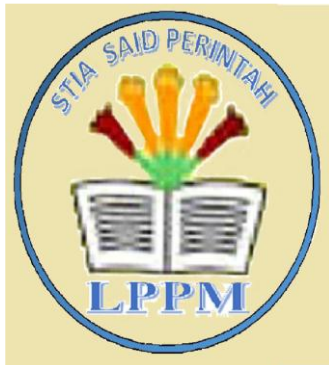

Public Policy: Jurnal Aplikasi Kebijakan Publik dan Bisnis



LPPM Universitas Dr. Djar Wattiheluw

Volume 7, No. 1, Maret 2026

<https://stia.saidperintah.e-journal.id/ppj>

Received; 2026-07-13

Accepted; 2026-07-25

Published; 2026-08-01



The editorial board holds publication rights for articles under a CC BY SA license, allowing distribution without separate permission if credited. Published articles are openly accessible for research, with no liability for other copyright violations (<https://stia.saidperintah.e-journal.id/ppj/kebijakanhakcipta>).



[Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)

Understanding Employee Performance through Work Engagement: Evidence from Distributive Justice and Work Life Balance

Revinda Afi Cintia ¹⁾

Asep Gunawan ²⁾

Harry Safari Margapradja ³⁾

^{1,2,3} Universitas Muhammadiyah Cirebon,
Jawa Barat, Indonesia

aficintiar@gmail.com

Abstract

This study examines the effects of distributive justice and work life balance on employee performance through the mediating role of work engagement among operational employees of SPX Express in Cirebon, Indonesia. Using a quantitative causal associative design, data were collected from 123 employees selected through purposive sampling and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0. The results indicate that distributive justice and work life balance do not directly affect employee performance but significantly enhance work engagement, which subsequently improves performance. Work engagement fully mediates the relationships between organizational resources and employee performance. These findings emphasize the importance of work engagement as a psychological mechanism linking organizational practices to performance outcomes. This study contributes to Equity Theory and Job Demands–Resources Theory while providing practical implications for improving logistics employee performance through engagement based strategies.

Keywords : *Distributive Justice; Work Life Balance; Work Engagement; Employee Performance; PLS SEM*

Introduction

Globalization together with ongoing digital transformation has accelerated the expansion of e commerce, placing increasing pressure on logistics networks to deliver goods rapidly, efficiently, and reliably. Indonesia's e commerce sector exemplifies this trend. According to Statistics Indonesia (BPS), approximately 4.4 million businesses actively engaged in e commerce activities in 2024, representing a 15.3% increase compared with the previous year and generating a transaction value of approximately IDR 1,288.93 trillion (BPS, 2024). Much of this growth is concentrated on Java Island, with West Java, including Cirebon, accounting for approximately 21.43% of the country's e commerce enterprises (Felda, 2024). This rapid expansion has substantially increased the volume of goods distribution and intensified operational demands on logistics employees, including couriers, warehouse personnel, and operational administrative staff, who are required to perform under conditions characterized by high mobility, strict delivery deadlines, and increasing service expectations.

Field observations conducted at three SPX Express operational warehouses in Cirebon (Palimanan, Kedawung, and Depok Jamblang) revealed several organizational issues that may adversely affect employee performance. Distributive justice concerns were evident in perceived disparities in the allocation of bonuses, wages, and employment benefits among couriers with different employment statuses, generating feelings of inequity and social tension among employees. In addition, working hours frequently exceeded standard schedules, disrupting employees' work life balance and potentially reducing their motivation and psychological attachment to work. These conditions indicate that organizational resources may influence employee performance not only directly but also through employees' psychological engagement with their work.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that distributive justice and work life balance are important determinants of employee performance and work engagement (Aisyah et al., 2023; Dalimunthe et al., 2023; Hartono & Riwayati, 2024; Tyofyan et al., 2022; Ulum & Supriharyanti, 2025; Widyawati et al., 2021). Employees who perceive organizational rewards as fair and experience a healthy balance between work and personal life generally exhibit higher levels of motivation, organizational commitment, and job performance. Nevertheless, the mechanisms through which these organizational resources translate into improved employee performance remain insufficiently understood, particularly in operational environments characterized by intensive workloads and demanding service targets.

Although previous studies have established significant associations among distributive justice, work life balance, work engagement, and employee performance (Dalimunthe et al., 2023; Tyofyan et al., 2022; Aisyah et al., 2023; Ulum & Supriharyanti, 2025; Hartono &

Riwayati, 2024; Widyawati et al., 2021), several important gaps remain in the literature. Existing research has predominantly examined the direct effects of distributive justice and work life balance on employee performance or has treated work engagement as an independent antecedent rather than as the underlying motivational mechanism through which organizational resources influence performance. Furthermore, empirical studies integrating distributive justice and work life balance within a single mediation framework remain limited, particularly in the logistics and last mile delivery industry, where operational employees face distinctive job characteristics, including high physical mobility, strict delivery deadlines, and heterogeneous employment arrangements. These contextual characteristics suggest that the psychological processes linking organizational resources to employee performance may differ from those observed in other organizational settings and therefore warrant further empirical investigation.

The proposed mediating role of work engagement is theoretically supported by both Equity Theory (Adams, 1963) and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Equity Theory argues that employees evaluate organizational fairness by comparing their work inputs with the rewards they receive, and these fairness perceptions subsequently shape employees' attitudes and behavioural responses. Accordingly, distributive justice is expected to influence employee performance primarily through employees' psychological reactions rather than solely through direct behavioural mechanisms. Complementing this perspective, the JD-R Theory posits that organizational resources, including fair reward distribution and work life balance, stimulate employees' motivational processes by enhancing work engagement, which subsequently promotes higher levels of job performance. Integrating these theoretical perspectives provides a more comprehensive explanation of how organizational resources are transformed into superior employee outcomes through employees' motivational states.

Building upon these theoretical and empirical gaps, this study investigates the direct and indirect effects of distributive justice and work life balance on employee performance through work engagement among operational employees of SPX Express across three warehouse hubs in Cirebon using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS SEM) approach. The novelty of this study lies in the integration of distributive justice and work life balance within a unified mediation model that positions work engagement as the central psychological mechanism explaining how organizational resources enhance employee performance in the operational logistics context. By extending the application of Equity Theory and the JD-R Theory to the last mile delivery industry, this study contributes to the human resource management literature by offering a more comprehensive understanding of the

motivational processes underlying employee performance in logistics operations. In addition, the findings provide practical insights for logistics companies in designing equitable compensation systems and work life balance policies that strengthen employee engagement and support sustainable organizational performance.

Theoretical Framework and Research Hypothesis Development

This study is grounded in Equity Theory and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Theory, which provide complementary perspectives for explaining employee performance. Equity Theory. Adams, (1963) posits that employees evaluate the fairness of organizational outcomes by comparing their work inputs with the rewards they receive. Fair reward distribution fosters positive attitudes and motivates employees to perform more effectively. Complementing this perspective, the JD-R Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) argues that job resources, such as distributive justice and work life balance, enhance employees' motivation by strengthening work engagement, which subsequently leads to better performance. Together, these theories provide a robust theoretical foundation for examining distributive justice and work life balance as organizational resources that influence employee performance both directly and indirectly through work engagement.

Distributive Justice

Distributive justice refers to employees' perceptions of the fairness of organizational outcomes relative to their contributions. According to Equity Theory (Adams, 1963), employees evaluate fairness by comparing their work inputs, such as effort, time, and skills, with the outcomes they receive, including pay, incentives, and recognition. When employees perceive that rewards are distributed fairly, they are more likely to develop positive attitudes and exhibit constructive work behaviors. Conversely, perceived inequity may reduce employees' motivation, work engagement, and job performance (Engdaw & Kebede, 2024). Accordingly, distributive justice is considered an important organizational resource that promotes higher levels of employee engagement and performance.

Work Life Balance

Work life balance represents employees' ability to effectively manage work responsibilities alongside personal and social life without one domain undermining the other. Lockwood (2003, as cited in Wijayanto et al., 2022) defines work life balance as the capacity to maintain equilibrium between work and non work demands, while Greenhaus et al., (2003) emphasize that such balance is reflected in the allocation of time, involvement, and satisfaction across both domains. Achieving work life balance enables employees to reduce stress, maintain

psychological well being, and sustain work productivity. As an important job resource, work life balance enhances employees' motivation and psychological energy, thereby fostering stronger work engagement and ultimately improving employee performance.

Work Engagement

Work engagement refers to a positive, fulfilling, and work related psychological state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption Schaufeli & Bakker, (2004). Employees with high levels of work engagement demonstrate greater energy, enthusiasm, persistence, and psychological attachment toward their work, which encourages them to invest greater effort in achieving organizational goals. From the perspective of the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Theory, work engagement represents a motivational mechanism through which job resources are transformed into positive work outcomes. When employees perceive supportive organizational conditions, such as fair treatment and adequate work life balance, they are more likely to develop stronger engagement with their work. Consequently, engaged employees tend to exhibit higher levels of productivity, commitment, and performance. Therefore, work engagement plays an important mediating role in explaining how organizational resources influence employee performance.

Employee Performance

Employee performance refers to the extent to which employees effectively accomplish their assigned tasks and contribute to organizational objectives. Pratiwi & Fatoni, (2023) describe employee performance as the observable outcomes resulting from employees' efforts and managerial support in implementing organizational strategies. Borman and Motowidlo (1993) distinguish employee performance into two dimensions: task performance, which involves the execution of core job responsibilities, and contextual performance, which reflects discretionary behaviors that support organizational functioning and a positive work environment (Çalışkan & Köroğlu, 2022). In the logistics industry, employee performance is particularly significant because operational effectiveness depends heavily on delivery accuracy, service reliability, and timely order fulfillment. From the perspective of the JD-R Theory, employee performance represents an important outcome of employees' motivational processes, whereby resources that enhance work engagement contribute to improved work effectiveness.

Hypothesis Development

Drawing on Equity Theory (Adams, 1963), the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), and previous empirical findings, this study develops a conceptual model explaining the relationships among distributive justice, work life balance, work

engagement, and employee performance. In this framework, distributive justice and work life balance are conceptualized as organizational resources that influence employee performance directly and indirectly through work engagement as a motivational mechanism. Equity Theory explains how employees' perceptions of fairness shape their attitudes and behaviors, while the JD-R Theory explains how organizational resources stimulate motivational processes that enhance work engagement and performance outcomes. Based on these theoretical foundations and previous empirical evidence, the following hypotheses are proposed.

Employees evaluate the fairness of organizational outcomes by comparing their contributions with the rewards they receive (Adams, 1963). When employees perceive that compensation, incentives, and recognition are allocated fairly, they are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward the organization and demonstrate stronger work motivation. Conversely, perceptions of inequity may reduce motivation and negatively influence work related outcomes. Previous studies have demonstrated that distributive justice contributes to improved employee performance because perceptions of fairness encourage positive workplace behaviors and greater commitment to organizational objectives (Dalimunthe et al., 2023; Tyofyan et al., 2022). Therefore, distributive justice is expected to enhance employee performance.

H₁ ; Distributive justice has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

Work life balance reflects employees' ability to effectively manage work responsibilities alongside personal and social demands while maintaining psychological well being (Lockwood, 2003, as cited in Wijayanto et al., 2022; Greenhaus et al., 2003). From the perspective of the JD-R Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), work life balance represents an important personal and organizational resource that enables employees to maintain energy, reduce psychological strain, and remain productive in their work roles. Employees who experience better work life balance are more likely to demonstrate higher concentration, motivation, and effectiveness in completing their tasks. Empirical studies have also indicated that work life balance is positively associated with employee performance (Aisyah et al., 2023; Hartono & Riwayati, 2024). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H₂ ; Work life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

Work engagement represents a positive psychological state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption in work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). According to the JD-R Theory, work engagement reflects a motivational process through which job resources are transformed into positive work outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Employees with higher levels of work engagement tend to demonstrate greater enthusiasm, persistence, and commitment in

performing their responsibilities, which subsequently contributes to improved performance. Previous research has confirmed that work engagement plays an important role in enhancing employee performance (Ulum & Supriharyanti, 2025; Widyawati et al., 2021). Therefore, this study proposes:

H₃ ; Work engagement has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

Perceptions of distributive justice influence employees' psychological responses toward their organization and work. Based on Equity Theory (Adams, 1963), employees who perceive that their contributions are fairly recognized and rewarded are more likely to develop positive work attitudes and stronger psychological attachment to their jobs. Such perceptions encourage employees to invest greater effort and become more engaged in their work. Previous empirical evidence indicates that fairness perceptions are associated with higher levels of employee engagement and positive workplace behaviors (Dalimunthe et al., 2023; Tyofyan et al., 2022). Thus, distributive justice is expected to strengthen work engagement.

H₄ ; Distributive justice has a positive and significant effect on work engagement.

Work life balance may also influence employees' psychological attachment to their work. The JD-R Theory suggests that available resources help employees maintain motivation and psychological energy, thereby fostering work engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). When employees are able to manage work and personal responsibilities effectively, they are less likely to experience excessive stress and more likely to demonstrate vigor, dedication, and absorption in their jobs (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Previous studies have found that work life balance contributes positively to employee engagement and related positive work outcomes (Aisyah et al., 2023; Hartono & Riwayati, 2024). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

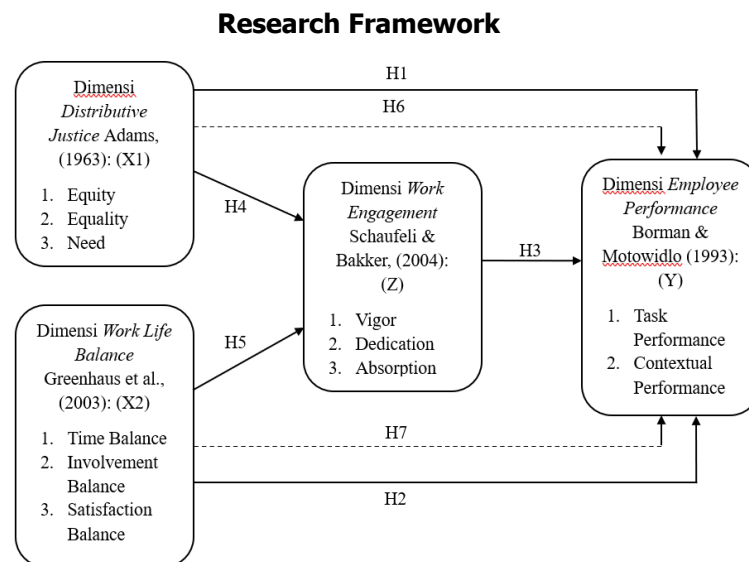
H₅ ; Work life balance has a positive and significant effect on work engagement.

Work engagement is proposed as the psychological mechanism that explains how organizational resources influence employee performance. Based on the JD-R Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), organizational resources do not only affect performance directly but also operate through motivational processes that enhance employees' willingness to invest energy and effort in their work. When employees perceive fair treatment and experience adequate work life balance, they are more likely to develop stronger work engagement, which subsequently contributes to improved performance outcomes. Previous studies have highlighted the important role of work engagement in linking organizational conditions with

employee performance (Ulum & Supriharyanti, 2025; Widyawati et al., 2021). Therefore, this study proposes the following mediation hypotheses:

H₆ ; Work engagement mediates the relationship between distributive justice and employee performance.

H₇ ; Work engagement mediates the relationship between work life balance and employee performance.



Method

This study employs a quantitative approach with a causal associative and explanatory research design to examine the causal relationships among variables through hypothesis testing. Data collection was conducted through preliminary interviews with warehouse managers, administrative staff, and couriers to obtain contextual information regarding operational conditions. Subsequently, primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire measured on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The study population comprised all operational employees, including couriers, warehouse staff, and operational administrative personnel, working at three SPX Express hubs in the Cirebon area. The distribution of the study population is as follows.

Study Population Size

No.	Logistic Hub	Number of Employees
1	SPX Express Gempol Palimanan	82
2	SPX Express Kedawung	62
3	SPX Express Depok Jamblang	36
Total		180

Source; Interview results with logistics warehouse management in Cirebon, (2026)

The study employed purposive sampling using a non probability sampling approach. Respondents were selected based on three criteria: (1) working as operational employees at SPX Express, (2) being actively employed during the research period, and (3) having a minimum tenure of six months. Based on the Isaac and Michael sample size table with a 5% margin of error, a population of 180 employees resulted in a required sample size of 123 respondents. This sampling approach ensured that respondents had sufficient operational experience to evaluate organizational practices related to reward distribution, work scheduling, and operational demands.

The adequacy of the sample size was further assessed based on PLS SEM requirements. Hair et al., (2022) suggest that the ten times rule can be used as a preliminary guideline, requiring at least ten observations for the maximum number of structural paths directed toward an endogenous construct. In this study, the largest number of structural paths directed toward an endogenous construct was three, resulting in a minimum requirement of 30 observations. Therefore, the final sample of 123 respondents was considered adequate for PLS SEM analysis.

Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0. This technique was selected because it enables the simultaneous examination of direct and indirect relationships among constructs without requiring multivariate normality assumptions. The measurement model was evaluated through convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability. Convergent validity was assessed based on outer loadings (>0.70) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE >0.50), while reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values exceeding 0.70.

The structural model was assessed through the coefficient of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2) using the blindfolding procedure, and hypothesis testing through bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples. The significance criteria were determined based on t values greater than 1.96 and p values below 0.05. Following Hair et al., (2022), mediation effects were interpreted by examining the significance of direct and indirect effects, where full mediation occurs when the indirect effect is significant while the direct effect is insignificant, whereas partial mediation occurs when both effects are significant.

Discussion of Research Results

A total of 123 questionnaires distributed to operational employees at three SPX Express hubs in Cirebon were successfully collected and considered valid for further analysis. Data

analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 4.0 through two sequential stages: measurement model assessment and structural model assessment.

The measurement model was evaluated through convergent validity and construct reliability analysis. The results indicate that all constructs achieved acceptable levels of convergent validity, with Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranging from 0.665 to 0.761, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50. This finding indicates that the indicators used in measuring each construct adequately represent their respective latent variables.

The reliability assessment also demonstrated satisfactory results. All constructs obtained Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values above the recommended threshold of 0.70. Specifically, Cronbach's Alpha values ranged from 0.945 to 0.955, while Composite Reliability values ranged from 0.955 to 0.962. These results confirm that the measurement instruments possess high internal consistency and are reliable for subsequent structural model analysis. The results of the convergent validity and reliability assessment are presented as follows.

Results of Convergent Validity and Construct Reliability Tests

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rho a	Composite Reliability (rho_c)	AVE
Distributive Justice	0,950	0,959	0,958	0,718
Employee Performance	0,955	0,959	0,962	0,761
Work Engagement	0,949	0,953	0,956	0,665
Work Life Balance	0,945	0,954	0,955	0,753

Source; Data analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0, (2026)

The following figure presents the structural model generated by the PLS algorithm, showing the path coefficients and outer loadings of each indicator relative to its construct.

Structural Model Based on PLS Algorithm Estimation Results

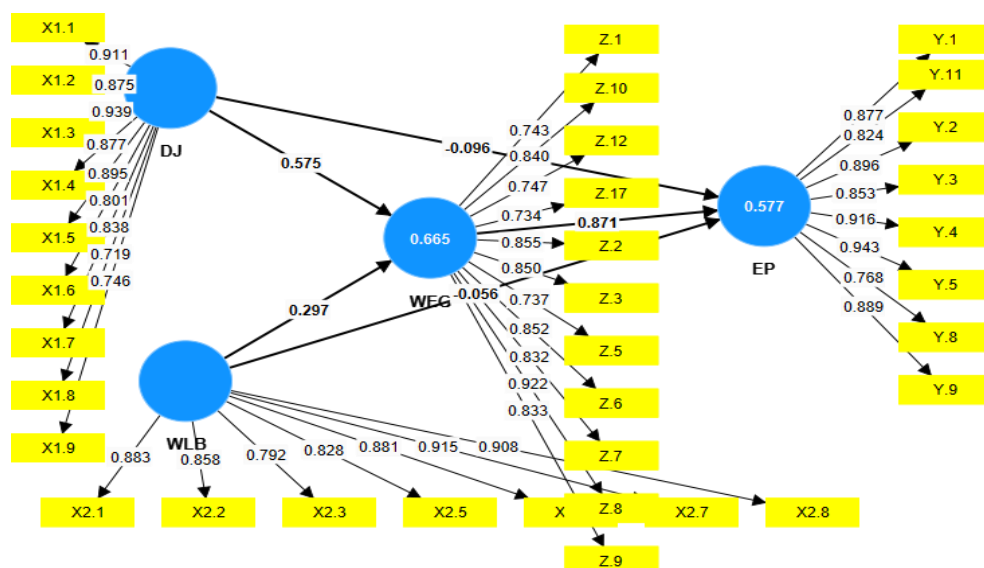


Table 3 and Table 4 display the coefficient of determination (R^2) and predictive relevance (Q^2) values for the structural model. The R^2 for Employee Performance is 0.719 (adjusted R^2 0.556), which, following the guidelines proposed by Hair et al., (2022), is situated in the vicinity of the "substantial" classification. This shows that 71.9% of the variation in Employee Performance is jointly related to Distributive Justice, Work life balance, and Job Engagement. Furthermore, the R^2 for Work Engagement is 0.563 (adjusted R^2 0.556), classified as "moderate," signifying that 56.3% of the variance in Work Engagement is accounted for by Distributive Justice and Work Life Balance.

R Square Value

Variable	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Employee Performance	0,719	0,712
Work Engagement	0,563	0,556

Source; Data analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0, (2026)

An evaluation using the blindfolding method yielded a score of 0.403 for Employee Performance and 0.422 for Work Engagement. As both figures exceed zero, it suggests that the proposed research model demonstrates satisfactory predictive capabilities. This finding is further supported by a positive Q^2 predict value, coupled with comparatively low RMSE and MAE measurements, all of which collectively signify that the model's predictive precision for the observed empirical data is sufficiently robust.

Predictive Relevance (Q^2) and Model Prediction Accuracy

Variable	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1 - SSE/SSO)$	Q^2 predict	RMSE	MAE
Distributive Justice	558	558	0,000	-	-	-
Employee Performance	496	296,196	0,403	0,228	0,942	0,666
Work Engagement	682	394,059	0,422	0,639	0,636	0,478
Work Life Balance	434	434	0,000	-	-	-

Source; Data analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0, (2026)

The hypotheses were tested using a bootstrapping method involving 5,000 resamples. The significance criteria were a t statistic greater than 1.96 and a p value less than 0.05. The results of the direct effects analysis are detailed in the following table.

Hypothesis Testing Results (Direct Effect)

Hypothesis	Process	Original Sample (O)	t Statistics	P Values	Description
H1	DJ → EP	-0,096	0,455	0,649	Rejected
H2	WLB → EP	-0,056	0,400	0,689	Rejected
H3	WEG → EP	0,871	4,253	0,000	Accepted
H4	DJ → WEG	0,575	5,353	0,000	Accepted
H5	WLB → WEG	0,297	3,330	0,001	Accepted

Source; Data analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0, (2026)

The following table displays the outcomes of the mediation analysis concerning Work Engagement. Given that the direct impacts of Distributive Justice and Work Life Balance on Employee Performance were not statistically significant, whereas the indirect impacts through Work Engagement were significant, both of these associations are categorized as exhibiting full mediation.

Results of the Mediation Test (Indirect Effect)

Hypothesis	Mediation Process	Original Sample (O)	t Statistics	P Values	Description
H6	DJ → WEG → EP	0,501	2,688	0,007	Full Mediation
H7	WLB → WEG → EP	0,258	2,789	0,005	Full Mediation

Source; Data analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0, (2026)

The hypothesis testing results provide several important insights into the relationships among distributive justice, work life balance, work engagement, and employee performance. The analysis of H1 indicates that distributive justice does not have a significant direct effect on employee performance ($\beta = -0.096$; $p = 0.649$). Therefore, H_1 is not supported. This finding differs from previous studies reporting a positive relationship between distributive justice and employee performance (Dalimunthe et al., 2023; Tyofyan et al., 2022).

The absence of a direct effect may be explained by the operational characteristics of the logistics and delivery industry. Operational employees at SPX Express work within a target oriented performance system, where daily performance is primarily determined by delivery completion, punctuality, and service quality. Under such conditions, employees may continue to achieve operational targets regardless of their perceptions of reward fairness. Thus, distributive justice may not immediately translate into improved performance because operational demands and performance indicators represent stronger immediate drivers of work outcomes. However, based on Equity Theory (Adams, 1963), fairness perceptions may still influence employees' psychological states, which subsequently affect performance through motivational mechanisms such as work engagement.

Similarly, H_2 is not supported, indicating that work life balance does not have a significant direct effect on employee performance ($\beta = -0.056$; $p = 0.689$). This finding differs from previous studies demonstrating a positive relationship between work life balance and employee performance (Aisyah et al., 2023; Ulum & Supriharyanti, 2025). A possible explanation is related to the nature of logistics work, which involves fluctuating delivery volumes, physical mobility, extended working hours during peak periods, and strict delivery deadlines. In this context, employees may perceive work related demands as inherent characteristics of their occupation, allowing them to maintain performance despite experiencing limited work life balance. This finding supports the JD-R Theory (Bakker &

Demerouti, 2007), which suggests that work resources primarily operate through motivational processes rather than directly determining performance outcomes.

In contrast, H_3 is supported, indicating that work engagement has a positive and significant effect on employee performance ($\beta = 0.871$; $p < 0.001$). This relationship represents the strongest path coefficient in the structural model. The finding confirms previous studies showing that employees with higher levels of vigor, dedication, and absorption tend to demonstrate better performance Alifia & Iryanti, (2023) and Rosalina et al., (2023). In the logistics sector, where employees face high workloads, mobility demands, and strict service targets, work engagement becomes an essential psychological condition that enables employees to sustain effort and achieve operational objectives.

Furthermore, H_4 and H_5 are supported, indicating that distributive justice ($\beta = 0.575$; $p < 0.001$) and work life balance ($\beta = 0.297$; $p = 0.001$) have positive and significant effects on work engagement. Among these predictors, distributive justice demonstrates a stronger influence on employee engagement. These findings are consistent with previous studies Hartono & Riwayati, (2024) and Widyawati et al., (2021) and reinforce the JD-R Theory perspective that organizational resources, including fairness perceptions and work life balance, stimulate employees' motivational processes and strengthen their engagement with work.

The mediation analysis supports H_6 and H_7 , demonstrating that work engagement fully mediates the relationships between distributive justice and employee performance ($\beta = 0.501$; $p = 0.007$) and between work life balance and employee performance ($\beta = 0.258$; $p = 0.005$). These findings indicate that distributive justice and work life balance do not directly improve employee performance; rather, their effects occur through enhanced work engagement. In other words, organizational resources contribute to better performance when they successfully strengthen employees' psychological involvement, energy, and commitment toward their work. This finding is consistent with previous research Hartono & Riwayati, (2024) and Fabanyo et al., (2025) and provides additional empirical evidence that work engagement functions as an important psychological mechanism linking organizational resources with performance outcomes among operational employees in the logistics and delivery sector.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationships among distributive justice, work life balance, work engagement, and employee performance among operational employees of SPX Express in Cirebon. The findings reveal that distributive justice and work life balance do not have direct effects on employee performance. Instead, both factors influence performance indirectly through work engagement, which functions as a full mediating mechanism. This finding

indicates that organizational resources, such as fair reward distribution and balanced work arrangements, contribute to improved performance when they successfully enhance employees' psychological attachment, energy, and commitment toward their work.

The results further demonstrate that the proposed structural model provides substantial explanatory capability in predicting employee performance and work engagement. These findings highlight the strategic importance of work engagement as a key mechanism that transforms organizational resources into improved employee outcomes. Theoretically, this study provides additional empirical evidence supporting Equity Theory and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Theory by demonstrating that fairness perceptions and work life balance operate primarily through motivational processes rather than directly influencing performance outcomes. Practically, the findings suggest that logistics organizations should not rely solely on compensation fairness or work arrangement policies but should also develop initiatives that strengthen employee engagement to achieve sustainable performance improvement.

Research Implication

This study provides theoretical and practical implications for understanding employee performance in the logistics and delivery service context. Theoretically, the findings provide additional empirical evidence for Equity Theory and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Theory by demonstrating that organizational resources, such as distributive justice and work life balance, influence employee performance primarily through work engagement. The insignificant direct effects of distributive justice and work life balance on performance indicate that organizational resources do not automatically generate improved performance unless they are translated into positive psychological states. Thus, this study contributes to the literature by clarifying the mediating role of work engagement as an important mechanism that explains how organizational resources are transformed into improved employee outcomes, particularly among operational employees in the logistics sector.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that logistics service organizations should move beyond solely improving compensation systems or work arrangements and focus on strengthening employee engagement as a pathway toward performance improvement. Organizations may consider developing transparent reward and incentive mechanisms, providing meaningful recognition for employee contributions, improving supervisor–employee communication, and designing more supportive work arrangements within operational constraints. These practices can enhance employees' perceptions of fairness and work life balance while simultaneously fostering greater vigor, dedication, and involvement in their work. Consequently, strengthening work engagement can become an important managerial

strategy for improving employee performance and sustaining operational effectiveness in the logistics industry.

Limitation and Future Research

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the cross sectional research design limits the ability to capture changes in employees' perceptions and behaviors over time and restricts stronger causal inference among the investigated variables. Future studies employing longitudinal designs could provide deeper insights into how distributive justice, work life balance, and work engagement develop and influence employee performance over time.

Second, this study was conducted among operational employees from three SPX Express hubs in the Cirebon area using purposive sampling. Although this approach ensured that respondents possessed relevant operational experience, the specific organizational and geographical context may limit the generalizability of the findings to other logistics companies, industries, or cultural settings. Future research could expand the sample across different logistics organizations, regions, or service sectors to enhance the external validity of the findings.

Third, the study relied on self reported questionnaire data, which may introduce potential common method bias and subjective evaluation effects. Future research may consider combining survey data with objective performance indicators, supervisor assessments, or qualitative approaches to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of employee performance mechanisms.

Furthermore, future studies are encouraged to extend the proposed model by examining additional explanatory factors that may strengthen or weaken the relationship between organizational resources and employee outcomes. Variables such as perceived organizational support, leadership style, organizational commitment, burnout, and psychological well being may provide deeper insights into the psychological processes underlying employee engagement and performance in the logistics sector.

References

- Adams, J. S. (1963). Towards an Understanding of Inequity. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 67(5), 422–436. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0040968>
- Aisyah, C., Suryaningsih, A., & Putri, D. A. (2023). The Effect of Work Life Balance on Employee Performance in Manufacture Companies (Case Study at PT. Gemilang Mitra Sejahtera). *Journal of Contemporary Administration and Management (ADMAN)*, 1(1), 26–33. <https://doi.org/10.61100/adman.v1i1.19>
- Alifia, N. S., & Iryanti, E. (2023). The Effect of Work Life Balance and Employee Engagement on Employee Performance of PT Duta Jaya Teknik Surabaya. *International Journal of*

- Social Science and Education Research Studies*, 03(09), 1808–1813. <https://doi.org/10.55677/ijssers/v03i9y2023-04>
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The Job Demands-Resources Model: State of the Art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309–328. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710733115>
- BPS. (2024). *Pertumbuhan e commerce Indonesia Tahun 2024 - Berita dan Siaran Pers - Badan Pusat Statistik Kota Prabumulih*. BPS. <https://prabumulihkota.bps.go.id/id/news/2025/12/26/179/pertumbuhan-e-commerce-indonesia-tahun-2024.html>
- ÇALIŞKAN, A., & KÖROĞLU, E. Ö. (2022). Job Performance, Task Performance, Contextual Performance: Development and Validation of a New Scale. *Uluslararası İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Dergisi*, 8(2), 180–201. <https://doi.org/10.29131/uiibd.1201880>
- Dalimunthe, L., Limakrisna, N., & Lusiana, L. (2023). Employee Performance Model Through Job Satisfaction: Distributive Justice and Procedural Justice at the Padang Sidempuan City Health Office. *International Journal of Social Science and Business*, 7(2), 397–405. <https://doi.org/10.23887/ijssb.v7i2.53739>
- Engdaw, B., & Kebede, M. (2024). The Impact of Organizational Justices on Organizational Success: the Mediating Role of Organizational Citizenship Behavior. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2024.2401207>
- Fabanyo, N., Hasyim, A. W., & Alhadar, F. M. (2025). Pengaruh Work life balance terhadap Peningkatan Employee Performance melalui Employee Engagement dan Job Satisfaction sebagai Variabel Mediasi. *Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen Bisnis Dan Inovasi Universitas Sam Ratulangi*, 12(2), 821–853.
- Felda, N. S. (2024). *Pelaku E commerce Indonesia Masih Terkonsentrasi di Pulau Jawa - GoodStats Data*. GoodStats Data. <https://data.goodstats.id/statistic/75-pelaku-e-commerce-indonesia-masih-terkonsentrasi-di-pulau-jawa-dJtZB>
- Greenhaus, J. H., Collins, K. M., & Shaw, J. D. (2003). The Relation between Work-Family Balance and Quality of Life. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 63(3), 510–531. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0001-8791\(02\)00042-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0001-8791(02)00042-8)
- Hair, J. F., M. Hult, G. T., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2022). *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)* (3rd ed.). Sage Publishing.
- Hartono, M. A., & Riwayati, H. E. (2024). Analysis of the Effect of Justice, Perceived Organizational Support on Performance with Employee Engagement as Intervening Variable at PT. Brantas Abipraya. *Formosa Journal of Sustainable Research*, 3(11), 2331–2352. <https://doi.org/10.55927/fjsr.v3i11.12196>
- Pratiwi, J. A., & Fatoni, F. (2023). Pengaruh Employee Engagement dan Work life balance terhadap Kinerja Karyawan Melalui Kepuasan Kerja. *Jurnal Ilmu Manajemen*, 11(1), 53–68. https://jurnal.um-palembang.ac.id/ilmu_manajemen/article/view/3252
- Rosalina, L. R., Rahmawati, P. I., & Sinarwati, N. K. (2023). Work Engagement as a Central Driver: Reassessing Employee Well Being Metrics and Performance. *JEMA: Jurnal Ilmiah Bidang Akuntansi Dan Manajemen*, 20(1), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.31106/jema.v20i1.20161>
- Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2004). Utrecht Work Engagement Scale Preliminary Manual Version 1.1. *Occupational Health Psychology Unit Utrecht University, December*, 1–60. <https://doi.org/10.1037/t01350-000>
- Tyofyan, G. T., Tjahjono, H. K., & Susanto. (2022). THE Effect of Distributive Justice and Motivation Intrinsic to Job Satisfaction and Employee Performance in MSMEs in the Culinary Sector in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. *Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary Science*, 975–984.
- Ulum, A. B., & Supriharyanti, E. (2025). Pengaruh Work life balance Terhadap Employee Performance a Systematic Literature Review. *Reslaj: Religion Education Social Laa Roiba Journal*, 7, 2590–2600. <https://doi.org/10.47476/reslaj.v7i9.8513>

- Widyawati, W., Manggabarani, A., & Marzuki, F. (2021). Analisis Pengaruh Kompensasi, Work life balance, Kesempatan Berkembang terhadap Employee Engagement Gen Y PT "X." *SALAM: Jurnal Sosial Dan Budaya Syar-I*, 8(5), 1421–1434. <https://doi.org/10.15408/sjsbs.v8i5.22450>
- Wijayanto, P., Suharti, L., & Chaniago, R. (2022). Pengaruh Work Life Balance terhadap Employee Engagement dan Dampaknya terhadap Turn-Over Intentions dengan Job Characteristics sebagai Pemoderasi (Studi pada Karyawan Generasi Y di Indonesia). *Jurnal Ekonomi Pendidikan Dan Kewirausahaan*, 10(1), 83–98. <https://doi.org/10.26740/jepk.v10n1.p83-98>