

The Role of Job Demands and Job Resources in Mediating the Influence of Leadership Practices on Work Engagement, and Their Impact on the Performance of Police Personnel at the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of leadership practices, job demands, and job resources on work engagement and their impact on the performance of Indonesian National Police personnel at the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police, including testing the mediating role of job demands, job resources, and work engagement in the developed relationship model. The study population consisted of 2,211 personnel, with a sample of 187 respondents determined using the Slovin formula at a precision level of 7 percent. The research approach used a quantitative method with Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis to test direct and mediating relationships between variables. The results showed that leadership practices had a positive and significant effect on job demands, job resources, work engagement, and personnel performance. In addition, job demands were proven to have a positive and significant effect on work engagement, while job resources had no significant effect. Work engagement had a positive and significant effect on personnel performance. The mediation analysis revealed that job demands acted as a full mediator in the relationship between leadership practices and work engagement, while job resources did not act as a mediator. Meanwhile, work engagement acted as a partial mediator in the relationship between leadership practices and personnel performance. The findings of this study extend the JD-R model by presenting performance variables as the primary output and highlighting the importance of leadership practices in shaping adaptive work demands and work engagement, which impact personnel performance. The theoretical and practical implications of this study can serve as a reference for the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police (Polda Sultra) in strengthening leadership strategies and human resource management to improve organizational performance.

Keywords: *Leadership Practices, Job Demands, Job Resources, Work Engagement, And Personnel Performance.*

Introduction

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a strategic field that plays a crucial role in optimizing individual contributions to achieve organizational goals effectively and sustainably. The development of HRM demonstrates a paradigm shift from the mechanistic approach of scientific management (Taylor, 1911) to a more humanistic and strategic approach through the human relations movement (Mayo, 1930s). Similarly, Ferris et al. (2004) assert that modern HRM studies have evolved through middle-range theories such as contingency theory, agency theory, and the resource-based view, which emphasize the importance of alignment between organizational strategy and HRM practices. The concept of strategic HRM proposed by Wright and McMahan (1992) reinforces the view that organizational effectiveness can only be achieved if HRM policies and practices consistently support organizational strategy.

The relationship between HRM practices and organizational performance is further emphasized by Guest (1997) and Wood (1999), who emphasize the importance of integrating HRM theory, performance theory, and the causal mechanisms between the two. High-commitment management, high-involvement management, and high-performance management approaches position practices

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such as training, work flexibility, teamwork, and performance-based compensation systems as strategic instruments for enhancing employee commitment, capability, and engagement. Thus, HR is no longer viewed solely as an administrative function but as a strategic pillar in creating people-based competitive advantage, including in high-intensity public sector organizations such as the police force.

In the context of the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police (Polda Sultra), HR management has become increasingly crucial given the complexity of tasks, high occupational risks, and the demands of continuous public service. The variety of operational and administrative tasks demands professionalism, physical and mental resilience, and a high degree of adaptability from each personnel. However, the actual situation indicates that human resources and work facilities remain limited. According to the LAKIP (Regional Approval) of the Human Resources Bureau of the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police (2024), the fulfillment of the Personnel List has only reached 44.5% of the ideal requirement, forcing most personnel to perform multiple duties. The significant increase in psychological services for personnel also indicates high work pressure and the need for psychological support, which can potentially reduce motivation and performance if not managed strategically.

In such situations, the role of leadership practices becomes crucial. Kouzes and Posner (2012) explain that leadership practices that model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart can build trust, social support, and emotional engagement among members. Based on the job demands–resources model (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), effective leadership can manage perceptions of job demands while simultaneously strengthening job resources, so that work pressure is not merely a source of fatigue but can be transformed into a motivational challenge. Several empirical studies (Tummers & Bakker, 2021; Atiku & Van Wyk, 2024) confirm that supportive and inspirational leadership plays a crucial role in shaping positive perceptions of work demands and resources.

Furthermore, the balance between job demands and job resources has been shown to play a crucial role in shaping work engagement, which is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). High levels of work engagement subsequently impact individual and organizational performance (Sonnentag & Frese, 2002; Armstrong, 2019). However, previous research findings have shown mixed results and mostly focused on non-police organizational contexts. Therefore, this study was developed to fill the empirical gap by examining the role of job demands and job resources in mediating the influence of leadership practices on work engagement and its impact on the performance of Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police personnel. It is hoped that this will enrich the development of JD–R theory and HRM practices in the high-intensity public sector.

Literature Review

Leadership Practices

Leadership practices are understood as a set of concrete behaviors, actions, and strategies implemented by leaders to direct, motivate, and empower individuals and groups to effectively achieve organizational goals. This perspective emphasizes that leadership is not solely related to individual technical competencies, but primarily to practices carried out within social and organizational contexts (Carroll et al., 2008). Various studies confirm that leadership practices are reflected through exemplary behavior, meaningful communication, the ability to manage change, and the formation of relationships based on trust and collaboration (Crevani et al., 2010; Hernandez et al., 2011; Day et al., 2014; Yukl, 2013; Northouse, 2016). Within this framework, leadership is viewed as an adaptive relational and contextual process, where a leader's effectiveness is determined by their ability to adapt their behavior to the needs of followers and the dynamics of the work environment, thereby building commitment, engagement, and sustainable performance.

Furthermore, leadership practices are also often explained through authentic and transformational leadership approaches. Avolio & Gardner (2005) and Walumbwa et al. (2008) emphasized that leadership practices are expressions of a leader's values, integrity, and morality that build trust, psychological safety, and commitment in followers. Meanwhile, Bass & Riggio (2006) and Cowden et al. (2011) demonstrated that transformational practices—such as inspiring vision, individualized attention, intellectual stimulation, and empowerment—can foster greater work meaning and engagement. This concept was further reinforced by Kouzes & Posner (2012; Posner, 2016) through five key leadership practices: leading by example, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart, which emphasize that effective leadership is realized through consistent actions in daily practice. Recent findings also indicate that leadership practices oriented towards intrinsic motivation, communication, and adaptive change play a strategic role in

building an innovative, committed, and high-performance work culture (Crawford et al., 2019; Atiku & Van Wyk, 2024).

Job Demands

Karasek (1979) views job demand as the level of psychological pressure arising from workload, time pressure, and task complexity, which is not always negative because at certain levels it can stimulate performance, but has the potential to cause stress when it exceeds individual capacity or is accompanied by low job control. This perspective is expanded in the framework of the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model by Demerouti et al. (2001) and Bakker & Demerouti (2007; 2014; 2017), which defines job demand as the physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of work that require sustained effort and are associated with physiological and psychological costs. Various studies confirm that demands such as high workloads, time pressure, significant responsibility, emotional demands, role conflict and ambiguity, and task complexity can drain energy and trigger burnout and decreased well-being if not balanced by adequate resources (Bakker et al., 2004; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Hakanen et al., 2006; Podsakoff et al., 2007; Van den Broeck et al., 2010).

However, the literature also emphasizes the dual nature of job demands. Crawford, LePine, & Rich (2010) and Bakker & Sanz-Vergel (2013) distinguish between challenge demands and hindrance demands, where challenging demands—such as high targets, significant responsibility, and learning demands—can foster growth, motivation, and performance, while hindering demands—such as excessive bureaucracy, role conflict, and task ambiguity—tend to diminish well-being. This view is supported by Yener & Coskun (2013), Coetzer & Rothmann (2007), and Schaufeli & Taris (2014), who emphasized that the impact of job demand depends heavily on individual perceptions and the balance between demands and adaptive capacity and available resources. Thus, job demand is not merely a source of stress but can also serve as a driver of engagement and performance when perceived as a meaningful challenge and managed adaptively (Taris & Schaufeli, 2015; Penz et al., 2019).

Job Resources

Schaufeli & Bakker (2004) define job resources as aspects of work that support employees in completing tasks, maintaining motivation, and helping them manage work stress. These resources include social support from superiors and coworkers, autonomy in decision-making, performance feedback, role clarity, and opportunities for competency development. Within the Job Demands–Resources Model, job resources act as motivational factors that encourage work engagement and also act as a buffer against the negative impacts of high job demands (Hakanen et al., 2006; Llorens et al., 2006). When employees have access to adequate resources, they tend to feel valued, are better able to cope with task complexity, and maintain psychological balance, thus avoiding emotional exhaustion and decreased well-being. Furthermore, various studies confirm that job resources are a positive aspect of the work environment that fosters employee energy, intrinsic motivation, and commitment to their work (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007; Bakker, 2010; Taris & Schaufeli, 2015; Schaufeli, 2017). Social support, learning opportunities, recognition for accomplishments, and constructive feedback not only help achieve work goals but also foster personal growth and psychological well-being. Bakker & Albrecht (2018) and Penz et al. (2019) emphasize that a resource-rich work environment enables individuals to feel more empowered, competent, and autonomous, thereby increasing work engagement and performance, while also mitigating the impact of demanding work demands. Thus, job resources serve as an important foundation for building sustained motivation, psychological resilience, and quality performance across various organizational contexts.

Work Engagement

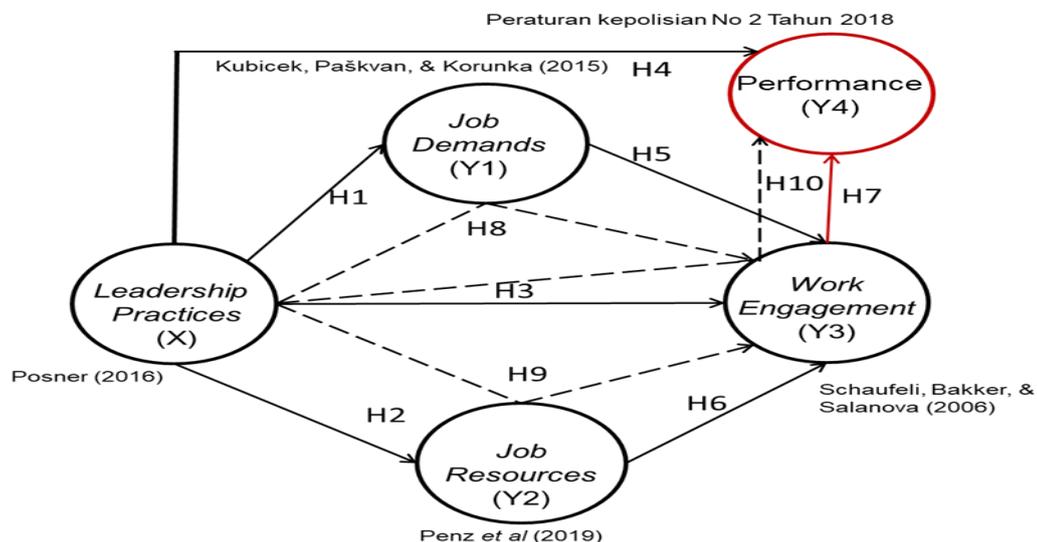
Kanungo (1982) defines work engagement as a psychological attachment that arises when work fulfills an individual's needs, values, and personal identity, thus making work a strong source of meaning and responsibility. This view was expanded by Kahn (1992), who defined work engagement as a state in which an individual is fully present—physically, cognitively, and emotionally—in their work role, characterized by a sense of security, meaningfulness, and psychological readiness to contribute. Similarly, Maslach et al. (2001) position work engagement as the opposite of burnout, a positive state characterized by high energy, emotional attachment, and self-efficacy, while Rothbard (2001) emphasizes the dimensions of attention and absorption as the core of an individual's psychological involvement in work. Furthermore, work engagement is understood as a relatively stable and sustained affective-motivational state, reflected in passion, dedication, and deep focus on work (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Bakker et al., 2008). Harter et al. (2002), Saks (2006), and May et al. (2004) emphasize that engagement develops through a reciprocal relationship between individuals and

organizations, when employees experience a sense of meaning, psychological safety, support, and fairness. Further studies have shown that work engagement is closely related to psychological well-being, creativity, and high performance, as engaged individuals optimally channel their physical, cognitive, and emotional energy into their work (Halbesleben, 2010; Rich et al., 2010; Christian et al., 2011; Truss et al., 2013). Thus, work engagement represents a positive psychological state that serves as an important foundation for productivity, mental resilience, and sustainable organizational performance.

Performance

Performance is generally understood as the level of individual contribution to achieving organizational goals through demonstrated results, behaviors, and work processes. Robert (2004) emphasizes performance as an employee's ability to utilize knowledge, skills, and competencies to support organizational success, while Henri (2004) views performance as a comparison between actual results and predetermined targets. This view is reinforced by Simamora (2006), Campbell and Wiernik (2015), and Robbins and Judge (2017), who emphasize that performance encompasses not only final results but also work behaviors oriented toward organizational goals. Similarly, Koopmans et al. (2014) and Aguinis (2019) view individual performance as a series of actions and behaviors directly relevant to organizational effectiveness, thus making work processes, attitudes, and behavioral consistency essential components of the performance concept. Furthermore, performance is also understood as work results that can be measured qualitatively and quantitatively based on specific standards (Mangkunegara, 2020; Wibowo, 2020; Sutrisno, 2021). Armstrong (2019), Dessler (2019), and Mathis and Jackson (2019) emphasize the dimensions of effectiveness and efficiency in task completion as key performance indicators, including timeliness, quality of results, and professionalism. In the context of human resource management, performance is viewed as a strategic criterion that forms the basis for organizational decision-making regarding selection, development, compensation, and training (Organ & Paine, 1999; Ramos-Villagrasa et al., 2019). Specifically, Police Regulation Number 2 of 2018 emphasizes that the performance of Polri members is the work results achieved in accordance with the standards of the duties and responsibilities of the police profession. Thus, performance represents a measurable reflection of the effectiveness of individual work behavior and contributes directly to the sustainable achievement of organizational goals (Luthans, 2018; Ivancevich et al., 2023).

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework



Research Hypothesis

- H1. Leadership practices have a positive and significant effect on job demands.
- H2. Leadership practices have a positive and significant effect on job resources.
- H3. Leadership practices have a positive and significant effect on work engagement.
- H4. Leadership practices have a positive and significant effect on performance.
- H5. Job demands have a positive and significant effect on work engagement.

- H6. Job resources have a positive and significant effect on work engagement.
- H7. Work engagement has a positive and significant effect on performance.
- H8. Job demands mediate the effect of leadership practices on work engagement.
- H9. Job resources mediate the effect of leadership practices on work engagement.
- H10. Work engagement mediates the effect of leadership practices on performance.

Research Methods

This study is based on a positivistic paradigm using an explanatory research approach, where data collection is carried out cross-sectionally. The explanatory research approach aims to explain the causal relationship between variables through hypothesis testing and obtain empirical evidence that supports causal conclusions. The focus of this study is to empirically test the Role of Job Demands and Job Resources in Mediating the Effect of Leadership Practices on Work Engagement, as well as its Impact on the Performance of Police Personnel of the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police. In this study, the population consists of all police personnel of the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police, a total of 2,211 people and have worked for 2 years or more, and does not include leaders. Based on the results of sample calculations using the Slovin formula, the number of samples is 187 people. This study applies a data analysis method that includes two main groups, namely descriptive statistical analysis and statistical analysis using SmartPLS.

Operational Definition of Variables

Leadership Practices are the ability of leaders to implement effective leadership behaviors through role modeling, inspiring vision, encouraging innovation, empowering members, and providing motivation and recognition, to build enthusiasm, collaboration, and optimal performance in achieving police organizational goals.

Job Demands are the level of job demands that require police personnel to exert sustained physical, mental, and emotional effort in coping with workloads, decision-making, career development, and knowledge and skills development to optimally fulfill police responsibilities.

Job Resources are the various resources available within the police work environment, including support and appreciation from superiors, training and professional development opportunities, collaboration among colleagues, adequate personnel and work hours, the availability of technology to support tasks, and freedom in decision-making to enhance the motivation, performance, and well-being of police personnel.

Work Engagement is a positive psychological state characterized by enthusiasm and resilience in work (vigor), pride and enthusiasm for police duties (dedication), and full involvement, including enjoyment and immersion in work (absorption).

Personnel Performance is an individual's ability to carry out main tasks efficiently and on time, demonstrate initiative and positive contributions to the organization, and avoid behavior that can harm performance or the work environment.

Research Result

Evaluation of Goodness of Fit and Model Fit

The structural model was evaluated using the R² value as an indicator of the model's ability to explain variation in endogenous variables. An R² value closer to 1 indicates a better fit of the model to the empirical data. Conceptually, the R² describes the magnitude of the predictor variables' contribution to explaining the dependent variable, so a higher value reflects the model's strength in explaining the causal relationships being tested. The estimated R² values in this study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 R-Square

Model Struktural	Variabel Penelitian	R-square
1	<i>Job demands</i>	0,787
2	<i>Job resources</i>	0,404
3	<i>Work engagement</i>	0,854
4	<i>Job performance</i>	0,881

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

$$\begin{aligned}
 Q^2 &= \frac{1-(1-R^2_1) 1-(1-R^2_2) 1-(1-R^2_3) 1-(1-R^2_4)}{(1-0,881)} = 1 \{(1-0,787) (1- 0,404) (1-0,854)\} \\
 &= 0,213 \times 0,596 \times 0,146 \times 0,119 = 0,0022 \\
 &= 1-0,002 \\
 &= 0,998
 \end{aligned}$$

Based on the calculation results, a predictive relevance (Q^2) value of 0.998 or 99.8 percent was obtained, indicating that the research model has a very high predictive ability in explaining the diversity of variables of leadership practices, job demands, job resources, work engagement, and the performance of Polda Sultra personnel. A Q^2 value approaching one indicates that the model is able to describe the relationship between variables with a near-perfect level of accuracy, while only 0.2 percent of the variation is influenced by other factors outside the model. This finding indicates that the model structure built has very good predictive power and is suitable for use in drawing empirical conclusions regarding the causal relationship between variables in this study.

Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis testing and coefficients of the direct and mediation paths in this study consist of ten hypotheses, as presented in the table below.

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing

Direct influence between research variables		Path Coefficient	P Value	Results
H1	Leadership practices -> job demands	0,887	0,000	Accepted
H2	Leadership practices -> job resources	0,635	0,000	Accepted
H3	Leadership practices -> work engagement	0,296	0,009	Accepted
H4	Leadership practices -> job performance	0,221	0,029	Accepted
H5	Job demands -> work engagement	0,629	0,000	Accepted
H6	Job resources -> work engagement	0,031	0,392	Rejected
H7	Leadership practices -> job performance	0,739	0,000	Accepted
H8	Leadership practices -> job demands-> work engagement	0,558	0,000	Accepted
H9	Leadership practices -> job resources -> work engagement	0.002	0.391	Rejected
H10	Leadership practices -> work engagement-> job performance	0.221	0,000	Accepted

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

Discussion

Based on the results of the analysis regarding the role of job demands and job resources in mediating the influence of leadership practices on work engagement and its implications for the performance of Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police personnel, the discussion of this research is structured by integrating various relevant theories and concepts.

The Influence of Leadership Practices on Job Demands of Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police Personnel

The analysis results show that leadership practices have a positive and significant effect on job demands among Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police personnel, indicating that the more effective the leadership practices implemented—through exemplary behavior, inspiring a shared vision, empowerment, and encouraging achievement—the higher the perceived job demands of members. This finding aligns with behavioral leadership theory, which emphasizes the role of leaders' concrete actions in shaping subordinate responses (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2007), as well as the view that leadership is a practice that can be learned and developed (Atiku & Van Wyk, 2024). From a leadership practices perspective (Kouzes & Posner, 2012), a leader's ability to enable others to act proves to be a dominant indicator, demonstrating the strong role of empowerment, trust, and collaboration in increasing job demands. In terms of job demands, learning demands related to knowledge and skills emerged as the strongest indicator, indicating that effective leadership encourages increased competency standards and adaptation to task complexity. Theoretically, this relationship is consistent with the Job Demands–Resources model (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), which views job demands as challenging demands when shaped through supportive, participatory, and adaptive leadership, as also emphasized in the leadership-as-practice approach (Raelin, 2017) and complexity leadership theory (Rosenhead et al., 2019). This finding aligns with empirical research by Tummers & Bakker (2021) and Atiku & Van Wyk (2024), which shows that inspirational and empowering leadership practices tend to increase job demands through expanded responsibilities, complex decision-making, and encouragement of continuous learning, thereby strengthening personnel's readiness and professionalism in facing the demands of police duties.

The Influence of Leadership Practices on Job Resources of Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police Personnel

The analysis results show that leadership practices have a positive and significant effect on job resources in Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police personnel, which confirms that effective leadership practices—through exemplary behavior, inspiring a shared vision, empowerment, and encouraging innovation—play a vital role in strengthening the availability of work resources such as superior support, feedback, training and professional development opportunities, coworker support, access to technology, sufficient time and personnel, and work autonomy. This finding aligns with behavioral leadership theory that emphasizes the role of leaders' concrete actions in shaping working conditions (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2007; Atiku & Van Wyk, 2024), the leadership practices perspective of Kouzes & Posner (2012), and Leadership Theory–Practice Symbiosis (Zaccaro & Horn, 2003) that positions leadership as a systemic mechanism in mobilizing organizational resources. Conceptually, these results are also consistent with the Leadership-as-Practice approach (Raelin, 2017) and Complexity Leadership Theory (Rosenhead et al., 2019), which view leadership as a collective and adaptive process that enriches structural, social, and psychological resources. Within the JD–R Model framework (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Bakker & Demerouti, 2014; Hakanen et al., 2024), leadership functions as a motivational factor that strengthens job resources, as empirically proven by Tummers & Bakker (2021) and Atiku & Van Wyk (2024), thus creating a more supportive, empowering, and conducive work environment for the development of competence and optimal performance of police personnel.

The Influence of Leadership Practices on the Work Engagement of Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police Personnel

The analysis results show that leadership practices have a positive and significant effect on work engagement among personnel of the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police, which confirms that the better the leadership practices—through exemplary behavior, inspiring a shared vision, daring to challenge the process, empowering members, and providing appreciation—the higher the work engagement of personnel, reflected in vigor, dedication, and absorption. These findings indicate that leaders who demonstrate integrity, provide clear direction, and open up space for participation and trust are able to build a positive work climate that encourages energy, mental resilience, pride, and personnel immersion in work. Empirically, the dominance of the indicators of enable others to act in leadership practices and vigor in work engagement indicates that empowering leadership contributes directly to the emergence of energy and work enthusiasm. These results are consistent with behavioral leadership theory and leadership practices (Kouzes & Posner, 2012; Yukl, 2013), the Leadership Theory–Practice Symbiosis perspective (Zaccaro & Horn, 2003), Leadership-as-Practice (Raelin, 2017), and Complexity Leadership Theory (Rosenhead et al., 2019), and are reinforced by the work engagement framework of Schaufeli & Bakker (2004), the psychological presence theory of Kahn (1992), and authentic and

transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Walumbwa et al., 2008). In addition, these findings are in line with the results of previous studies by Rahmadani & Schaufeli (2022), Wen, Huang, & Teo (2023), and Alluhaybi et al. (2023), Atiku & Van Wyk (2024), and Medhn Desta & Mulie (2024) who consistently prove that effective leadership practices are the main determinant in increasing work engagement.

The Influence of Leadership Practices on the Performance of Police Personnel of the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police

The analysis results show that leadership practices have a positive and significant effect on the performance of police personnel from the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police, indicating that the more effective leadership practices—through exemplary behavior, inspiring a shared vision, courage to constructively challenge processes, empowering members, and providing emotional reinforcement—the higher the quality of personnel performance, reflected in service orientation, communication, emotional control, integrity, empathy, discipline, initiative, organizational commitment, and teamwork. These findings indicate that empowering leadership, particularly the ability to enable others to act as a dominant indicator, builds trust and collaboration that encourages professional work behavior, with discipline as the most prominent aspect of performance. Theoretically, these results are consistent with the Leadership-as-Practice approach (Raelin, 2017), Complexity Leadership Theory (Rosenhead et al., 2019), and the leadership practice perspectives of Kouzes & Posner and Carroll et al. (2008), which position leadership as a social practice that shapes behavior and performance through daily interactions. These findings are also in line with authentic leadership theory (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008) and transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006), which emphasize that leaders' integrity, inspiration, and individualized attention strengthen motivation, commitment, and stability of work behavior. From a performance theory perspective (Elger, 2007; Koopmans et al., 2014; Kaplan & Norton, 2011; Robbins & Judge, 2017; Luthans, 2018), leadership practices serve as managerial input that aligns psychological states and work behaviors with organizational goals. Empirically, these findings are consistent with previous research by Schaufeli (2015), Syahrani et al. (2022), Wang & Jin (2023), Medhn Desta & Mulie (2024), and Ha et al. (2025), who both proved that effective leadership practices are the main determinant of improving individual and organizational performance, including in the police context.

The Influence of Job Demands on Work Engagement of Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police Personnel

The analysis results show that job demands have a positive and significant effect on work engagement among personnel from the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police, indicating that job demands—such as planning, decision-making, and learning knowledge and skills—are perceived as challenges that encourage higher energy, focus, and work engagement. This finding suggests that clear, relevant, and meaningful job demands strengthen vigor, dedication, and absorption, especially when faced by personnel who are of productive age, have a relatively long tenure, and an adequate level of education. Theoretically, these results are consistent with the Job Demands–Resources Model (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), Karasek's (1979) job demands theory, and the concept of challenge demands (Crawford et al., 2010), which emphasize that job demands can be motivational when perceived as development opportunities. This finding is also in line with the views of Schaufeli & Bakker (2004) and Hakanen et al. (2006) that managed demands can activate work energy and increase engagement, and is supported by empirical evidence from Jazilah (2020), Truong et al. (2021), Ratri & Budiono (2023), and Atiku & Van Wyk (2024), which shows that in the context of high-intensity work such as policing, challenging job demands are the main stimulus for the formation of strong and sustainable work engagement.

The Influence of Job Resources on Work Engagement of Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police Personnel

The analysis results show that job resources do not have a significant effect on work engagement among Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police personnel, indicating that various forms of job support—such as supervision, recognition and feedback, training, professional development and continuing education, collegial support, staffing and time, technology, and autonomy and control—have not automatically been able to increase vigor, dedication, and absorption. This finding indicates that work engagement is not solely determined by the availability of resources, but by the extent to which these resources are perceived as relevant, utilized effectively, and able to address operational challenges faced by personnel (Van den Broeck et al., 2010). In the context of the police, motivation for work

engagement tends to be more influenced by intrinsic factors such as professional identity, moral commitment, and challenging task demands, so that job demands play a more dominant role as a trigger for engagement than facilitative resources (Crawford, LePine, & Rich, 2010; Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). Theoretically, these results appear to differ from the initial assumptions of the Job Demands–Resources Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; 2014), but can be explained by the phenomenon of diminishing returns in JD-R 3.0, where resources that are not well-targeted or less relevant no longer have motivational driving force (Li, Chen, & Yuan, 2025). These findings are also consistent with psychological perspectives on work engagement that emphasize the role of work meaning and emotional attachment (Kanungo, 1982; Kahn, 1992), and are supported by empirical evidence from Atiku & Van Wyk (2024) which shows that job resources do not always have a significant effect on work engagement when engagement is more driven by job demands and strong intrinsic motivation.

The Influence of Work Engagement on the Performance of Police Personnel at the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police

The results of the analysis show that work engagement has a positive and significant effect on the performance of police personnel of the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police, which confirms that the higher the work engagement of personnel—reflected through vigor (energy and mental toughness), dedication (pride, enthusiasm, and meaning of work), and absorption (fully immersed and focused on work)—the more optimal the performance displayed in the form of service orientation, effective communication, emotional control, integrity, empathy, discipline, initiative, organizational commitment, and teamwork. These findings indicate that emotional, cognitive, and physical engagement encourage personnel to exert extra effort and maintain consistent professional work behavior, with vigor as the dominant indicator of work engagement and discipline as the highest indicator of performance. Theoretically, these results are in line with the view that work engagement is an affective-motivational condition that has direct implications for performance (Kanungo, 1982; Kahn, 1992; Maslach et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Bakker & Demerouti, 2008), reinforced by the social exchange perspective that positions engagement as a reciprocal response to a work system that is perceived as meaningful and fair (Saks, 2006), as well as the trait–state–behavioral engagement typology that explains how psychological energy is manifested in real work behavior (Macey & Schneider, 2008). This finding is also consistent with recent empirical evidence showing the positive influence of engagement on performance in various organizational contexts (Corbeanu & Iliescu, 2023; Liu, Xu, & Wang, 2024; Naqshbandi et al., 2024; Ha, Loan, & Phong, 2025; Karim, Jebunnesa, & Rabiul, 2025; Khan, Soomro, & Pitafi, 2025), thus strengthening the argument that work engagement is a key determinant of performance, including in high-intensity and high-risk organizations such as the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police.

The Role of Job Demands in Mediating the Influence of Leadership Practices on Work Engagement of Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police Personnel

The analysis results show that job demands act as a significant mediator in the relationship between leadership practices and work engagement among personnel of the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police, as indicated by the continued significant direct influence of leadership practices on work engagement while strengthening this influence when mediating through job demands, thus statistically reflecting a full mediation pattern. This finding indicates that effective leadership practices—such as inspiring a shared vision, being a role model, challenging processes, and empowering members—not only have a direct impact on increasing work engagement, but primarily work through the creation of challenging and meaningful job demands, such as increased responsibility, decision-making, and skills learning demands. Within the framework of the Job Demands–Resources Model (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; 2014), this finding confirms that challenging job demands function as a psychological mechanism that transforms the influence of leadership into higher work energy, dedication, and focus (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Crawford, LePine, & Rich, 2010). Consistent with the views of Karasek (1979), Kanungo (1982), and Kahn (1992), job demands arising from supportive leadership contexts are perceived as meaningful challenges that align with the professional identity of police personnel, thus encouraging physical, cognitive, and emotional presence in the work. The consistency of the dominant indicators—enable others to act in leadership practices, skill learning demands in job demands, and vigor in work engagement—strengthens that empowering leadership creates job demands that stimulate energy and engagement. This finding aligns with empirical evidence from Schaufeli (2015) and Atiku & Van Wyk (2024) which suggests that job demands are the primary mediating pathway explaining how leadership practices translate into higher work

engagement through motivational and cognitive processes relevant to high-intensity work contexts such as policing.

The Role of Job Resources in Mediating the Influence of Leadership Practices on Work Engagement of Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police Personnel

Based on the analysis results, job resources do not act as a mediator in the relationship between leadership practices and work engagement among personnel of the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police, indicating that the existence of job resources—such as supervision, recognition and feedback, training, professional development, collegial support, staffing and time, technology, and autonomy and control—has not become the main mechanism that bridges the influence of leadership on work engagement. This finding is in line with empirical conditions in the field, where personnel indicate that high work engagement is more triggered by internal factors such as personal commitment, professional identity, and challenging task dynamics, as well as by empowering leadership practices, especially enabling others to act, rather than by facilitative structural support. Theoretically, although the Job Demands–Resources Model places job resources as a motivational factor (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; 2014), this finding indicates that job resources only function when perceived as relevant and truly needed to face demands (Van den Broeck et al., 2010). In the context of the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police, job demands and leadership practices have formed a strong motivational drive, so that job resources do not provide additional contributions as a mediating pathway, especially in hierarchical and procedural work structures as described in the Demand–Control model (Karasek, 1979). The dominance of vigor indicators on work engagement and the strong direct influence of leadership reinforce that work engagement is determined more by work energy, task challenges, and the social influence of leaders (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Sonnentag, 2003), rather than by perceptions of social exchange from work resources (Saks, 2006). Consistent with the findings of Atiku & Van Wyk (2024), these results confirm that job resources do not mediate the influence of leadership practices on work engagement because personnel engagement is more shaped by a combination of strong leadership and challenging and meaningful job demands.

The Role of Work Engagement in Mediating the Influence of Leadership Practices on the Performance of Police Personnel at the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police

Based on the analysis results, work engagement is proven to play a significant role as a mediator in the relationship between leadership practices and the performance of Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police personnel with a partial mediation pattern, as indicated by the continued significant direct influence of leadership on performance as well as significant indirect influences through vigor, dedication, and absorption. These findings indicate that effective leadership practices—such as role modeling, inspiring a shared vision, empowerment, and emotional reinforcement—not only directly improve performance but also activate psychological mechanisms in the form of work engagement that strengthen personnel's energy, pride, focus, and willingness to exert extra effort in carrying out tasks. Theoretically, these results are in line with Job Demands–Resources Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; 2014) which places work engagement as a primary motivational process, the theory of psychological presence (Kahn, 1992), and the concepts of authentic and transformational leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Bass & Riggio, 2006) which emphasize the role of leadership in building meaning, psychological safety, and work energy. The consistency of these findings is also supported by the attention–absorption perspective (Rothbard, 2001), meaningfulness–safety–availability (May et al., 2004), and social exchange mechanisms (Saks, 2006), and is strengthened by empirical evidence from Lai et al. (2020), Medhn Desta & Mulie (2024), and Ha, Loan, & Phong (2025), which consistently show that work engagement is an important psychological pathway that transforms leadership practices into more effective, disciplined, and professional personnel performance in the context of public organizations such as the police.

Conclusion and Suggestions

This study shows that leadership practices have a positive and significant effect on job demands, job resources, work engagement, and the performance of Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police personnel, which confirms that effective leadership practices can increase challenging work demands, strengthen perceptions of the availability of work resources, increase energy, dedication, and work immersion, and encourage improved performance in various important aspects such as discipline, communication, emotional control, integrity, empathy, organizational commitment, initiative, and cooperation. The findings also show that job demands have a positive effect on work engagement and act as a full mediator in the relationship between leadership practices and work engagement, while job

resources have no significant effect on work engagement nor act as a mediator, indicating that personnel work engagement is more triggered by challenging work demands and leadership dynamics than by structural support alone. Furthermore, work engagement is proven to have a positive effect on performance and acts as a partial mediator in the relationship between leadership practices and performance, so that work engagement becomes an important psychological mechanism that strengthens the impact of leadership on performance, although it does not fully explain the effect. However, this research model has not fully captured the complexity of the psychological dynamics and work behavior of police personnel because it has not included other variables such as organizational culture, trust in leadership, organizational support, psychological climate, mental well-being, and personality characteristics, so that further research is recommended to expand the model by adding additional mediating or moderating variables to obtain a more comprehensive understanding.

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