2025 Mental Health and Well-Being Assessment Survey results showing that First Expert Functional Position employees are among the most vulnerable groups compared to other position groups, particularly in aspects of mental health, financial well-being, and overall work well-being conditions. These employees recorded relatively higher levels of anxiety, stress, and psychological pressure, and still face various challenges related to well-being and work experience within the organization. These conditions indicate that First Expert Functional Position employees are a relevant group for understanding work engagement dynamics, especially regarding how psychological contract fulfillment, perceived organizational support, and empowering leadership practices affect psychological conditions and employee engagement with the organization. The total population in this research is 305 active employees spread across various work units and fields within the Ministry of PANRB.

Sample is a subgroup of the population selected for analysis, with the assumption that findings from the sample can provide an accurate picture of the entire population (Bougie & Sekaran, 2020). This research uses a non-probability sampling approach with purposive sampling method, where the researcher selects samples based on certain considerations or criteria deemed most relevant to the research objectives (Bougie & Sekaran, 2020). This method was chosen because not all population members have the same level of experience and involvement in the aspects that are the focus of this research. The inclusion criteria established are: (1) ASN employees with First Expert Functional positions at the Ministry of PANRB, (2) employees who have worked for at least one year at the Ministry of PANRB, (3) employees

who have participated in training and competency development activities or actively engaged in self-learning within the past year, and (4) employees willing to become respondents and participate voluntarily in filling out the research questionnaire. Sample size determination refers to the guidelines of Bougie & Sekaran (2020) referencing the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size table. With a population of 305 employees, the recommended minimum sample size is approximately 169-175 respondents. Therefore, this research establishes a sample size of 175 respondents, considered adequate to represent the research population.

Instrument Development

The research instrument used is a closed questionnaire where respondents are asked to provide assessments of several statements developed based on indicators from each research variable. Questionnaire items were developed based on literature reviews, relevant theories, and adaptation from previous research that has been tested for validity and reliability. The research model involves five main variables: Psychological Contract, Perceived Organizational Support, and Empowering Leadership as independent variables, Psychological Capital as a mediating variable, and Work Engagement as the dependent variable. Each variable is operationalized into several dimensions and indicators reflecting its theoretical concepts. Since each variable consists of several dimensions that conceptually form a unified construct, measurement uses a Higher-Order Construct (HOC) or Second-Order Construct approach. According to Hair et al. (2021), this approach represents multidimensional constructs through relationships between second-order constructs and their constituent dimensions as first-order constructs, allowing complex constructs to be represented more comprehensively while producing a more parsimonious model without losing the conceptual meaning of each dimension. In this research, Psychological Contract, Perceived Organizational Support, Empowering Leadership, Psychological Capital, and Work Engagement are modeled as second-order constructs formed by their constituent dimensions. Evaluation of the measurement model is conducted in stages by testing validity and reliability at the first-order construct level before evaluating second-order constructs according to Hair et al. (2021) guidelines.

1. Psychological Contract

Psychological Contract is conceptually defined as individual beliefs regarding reciprocal obligations between employees and organizations, formed from interpretations of promises, commitments, and organizational treatment in employment relationships, influencing individual work attitudes and behaviors, measured by individual perceptions of the fulfillment level of organizational obligations and employee obligations in the employment relationship. Operationally, Psychological Contract is defined as the level of employee perception regarding the fulfillment of mutual beliefs and expectations between themselves and the organization, encompassing obligations and responsibilities of each party in the employment relationship, measured based on employees' subjective perceptions of organizational promises and treatment experienced during work. The operationalization of Psychological Contract adapts the original scale from dimensions developed by Rousseau (1995; 2000) covering Relational Contract (loyalty and mutual commitment), Transactional Contract (short-term work relationships and limited work obligations), Balanced Contract (competency development and dynamic performance), and Transitional Contract (uncertainty and decreased reciprocity), with each dimension measured through specific indicators.

2. Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived Organizational Support is conceptually defined as employee beliefs regarding the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being in employment relationships, influencing employee work attitudes and behaviors, measured by employee perceptions of organizational appreciation for their contributions and organizational attention to employee well-being and needs. Operationally, Perceived Organizational Support is defined as the level of employee perception and belief regarding the extent to which the organization values their contributions and demonstrates concern for employee well-being, health, and socio-emotional needs, reflected through employee experiences of organizational policies, treatment, and practices. The operationalization of Perceived Organizational Support adapts the original scale from dimensions developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986; 2020) covering Recognition and Valuation of Contribution (appreciation for employee efforts and recognition of work results) and Care for Employee Well-Being (organizational attention to employees and concern for employee well-being), with each dimension measured through specific indicators.

3. Empowering Leadership

Empowering Leadership is conceptually defined as a leadership style emphasizing subordinate empowerment through delegation of authority, provision of work autonomy, and employee involvement in decision-making processes, aimed at increasing employee confidence, responsibility, and intrinsic motivation in performing work, measured by employee perceptions of the level of empowerment provided by leaders through enhancing work meaningfulness, involvement in decision-making, trust in employee abilities, and reduction of bureaucratic constraints in work implementation. Operationally, Empowering Leadership is defined as employee perception of direct supervisor behavior in empowering subordinates through providing meaning to work, involvement in decision-making, expressing trust in performance capabilities, and providing autonomy by reducing bureaucratic constraints. The operationalization of Empowering Leadership adapts the original scale from dimensions developed by Ahearne et al. (2005) covering Enhancing the Meaningfulness of Work (work meaning and understanding of work purpose), Fostering Participation in Decision-Making (participation in decision-making and strategic roles), Expressing Confidence in High Performance (trust in employee abilities and belief in employee potential), and Providing Autonomy from Bureaucratic Constraints (work autonomy and work implementation flexibility), with each dimension measured through specific indicators.

4. Psychological Capital

Psychological Capital is conceptually defined as an individual's positive psychological state that serves as a personal resource in facing work demands, reflected in self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience in achieving work goals, measured by the level of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience in performing work. Operationally, Psychological Capital is defined as the level of positive individual psychological conditions measured through respondent perceptions of confidence in their abilities, drive and planning for goal achievement, positive views toward present and future

success, and ability to persevere and recover in facing pressure, change, and difficulties. The operationalization of Psychological Capital adapts the original scale from dimensions developed by Luthans et al. (2007) covering Self-Efficacy (confidence in abilities and ability to control and direct oneself), Hope (ability to find alternative ways to achieve goals and perseverance in achieving goals), Optimism (positive views toward the future and hope for positive outcomes), and Resilience (ability to recover from obstacles and resilience in facing crises), with each dimension measured through specific indicators.

5. Work Engagement

Work Engagement is conceptually defined as a positive psychological state reflecting individual cognitive, emotional, and behavioral attachment to work, characterized by levels of energy, dedication, and absorption in work, measured by levels of vigor, dedication, and absorption in performing work. Operationally, Work Engagement is defined as the level of positive and sustainable psychological conditions experienced by individuals in performing their work, measured through respondent perceptions of work energy and resilience, emotional involvement and work meaning, and absorption and immersion in work activities. The operationalization of Work Engagement adapts the original scale from dimensions developed by Schaufeli et al. (2004) covering Vigor (energy levels in work and work enthusiasm), Dedication (enthusiasm toward work and personal value of work), and Absorption (enjoyment when working intensively and concentration at work), with each dimension measured through specific indicators.

6. Measurement Scale

All research variables are measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), with a neutral midpoint of 3. Data obtained from questionnaire responses are analyzed descriptively by calculating mean values for each variable and dimension, with interpretation based on Sugiyono (2022) categories: 1.00-1.80 (Very Low), 1.81-2.60 (Low), 2.61-3.40 (Moderate), 3.41-4.20 (High), and 4.21-5.00 (Very High).

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection employs a survey method using a closed questionnaire distributed online through Google Forms. This method was selected based on accessibility, time efficiency, and the ability to reach respondents across various work units without geographic limitations. The questionnaire is distributed selectively to employees meeting the research criteria, with the initial section containing research purpose information, data confidentiality guarantees, and informed consent for voluntary participation. Through these data collection procedures, the data obtained is expected to be of good quality, relevant to research objectives, and capable of representing respondent conditions objectively.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis uses Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS) through SmartPLS version 4 software. PLS-SEM was selected because it is suitable for testing complex causal relationships between latent constructs, whether as exogenous, endogenous, or mediating variables. According to Hair et al. (2021), PLS-SEM is a prediction-oriented approach highly suitable for developing and testing research models involving many constructs and indicators. PLS-SEM offers advantages over covariance-based SEM, including

not requiring strict normal data distribution, accommodating complex research models, and maintaining stable estimates with relatively limited sample sizes (Hair et al., 2021). Data analysis consists of four main stages: outer model evaluation, inner model evaluation, hypothesis testing, and mediation effect testing.

1. Outer Model Evaluation

The measurement model evaluation aims to assess the extent to which indicators accurately, validly, and reliably represent latent constructs (Hair et al., 2021). Since all constructs in this research are treated as reflective constructs, outer model evaluation is conducted through convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability testing.

Convergent Validity is assessed using outer loading values and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Ideal outer loading values are > 0.70 , with values between 0.60-0.70 still acceptable in exploratory research (Hair et al., 2021). AVE values should be ≥ 0.50 , indicating that more than 50% of indicator variance can be explained by the latent construct.

Discriminant Validity is assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, where the square root of AVE for each construct should be greater than correlations with other constructs, and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) with values ≤ 0.85 (strict standard) or ≤ 0.90 (moderate standard) (Hair et al., 2021).

Construct Reliability is assessed using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, with minimum values ≥ 0.70 , though ≥ 0.60 is still acceptable in exploratory research (Hair et al., 2021).

2. Inner Model Evaluation

The structural model evaluation aims to examine relationships between latent constructs that have met validity and reliability criteria (Hair et al., 2021). Inner model evaluation is conducted through:

- a. Coefficient of Determination (R^2) indicates the proportion of endogenous construct variance explained by exogenous constructs, with interpretations: $R^2 \geq 0.75$ (strong), ≥ 0.50 (moderate), ≥ 0.25 (weak) (Chin, 1998).
- b. Effect Size (f^2) measures the contribution of each exogenous construct to endogenous constructs, with interpretations: ≥ 0.35 (large), ≥ 0.15 (medium), ≥ 0.02 (small) (Hair et al., 2021).
- c. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) detects multicollinearity, with ideal values < 3.3 and acceptable values ≤ 5 (Hair et al., 2021).
- d. Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) assesses model fit, with values < 0.08 indicating good model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

3. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing uses bootstrapping procedures with 10,000 subsamples (bootstrap samples) to obtain more stable parameter estimates and significance levels. A hypothesis is accepted when t-statistic > 1.96 and p-value < 0.05 at 5% significance level (Hair et al., 2021). Path coefficients indicate direction and strength of relationships between constructs, ranging from -1 to +1. T-statistics evaluate significance, with

values > 1.96 indicating significance at 95% confidence level. P-values < 0.05 indicate statistically significant relationships.

4. Mediation Effect Testing

Mediation effect testing aims to determine whether the mediating variable can explain the mechanism of relationships between exogenous and endogenous variables. Testing is conducted through specific indirect effects analysis using bootstrapping procedures with 10,000 subsamples (Hair et al., 2021). An indirect effect is declared significant when $t\text{-statistic} > 1.96$ and $p\text{-value} < 0.05$. Mediation type is determined by comparing direct and indirect effect significance: full mediation occurs when indirect effect is significant but direct effect is not significant, partial mediation occurs when both direct and indirect effects are significant, and no mediation occurs when indirect effect is not significant (Hair et al., 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description of Analysis Unit

This research was conducted at the Ministry of Administrative Reform and Bureaucratic Reform (PANRB), a ministry under and responsible to the President of the Republic of Indonesia tasked with organizing government affairs in the field of state apparatus utilization and bureaucratic reform. The Ministry plays a strategic role in realizing effective, efficient, professional, accountable, and public service-oriented governance. Based on Ministerial Regulation Number 1 of 2025 concerning the Organization and Work Procedures of the Ministry of PANRB, the organizational structure consists of the Ministry Secretariat, Deputies for Bureaucratic Reform and Apparatus Accountability, Institutional and Procedural Affairs, Apparatus Human Resources, Public Services, and Government Digital Transformation, along with several Expert Staff to the Minister.

Description of Respondent Characteristics

Respondents in this research were First Expert Functional Position employees at the Ministry of PANRB. Based on questionnaire distribution, 178 respondents met the research criteria and completed the questionnaire fully.

Gender: From 178 respondents, 91 (51.1%) were female and 87 (48.9%) were male, indicating a relatively balanced composition.

Age: Most respondents were aged 26–30 years (73 respondents, 41.0%), followed by 31–35 years (71 respondents, 39.9%), 36–40 years (22 respondents, 12.4%), 21–25 years (11 respondents, 6.2%), and >41 years (1 respondent, 0.6%). This shows that the majority are in productive age, generally at the early to mid-career development phase.

Work Experience: The majority had 4–6 years of service (48.3%), followed by 7–10 years (30.9%), 1–3 years (18.5%), and >10 years (2.2%), indicating adequate work experience to provide valid perceptions.

Work Unit: Respondents came from all work units, with the largest from the Deputy for Bureaucratic Reform and Apparatus Accountability (23.0%), followed by Deputy for Public Services (17.4%), Deputy for Apparatus Human Resources (14.6%), Deputy for Government Digital Transformation (14.0%), and Deputy for Institutional and Procedural Affairs (12.4%).

Position Nomenclature: The majority were Policy Analyst First Expert (71.3%), followed by Planner First Expert (7.9%), Computer Administrator First Expert (6.2%),

Apparatus Human Resources Analyst First Expert (5.6%), Public Relations Officer First Expert (2.8%), Legal Analyst First Expert (2.2%), Archivist First Expert (2.2%), with others at 0.6% each.

Variable Description

Work Engagement (Y)

Work Engagement achieved an overall mean score of 3.55. Among dimensions, Dedication had the highest mean (3.60), indicating that employees possess enthusiasm toward their work and view their work as inspiring and meaningful. Absorption had the lowest mean (3.50), suggesting that full employee involvement in work remains relatively lower compared to Vigor and Dedication dimensions.

Psychological Contract (X1)

Psychological Contract achieved an overall mean of 3.63. Transitional Contract had the highest mean (3.67), with high scores on reverse statements indicating that respondents tend not to agree with organizational commitment uncertainty or decreased reciprocity in the employment relationship. Balanced Contract had the lowest mean (3.62), indicating room for improving competency development opportunities and employees' ability to meet evolving performance demands.

Perceived Organizational Support (X2)

Perceived Organizational Support achieved an overall mean of 3.68, with both dimensions (Recognition & Valuation of Contribution and Care for Employee Well-Being) scoring equally at 3.69. This indicates that respondents perceive good organizational support, both in recognition of contributions and organizational concern for employee well-being.

Empowering Leadership (X3)

Empowering Leadership achieved an overall mean of 3.75. Expressing Confidence in High Performance had the highest mean (3.84), indicating that respondents perceive supervisors have high trust in employee abilities. Enhancing the Meaningfulness of Work had the lowest mean (3.67), indicating room for supervisors to better help employees understand the meaning and contribution of their work to organizational goals.

Psychological Capital (Z)

Psychological Capital achieved an overall mean of 3.59. Optimism and Resilience had the highest means (3.61 each), indicating that employees possess positive views toward the future and ability to adapt and recover when facing challenges. Self-Efficacy had the lowest mean (3.57), indicating room for improving employee confidence in their abilities.

Data Analysis

Outer Model Testing

Convergent Validity: All dimensions had loading factors above 0.70, and all constructs had AVE values above 0.50, as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Convergent Validity Results

Variable	Dimension	Loading Factor	AVE
Psychological Contract	Relational Contract	0.869	0.788
	Transactional Contract	0.912	
	Balanced Contract	0.887	
	Transitional Contract	0.883	
Perceived Organizational Support	Recognition & Valuation	0.948	0.893
	Care for Employee Well-Being	0.942	
Empowering Leadership	Enhancing Meaningfulness	0.912	0.795
	Fostering Participation	0.873	
	Expressing Confidence	0.870	
	Providing Autonomy	0.911	
Work Engagement	Vigor	0.923	0.825
	Dedication	0.883	
	Absorption	0.917	
Psychological Capital	Self-Efficacy	0.932	0.848
	Hope	0.924	
	Optimism	0.916	
	Resilience	0.911	

Source: Primary data processed using SmartPLS 4 (2026)

Discriminant Validity: Cross-loading analysis showed that each dimension had the highest loading on its respective construct. HTMT values ranged from 0.311 to 0.778 (all below 0.9), and square roots of AVE for each construct were greater than correlations with other constructs, confirming good discriminant validity.

Construct Reliability: All constructs had Composite Reliability values ranging from 0.934 to 0.957 and Cronbach's Alpha values from 0.880 to 0.940, all exceeding the 0.70 threshold, confirming good internal consistency.

Inner Model Testing

R-Square: Psychological Capital had an R^2 adjusted of 0.514, meaning 51.4% of its variance was explained by Psychological Contract, Perceived Organizational Support, and Empowering Leadership. Work Engagement had an R^2 adjusted of 0.636, meaning 63.6% of its variance was explained by all four constructs.

Effect Size (f^2): Psychological Contract had moderate effects on both Psychological Capital (0.262) and Work Engagement (0.198). Perceived Organizational Support had a moderate effect on Psychological Capital (0.198) but a small effect on Work Engagement (0.063). Empowering Leadership had small effects on both Psychological Capital (0.101) and Work Engagement (0.081). Psychological Capital had a moderate effect on Work Engagement (0.151).

Multicollinearity: All VIF values ranged from 1.127 to 2.094, all below 5.00, indicating no multicollinearity issues.

Model Fit: SRMR was 0.043 (<0.08) and NFI was 0.891 (approaching 1), indicating good model fit.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 2. PathCoefficient Results

Hypothesis	Path	Original Sample	T-Statistics	P-Value	Decision
H1	PC → WE	0.331	6.161	0.000	Accepted
H2	POS → WE	0.181	3.240	0.001	Accepted
H3	EL → WE	0.189	3.731	0.000	Accepted
H4	PC → PsyCap	0.392	7.429	0.000	Accepted
H5	POS → PsyCap	0.339	5.871	0.000	Accepted
H6	EL → PsyCap	0.234	4.320	0.000	Accepted
H7	PsyCap → WE	0.335	5.210	0.000	Accepted

Note: PC = Psychological Contract, POS = Perceived Organizational Support, EL = Empowering Leadership, PsyCap = Psychological Capital, WE = Work Engagement

Source: Primary data processed using SmartPLS 4 (2026)

All seven direct hypotheses were accepted with positive and significant path coefficients at $p < 0.05$.

Mediation Effect Testing

Table 3. Indirect Effect Results

Hypothesis	Indirect Path	Original Sample	T-Statistics	P-Value	Decision
H8	PC → PsyCap → WE	0.131	4.455	0.000	Accepted
H9	POS → PsyCap → WE	0.114	3.739	0.000	Accepted
H10	EL → PsyCap → WE	0.078	3.129	0.002	Accepted

Source: Primary data processed using SmartPLS 4 (2026)

All three mediation hypotheses were accepted, indicating that Psychological Capital significantly mediates the influence of Psychological Contract, Perceived Organizational Support, and Empowering Leadership on Work Engagement.

Influence of Psychological Contract on Work Engagement

The results show that Psychological Contract positively and significantly influences Work Engagement ($\beta = 0.331$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1. This indicates that the higher ASN employees perceive fulfillment of reciprocal obligations between employees and organizations, the higher their Work Engagement through vigor, dedication, and absorption. When employees feel the organization fulfills commitments, promises, and expectations established in the employment relationship, they tend to have higher engagement with their work. This finding aligns with the Job Demands–Resources Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), which positions Psychological Contract as a job resource that enhances motivation and work engagement. Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) explains that when organizations fulfill their commitments, employees respond positively through increased enthusiasm, dedication, and work involvement. Rousseau (1995; 2000) affirms that Psychological Contract fulfillment builds trust and commitment that ultimately increases Work Engagement. This research is supported by Büyükaslan & İyigün (2025), Wonda et al. (2024), and Soares & Mosquera (2019), who found that Psychological Contract fulfillment positively influences Work Engagement. The descriptive analysis shows that Transitional Contract had the highest mean, indicating positive perceptions of organizational commitment, while Balanced Contract had the lowest mean, indicating room for improving competency development opportunities.

Influence of Perceived Organizational Support on Work Engagement

The results demonstrate that Perceived Organizational Support positively and significantly influences Work Engagement ($\beta=0.181$, $p=0.001$), supporting H2. This shows that the higher employees perceive organizational support, the higher their Work Engagement. When employees feel the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being, they are motivated to work with greater enthusiasm, dedication, and full involvement. This aligns with the JD-R Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), positioning POS as a job resource enhancing intrinsic motivation and work engagement. Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) explains that organizational care and appreciation elicit positive responses from employees. Eisenberger et al. (1986) state that POS fosters feelings of being valued and increases organizational concern, encouraging greater contributions. This is supported by Nikhil & Arthi (2018), Imran et al. (2020), Jankelová et al. (2021), Zhang & Chang (2023), and Tian et al. (2023), who found POS positively influences Work Engagement. Descriptive analysis shows both dimensions (Recognition & Valuation of Contribution and Care for Employee Well-Being) scored equally at 3.69, indicating balanced and positive perceptions of organizational support.

Influence of Empowering Leadership on Work Engagement

The findings indicate that Empowering Leadership positively and significantly influences Work Engagement ($\beta=0.189$, $p<0.001$), supporting H3. This demonstrates that the higher the implementation of empowering leadership, the higher employee Work Engagement. When leaders enhance work meaningfulness, encourage participation in decision-making, express confidence in employee abilities, and provide autonomy, employees demonstrate higher vigor, dedication, and absorption. Through the JD-R Model, Empowering Leadership serves as a job resource enhancing motivation. Social Exchange Theory explains that trust and autonomy given by superiors are perceived as appreciation, prompting reciprocal commitment and involvement. Ahearne et al. (2005) explain that empowering leaders enhance employee confidence and encourage active participation. This is supported by Peral & Weitz (2025), Töre & Uzun (2024), Ishfaq & Ali (2023), and Helland et al. (2020), who found Empowering Leadership positively influences Work Engagement. Descriptive analysis shows Expressing Confidence in High Performance had the highest mean (3.84), indicating high leader trust in employee abilities, while Enhancing the Meaningfulness of Work had the lowest mean (3.67), suggesting room for leaders to better communicate work meaning and purpose.

Influence of Psychological Contract on Psychological Capital

The results show Psychological Contract positively and significantly influences Psychological Capital ($\beta=0.392$, $p<0.001$), supporting H4. This indicates that the higher ASN employees perceive organizational commitment fulfillment, the higher their Psychological Capital through self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. Through the JD-R Model, Psychological Contract serves as a job resource that strengthens personal resources. Social Exchange Theory explains that organizational commitment fulfillment is reciprocated through positive psychological conditions. Rousseau (1995; 2000) affirms that Psychological Contract fulfillment builds trust and psychological security that forms the basis for developing individual psychological capacities. This is supported by Yang & Chao (2016), Costa & Neves (2017), Ansari, Malik, & Singh (2024), Xu et al. (2024), and Koko & Mphirime (2022), who found Psychological Contract fulfillment positively influences Psychological Capital.

Descriptive analysis shows Transitional Contract had the highest mean in Psychological Contract, while Optimism and Resilience had the highest means in Psychological Capital, with Self-Efficacy having the lowest mean, indicating room for improving employee confidence through competency development and challenging work experiences.

Influence of Perceived Organizational Support on Psychological Capital

The results demonstrate that Perceived Organizational Support positively and significantly influences Psychological Capital ($\beta=0.339$, $p<0.001$), supporting H5. This indicates that the higher organizational support perceived by employees, the higher their Psychological Capital. Through the JD-R Model, POS serves as a job resource that strengthens personal resources. Social Exchange Theory explains that organizational care and appreciation elicit positive psychological responses. Eisenberger et al. (1986) state that POS increases feelings of being valued and security, strengthening Psychological Capital. This is supported by Ho & Chan (2022), Yang et al. (2020), Sarwar et al. (2023), Özgül & Çelenk (2024), and Sihag (2020), who found POS positively influences Psychological Capital. Descriptive analysis shows both POS dimensions scored equally at 3.69, indicating balanced perceptions of organizational support, while Optimism and Resilience had the highest means in Psychological Capital and Self-Efficacy the lowest, suggesting continued need for competency development to enhance employee confidence.

Influence of Empowering Leadership on Psychological Capital

The findings indicate that Empowering Leadership positively and significantly influences Psychological Capital ($\beta=0.234$, $p<0.001$), supporting H6. This demonstrates that the higher empowering leadership implementation, the higher employee Psychological Capital. Through the JD-R Model, leadership serves as a job resource that strengthens personal resources. Social Exchange Theory explains that trust and support from leaders build feelings of being valued, strengthening psychological capital. Ahearne et al. (2005) explain that Empowering Leadership enhances employee confidence through responsibility and development opportunities. This is supported by Park et al. (2017), Li (2024), Su Yan & Abd Rani (2025), Jabid et al. (2025), and Hanafy et al. (2025), who found Empowering Leadership positively influences Psychological Capital. Descriptive analysis shows Expressing Confidence in High Performance had the highest mean (3.84), indicating high leader trust, while Enhancing the Meaningfulness of Work had the lowest mean (3.67), with Optimism and Resilience scoring highest in Psychological Capital and Self-Efficacy lowest.

Influence of Psychological Capital on Work Engagement

The results demonstrate that Psychological Capital positively and significantly influences Work Engagement ($\beta=0.335$, $p<0.001$), supporting H7. This indicates that the higher Psychological Capital through self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, the higher Work Engagement through vigor, dedication, and absorption. Through the JD-R Model, Psychological Capital serves as a personal resource that enhances Work Engagement. Employees with strong psychological resources are better able to face work demands, maintain motivation, and demonstrate high energy, dedication, and involvement. Social Exchange Theory explains that positive psychological conditions prompt employees to respond through higher work involvement. Luthans et al. (2007; 2021) explain that individuals with high Psychological Capital are better able to manage challenges and maintain motivation. This is supported by Harris et al. (2025), Nordin et al. (2019), Niswaty et al. (2021), Masindi &

Khashane (2025), and Biswal et al. (2023), who found Psychological Capital positively influences Work Engagement. Descriptive analysis shows Optimism and Resilience had the highest means (3.61 each), while Self-Efficacy had the lowest mean (3.57), with Dedication scoring highest in Work Engagement and Absorption lowest.

Psychological Capital Mediates the Influence of Psychological Contract on Work Engagement

The results confirm that Psychological Capital mediates the influence of Psychological Contract on Work Engagement ($\beta=0.131$, $p<0.001$), supporting H8. This indicates that Psychological Contract fulfillment not only directly increases Work Engagement but also does so through enhanced Psychological Capital. Through the JD-R Model, job resources can work through personal resources. Psychological Contract serves as a job resource providing security and certainty, while Psychological Capital serves as a personal resource strengthening employees' ability to face work demands. Social Exchange Theory explains that organizational commitment fulfillment elicits positive psychological conditions. Rousseau (1995; 2000) affirms that Psychological Contract fulfillment builds trust that strengthens Psychological Capital and encourages increased Work Engagement. This is supported by Wang (2025), Srivastava (2022), Alev (2022), Pandey et al. (2025), and Nawaz et al. (2014), who found Psychological Capital mediates the relationship between Psychological Contract and Work Engagement. Descriptive analysis shows Transitional Contract had the highest mean in Psychological Contract, Optimism and Resilience had the highest means in Psychological Capital, and Dedication had the highest mean in Work Engagement, indicating a positive chain from contractual fulfillment to psychological resources to work engagement.

Psychological Capital Mediates the Influence of Perceived Organizational Support on Work Engagement

The results confirm that Psychological Capital mediates the influence of Perceived Organizational Support on Work Engagement ($\beta=0.114$, $p<0.001$), supporting H9. This indicates that organizational support perceived by employees not only directly influences Work Engagement but also increases it through strengthened Psychological Capital. Through the JD-R Model, job resources can enhance Work Engagement through personal resource formation. POS serves as a job resource providing feelings of being valued, while Psychological Capital serves as a personal resource strengthening employees' ability to face work demands. Social Exchange Theory explains that organizational support elicits positive psychological conditions. Eisenberger et al. (1986) affirm that POS increases feelings of being valued and belief that the organization cares, strengthening Psychological Capital that drives increased Work Engagement. This is supported by Yang et al. (2020), Purwasono (2019), Kılıç Kirilmaz (2022), Partama et al. (2025), and Ren et al. (2024), who found Psychological Capital mediates the relationship between POS and Work Engagement. Descriptive analysis shows both POS dimensions scored equally at 3.69, Optimism and Resilience had the highest means in Psychological Capital, and Dedication had the highest mean in Work Engagement, supporting the mediation chain.

Psychological Capital Mediates the Influence of Empowering Leadership on Work Engagement

The results confirm that Psychological Capital mediates the influence of Empowering Leadership on Work Engagement ($\beta=0.078$, $p=0.002$), supporting H10. This indicates that

empowering leadership not only directly increases Work Engagement but also does so through enhanced Psychological Capital. Through the JD-R Model, Empowering Leadership serves as a job resource providing trust and autonomy, while Psychological Capital serves as a personal resource. Social Exchange Theory explains that leader trust and development opportunities elicit positive psychological conditions. Ahearne et al. (2005) explain that Empowering Leadership enhances employee confidence and intrinsic motivation that forms the basis for developing Psychological Capital and increasing Work Engagement. This is supported by Qatrunnada & Parahyanti (2019), Hashemi et al. (2025), Niswaty et al. (2021), Widowati & Satrya (2023), and Ciftci & Erkanli (2020), who found Psychological Capital mediates the relationship between leadership and Work Engagement. Descriptive analysis shows Expressing Confidence in High Performance had the highest mean (3.84) in Empowering Leadership, Optimism and Resilience had the highest means in Psychological Capital, and Dedication had the highest mean in Work Engagement, confirming that leader trust and empowerment strengthen psychological capital, which drives increased work engagement.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings regarding the influence of psychological contract, perceived organizational support, and empowering leadership on work engagement through psychological capital among State Civil Apparatus (ASN) employees at the Ministry of Administrative Reform and Bureaucratic Reform (PANRB), several conclusions can be drawn. Psychological contract, perceived organizational support, and empowering leadership each have a positive and significant effect on work engagement, indicating that the better employees perceive the fulfillment of reciprocal obligations, the stronger the organizational support they receive, and the more empowering the leadership practices they experience, the higher their level of work engagement tends to be. Trust, fulfillment of commitments, recognition of contributions, concern for employee well-being, autonomy, and opportunities for participation encourage employees to demonstrate greater enthusiasm, dedication, and involvement in performing their organizational responsibilities.

These three variables also have a positive and significant effect on psychological capital, indicating that stronger psychological contracts, higher perceived organizational support, and more empowering leadership contribute to strengthening employees' self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience in facing workplace challenges, pressures, and changes. Furthermore, psychological capital has a positive and significant effect on work engagement, demonstrating that employees with stronger self-confidence, optimism, hope, and the ability to recover from setbacks tend to exhibit higher levels of enthusiasm, dedication, and involvement in their work.

Moreover, psychological capital is proven to mediate the relationship between each of the three independent variables and work engagement. Psychological contract, perceived organizational support, and empowering leadership influence work engagement not only directly but also indirectly through their role in strengthening employees' psychological capital. The fulfillment of organizational commitments, perceived organizational support, and empowering leadership practices enhance employees' self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, which subsequently promote higher levels of work engagement and support the achievement of organizational objectives.

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