

The Role of Public Service Motivation in Mediating the Effect of Human Resource Development on Organizational Commitment at the Medan Sunggal District Office

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the role of Public Service Motivation (PSM) in mediating the influence of human resource development on organizational commitment at the Medan Sunggal Sub-District Office. The study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method. The study population consists of all 90 civil servants at the Medan Sunggal Sub-District Office, all of whom were included in the sample. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the help of SmartPLS. The results showed that HRD had a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment and a positive and significant effect on Public Service Motivation. Furthermore, Public Service Motivation was proven to have a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment. The results of the indirect effect test showed that Public Service Motivation acted as a significant mediating variable in the relationship between HR development and organizational commitment. These findings indicate that increasing organizational commitment in the Medan Sunggal Sub-District Office environment can be achieved more effectively through HR development that is capable of strengthening employees' public service motivation. This study provides practical implications for public sector organization managers in designing HR development policies that are oriented towards strengthening public service values and increasing organizational commitment.

Keywords: Human Resource Development, Public Service Motivation, Organizational Commitment

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Introduction

Organizational commitment is a key factor in improving the performance and sustainability of public sector organizations, especially in government agencies that are oriented towards public service. Employees with a high level of organizational commitment tend to show loyalty, work engagement, and a willingness to prioritize public interests over personal interests. However, in practice, there are still cases of suboptimal employee commitment levels, one of which is influenced by the quality of human resource management and public service motivation (Kim & Park, 2021).

Human resource development (HRD) is a strategic instrument for public organizations in improving the capacity, competence, and work attitude of employees. Training programs, career development, and continuous learning not only serve to improve technical skills but also shape the values, ethics, and service orientation of employees. However, several studies show that HRD does not always have a direct impact on organizational commitment, especially if it is not accompanied by strong intrinsic motivation to serve the public interest (Van Loon, Kjeldsen, & Leisink, 2020).

In the context of public organizations, Public Service Motivation (PSM) is seen as a psychological factor that drives individuals to devote themselves to the interests of society and the state. PSM reflects altruistic values, social concern, and commitment to public service. Recent studies show that PSM plays an important role in strengthening the relationship between HR management practices and positive work attitudes, including organizational commitment (Ritz, Brewer, & Neumann, 2021; Belle & Cantarelli, 2022).

At the Medan Sunggal Sub-District Office, as a public service unit that interacts directly with the community, the presence of employees with high organizational commitment and strong public service motivation is crucial. Therefore, it is important to examine the role of Public Service Motivation in mediating the influence of HR development on organizational commitment. This study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of public management studies as well as practical recommendations for government agency leaders in designing HR development policies oriented towards strengthening employee motivation and commitment.

Literature Review

Organizational Commitment

Definition of Organizational Commitment

Wibowo (2022) defines organizational commitment as a form of employee attachment demonstrated through a willingness to support organizational goals, remain part of the organization, and contribute optimally to their work.

Indicators of Organizational Commitment

According to Wibowo (2022) in his book *Performance Management*, organizational commitment can be seen from the following main indicators:

- 1) **Employee Engagement**
Employees demonstrate active involvement in their work and organizational activities and have a sense of ownership of their duties and responsibilities.
- 2) **Willingness to Work Hard for the Organization**
Employees are willing to go the extra mile, work hard, and show high dedication to achieving organizational goals.
- 3) **Desire to Stay**
Employees have a strong desire to maintain their membership in the organization and do not intend to move elsewhere.
- 4) **Pride in the Organization**
Employees feel proud to be part of the organization and positively associate their identity with the institution.

Public Service Motivation (PSM)

Definition of Public Service Motivation

According to Lu & Chen (2022), public service motivation is an individual's predisposition or motivation in the public sector that is related to the desire to serve the community and the public interest, rather than simply economic motives or personal gain.

Indicators of Public Service Motivation

The main indicators of public service motivation proposed by Lu & Chen (2022) and other studies are:

- 1) **Attraction to Public Policy Making (APM)**
Individuals with high PSM tend to be attracted to working in decision-making or policy-making that affects the wider community. This indicates a motivation to contribute to the development and improvement of public systems.
- 2) **Commitment to Public Interest (CPI)**
Individuals with PSM have a high concern for the welfare of others and are oriented towards achieving goals that are greater than personal gain. They are committed to providing services that benefit society.
- 3) **Compassion (COM)**
Motivation to help those in need, such as providing attention or support to the poor or less fortunate. This indicates a drive to provide services with empathy and care.
- 4) **Self-Sacrifice (SS)**
Individuals with high PSI are willing to sacrifice their time, energy, or personal gain for the benefit of others. This demonstrates a willingness to work hard without expecting significant material rewards.
- 5) **Public Service Identity (PSI)**
Indicates how strongly individuals identify themselves with work in the public sector and feel connected to the mission and values of public institutions. This identity includes a sense of belonging to the organization or public service mission.
- 6) **Work Engagement (WE)**
Individuals with high PSM are usually emotionally and actively involved in their work, feel enthusiastic and attentive to their tasks, and strive to give their best.
- 7) **Organizational Commitment (OC)**
Strong PSM is associated with high commitment to the organization where individuals work, including loyalty to the organization's mission and dedication to achieving organizational goals.
- 8) **Job Satisfaction (JS)**
Individuals with high PSM tend to feel satisfied with their work, as they feel that their work makes a positive contribution to society and adds value to their lives.

Human Resource Development

Definition of Human Resource Development

According to Wijaya (2023), human resource development is a planned and continuous effort to improve employees' skills, work efficiency, and readiness to face change, thereby ultimately encouraging their commitment to the organization. When employees feel that the organization provides opportunities for learning and development, they will show pride, loyalty, and a stronger desire to contribute their best to the organization.

Indicators of Human Resource Development

Indicators of Human Resource Development According to Wijaya (2023)

- 1) Skill Improvement

Human resource development must be able to improve employees' technical and non-technical skills.

- 2) Improved Work Efficiency
Human resource development improves employees' ability to work faster, more accurately, and more effectively.
- 3) Increased Readiness to Face Change
Development programs make employees better prepared to face changes in technology, work methods, and organizational demands.
- 4) Organizational Support for Learning and Development
When organizations provide opportunities for learning and development, employees demonstrate high loyalty.
- 5) Opportunities for Self-Development and Career Growth
The importance of development opportunities so that employees feel valued and proud of the organization.
- 6) The Impact of Development on Employee Attitude and Loyalty
Good human resource development "increases pride, loyalty, and the desire to give one's best contribution."

Conceptual Framework

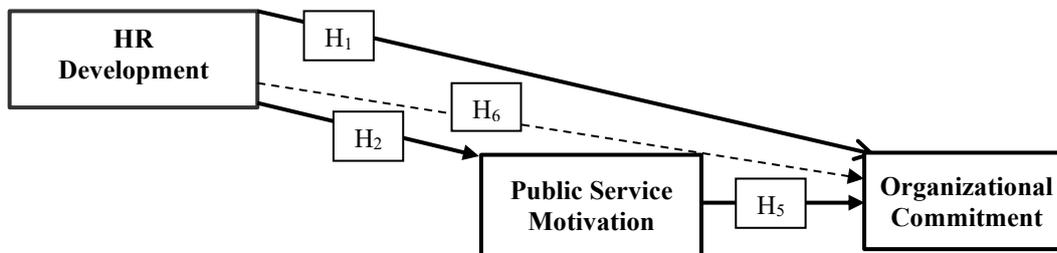


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Research Hypothesis

- H₁ Human Resource Development has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment at the Medan Sunggal Subdistrict Office.
- H₂ Human resource development has a positive and significant effect on public service motivation at the Medan Sunggal Subdistrict Office.
- H₃: Public service motivation has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment at the Medan Sunggal Subdistrict Office.
- H₄ : Human resource development has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment through public service motivation at the Medan Sunggal Subdistrict Office.

Research Methodology

Type of Research

The type of research used by the researcher is quantitative research. According to Sugiyono (2022), quantitative research can be defined as a method based on positivism philosophy, used to study a specific population or sample, with sampling techniques generally conducted randomly, data collection using research instruments, and quantitative/statistical data analysis with the aim of testing predetermined hypotheses. This type of quantitative research was conducted to create a study aimed at adjusting a study and analyzing organizational culture and human resource development in relation to organizational commitment with public service motivation as a mediating variable at the Medan Sunggal Sub-District Office.

Research Location and Time

The research location was at the Medan Sunggal Sub-District Office, located at Jl. T.B. Simatupang No.193, Sunggal, Medan Sunggal Sub-District, Medan City. The research was conducted over a period of 3 months, from October to December 2025.

Population and Sample

Sugiyono (2021) defines population as a generalization area consisting of objects or subjects that have certain qualities and characteristics determined by researchers to be studied and then conclusions are drawn. The population and sample in this study are all permanent employees at the Medan Sunggal Subdistrict Office. There are 90 civil servant employees at the Medan Sunggal Subdistrict Office. In this study, the entire population was used as the sample, known as a population study.

Research Data Sources

The data source used in this study is primary data.

Results

Outer Model Analysis

Outer Model Analysis using the PLS Algorithm produced the following results:

Validity Test

Table 1. Outer Loadings Values

	HR Development	Organizational Commitment	Public Service Motivation
X2.1	0.950		
X2.2	0.977		
X2.3	0.950		
X2.4	0.971		
X2.5	0.946		
Y.1		0.837	
Y.2		0.909	
Y.3		0.922	
Y.4		0.914	
Z.1			0.948
Z.2			0.940
Z.3			0.946
Z.4			0.881
Z.5			0.968
Z.6			0.965
Z.7			0.962
Z.8			0.947

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

Based on the values in Table 1 above, which show the results of outer model testing through loading factor/outer loadings values, all indicators in each variable have a loading value ≥ 0.70 . This indicates that each indicator is measured validly and strongly. Therefore, it can be concluded that all items in the questionnaire have met the validity criteria, as shown in the following figure.

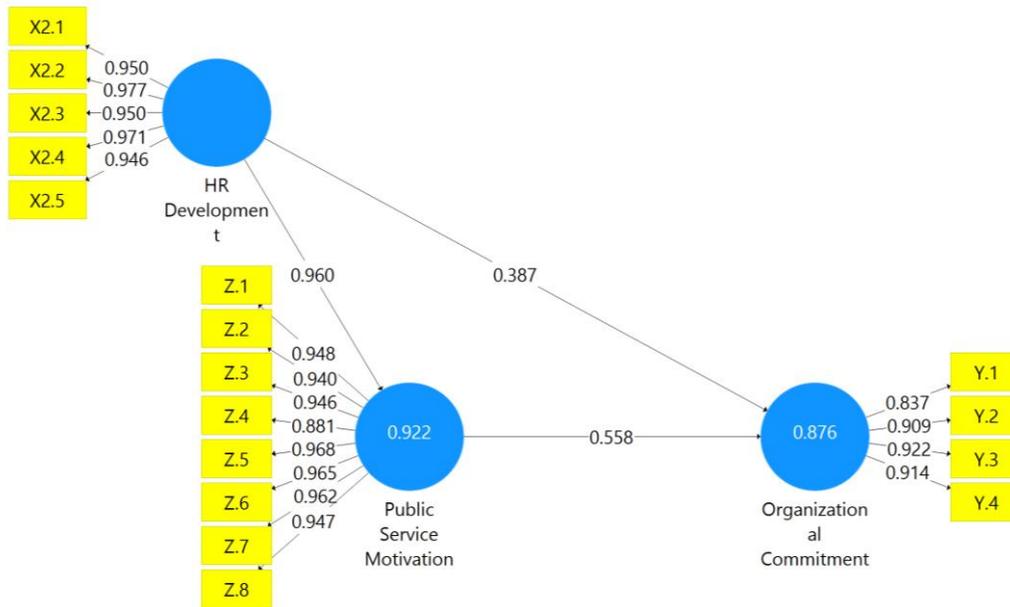


Figure 2. Outer Loading

Reliability Test

Table 2. Construct Reliability and Validity Test

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
HR Development	0.978	0.979	0.983	0.919
Organizational Commitment	0.918	0.928	0.942	0.804
Public Service Motivation	0.983	0.983	0.985	0.893

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

From Table 2 above, the reliability test results show that the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values for all constructs are above 0.70. This indicates that all indicators have high internal consistency and are reliable in measuring their respective constructs. Thus, the research instrument is declared reliable and suitable for use in structural model testing.

Coefficient of Determination (R²)

In assessing the model with PLS, we begin by looking at the R-square for each dependent latent variable. The table below shows the Rsquare estimation results using SmartPLS.

Table 3. R Square Results

	R Square	Adjusted R-Square
Public Service Motivation	0.922	0.921
Organizational Commitment	0.876	0.872

Source: Smart PLS, 2025

Table 3 shows the R square values for both dependent variables. For the public service motivation variable, the R square value is 0.922, meaning that the influence of human resource development is 0.922 or 92.2%, with the remainder attributable to other variables outside the model. The R square value for employee performance is 0.876, meaning that human resource development and public service motivation account for 0.876 or 87.6%, with the remainder attributable to other variables outside the model.

Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

Hypothesis Testing

Direct Influence Between Variables

The direct effect between variables can be seen in the path coefficients. The data analysis results show the direct effect values in the following table.

Table 4. Path Coefficients (Direct Effects)

	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Conclusion
HR Development -> Organizational Commitment	0.387	1.968	0.050	Accepted
HR Development -> Public Service Motivation	0.960	41,830	0.000	Accepted
Public Service Motivation -> Organizational Commitment	0.558	2.786	0.006	Accepted

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

The results in Table 4 show the following direct effect values:

1. Human resource development has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment with a t-statistic value of 1.968 below 1.96 and a significance of 0.050 equal to 0.05, meaning that human resource development has a real effect on organizational commitment because the significance value is below 0.05. The results of this study are in line with previous studies, namely that human resource development has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment (Rahayu et al., 2019).
2. HRD has a positive and significant effect on public service motivation with a t-statistic value of 41.830 above 1.96 and a significance of 0.000 below 0.05, meaning that HRD has a significant effect on public service motivation because the significance value is below 0.05. The results of this study are in line with previous studies, namely that HRD has a positive and significant effect on public service motivation (Piatak et al., 2020).
3. Public service motivation has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment with a t-statistic value of 2.786 above 1.96 and a significance of 0.006 below 0.05, meaning that public service motivation has a significant effect on organizational commitment because the significance value is below 0.05. The results of this study are in line with previous studies, namely that public service motivation has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment (Lu & Chen, 2022).

Indirect Effects Between Variables

The indirect effect between variables can be seen in the specific indirect effects value. The data analysis results show the indirect effect value in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Specific Indirect Effects

	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Conclusion
HR Development -> Public Service Motivation -> Organizational Commitment	0.536	2.767	0.006	Accepted

Source: Smart PLS, 2025

Table 5 shows the indirect effect between variables, namely: human resource development has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment through public service motivation with a t-statistic value of 2.767 above 1.96 and a significance value of 0.006 below 0.05, meaning that public service motivation acts as an intervening variable between human resource development and organizational commitment.

Conclusion

1. Human resource development has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment at the Medan Sunggal Sub-District Office.
2. Human resource development has a positive and significant effect on public service motivation at the Medan Sunggal Subdistrict Office.
3. Public service motivation has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment at the Medan Sunggal Sub-District Office.
4. Human resource development has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment through public service motivation at the Medan Sunggal Subdistrict Office.

Recommendations

1. Organizational commitment with the lowest value statement is "I am actively involved in the activities and work of this organization." Therefore, the recommendation is that the Medan Sunggal Sub-District Office needs to increase the active involvement of employees by strengthening participation in work planning and implementation, delegating clear authority, and linking daily tasks to public service values (Public Service Motivation) so that employees feel that their work is meaningful and has a direct impact on the community.
2. Public Service Motivation with the lowest value statement being "I am willing to sacrifice my personal interests for the sake of public service." The Medan Sunggal Sub-District Office needs to strengthen the internalization of public service values through leadership role modeling, non-material recognition of employee dedication, and strengthening the meaning of the social impact of work so that employees' willingness to prioritize public interests increases.
3. Human Resource Development with the lowest value statement being "Human Resource Development encourages employees to work together to solve work problems." The Medan Sunggal Sub-District Office needs to direct human resource development towards collaborative training and team-based problem solving, so that employees become accustomed to working together to solve work problems effectively and with a focus on public service.

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