

Impact of Employee Engagement on Service Delivery Efficiency in Multi-Department Business Operations

Giovanni A. Ocampo Jr.

<https://orcid.org/0009-0003-8430-326X>

cocoy.ocampo@gmail.com

University of Perpetual Help System DALTA
Las Piñas City, Manila, Philippines

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Abstract

This study explored the impact of employee engagement on service delivery efficiency in multi-department business operations in Metro Manila. Guided by Social Exchange Theory, the research explored how perceived organizational support (POS)—measured through fair treatment, recognition and rewards, and interdepartmental communication—relates to engagement dimensions of vigor, dedication, and absorption, and how these factors influence service delivery outcomes. Using a descriptive–correlational design, data were collected from 100 full-time employees across eight departments through a structured survey. Results revealed that while POS was generally rated “High,” its direct correlation with service delivery efficiency was not statistically significant. In contrast, all three dimensions of employee engagement showed moderate, positive, and significant relationships with service quality and turnaround time, confirming engagement as the more proximal driver of efficiency. These findings suggest that organizational support policies, while important, only achieve their intended outcomes when translated into meaningful engagement experiences for employees. Theoretically, the study reinforces the role of engagement as a behavioral mechanism in Social Exchange Theory. Conceptually, it clarifies engagement’s mediating role in linking support to performance. Practically, it recommends engagement-centered interventions—such as wellness, recognition, and collaboration programs—to enhance service outcomes in multi-department operations.

Keywords: employee engagement, service delivery efficiency, perceived organizational support, multi-department operations, Social Exchange Theory

Introduction

Employee engagement has become a central construct in organizational research and practice because it contributes significantly to motivation, productivity, and service excellence (Budrienė & Diskienė, 2020). Defined as the level of cognitive, emotional, and physical investment employees put into

their roles, engagement ensures that staff members demonstrate enthusiasm, accountability, and discretionary effort (Kossyva et al., 2023). These qualities are especially critical in multi-department business operations, where interdependent workflows require smooth collaboration, fast response times, and consistent service quality.

The significance of engagement extends beyond individual performance. Studies have shown that engaged employees reduce errors, accelerate turnaround times, and improve service reliability, all of which are crucial in customer-centric operations (Imam et al., 2022). In addition, highly engaged employees are more adaptable and innovative, aligning their actions with organizational objectives and sustaining service quality across departments (So et al., 2021). Thus, engagement functions as a systemic contributor to organizational resilience and operational efficiency.

Service delivery efficiency, meanwhile, refers to the ability of an organization to provide timely, accurate, and reliable services that meet or exceed client expectations (Kabwama et al., 2024). In multi-department operations, efficiency depends not only on system design and technology but also on human factors, particularly employees' motivation and work engagement (Sony et al., 2022). When employees are fully engaged, they contribute to streamlined processes, reduce bottlenecks, and enhance accountability, thereby ensuring smooth operational flow across functional boundaries.

The Philippine business environment underscores this relationship. JobStreet Philippines (2023) reported that while Filipino employees generally show commitment to their work, many remain disengaged due to limited recognition, poor communication, and weak participation in decision-making. In multi-department organizations, these challenges are magnified by siloed structures and fragmented leadership, which often hinder interdepartmental collaboration. As service-oriented industries expand amid digital transformation, understanding the link between employee engagement and service delivery efficiency has become increasingly vital.

Globally, scholars emphasize the role of perceived organizational support (POS) in fostering engagement. POS, defined as the extent to which employees feel valued and cared for by their organization, shapes their motivation to reciprocate through higher performance (Eisenberger et al., 2020). Research shows that recognition, fair treatment, and transparent communication are positively related to engagement and, in turn, to operational outcomes (Fetriah & Hermingsih, 2023; Suharto & Suprpto, 2023). However, recent findings suggest that support alone does not directly guarantee performance improvements; rather, it operates through engagement as a mediating mechanism (Ferawati, 2023).

This study adopts Social Exchange Theory (SET) as its guiding framework. According to Blau (1964) and Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005), employees reciprocate favorable organizational treatment with positive attitudes and behaviors, including heightened engagement. In multi-department contexts where interdependence is high, this reciprocity is essential for effective coordination and efficiency. When employees perceive fair treatment, recognition, and interdepartmental cooperation, they are more likely to engage deeply with their roles, translating into superior service delivery outcomes.

Despite growing international evidence, empirical research in the Philippine context remains limited. Few studies have directly examined how engagement influences service quality and turnaround time in multi-department business operations. Existing literature often treats engagement, support, and service outcomes separately rather than exploring their interconnectedness in complex organizational systems (Rahman et al., 2022). Addressing this gap is critical for organizations aiming to enhance operational efficiency and sustain competitiveness in the service sector.

Thus, the present study investigates the impact of employee engagement on service delivery efficiency in multi-department business operations in the Philippines. By examining the relationships among organizational support, engagement, and efficiency, the study aims to provide evidence-based insights for managers and HR practitioners. Ultimately, the findings will inform the design of engagement programs that foster vigor, dedication, and absorption among employees, thereby improving both service quality and operational speed in multi-department settings.

Objectives of the study

This study aimed to:

1. Determine the perceived level of organizational support among employees.
2. Assess the level of employee engagement within the organization.
3. Evaluate the efficiency of service delivery as perceived by employees and/or clients.
4. Examine the relationships between organizational support, employee engagement, and service delivery efficiency.

Methodology

Research Design. This study employed a quantitative, descriptive–correlational research design to investigate the impact of employee engagement on service delivery efficiency in multi-department business operations. The descriptive component was used to profile the demographic characteristics of respondents, as well as to assess their perceptions of organizational support, engagement, and service delivery efficiency. The correlational component examined the relationships between perceived organizational support, employee engagement, and service delivery efficiency. This design was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to measure existing conditions and test statistical associations without manipulating variables (Imam et al., 2022).

Research Setting and Sampling. The study population consisted of employees from medium to large-scale business organizations in Metro Manila operating with multiple interdependent departments such as administration, operations, customer service, human resources, finance, sales, and information technology. Using purposive sampling, 100 full-time employees were selected as respondents. Inclusion criteria required that respondents must be (a) currently employed in a multi-department organization, (b) engaged in operational or service-oriented functions where interdepartmental collaboration is required, (c) have at least one year of tenure in their current organization, and (d) willing to provide informed consent. This sampling strategy ensured that participants had sufficient exposure to employee engagement practices and service delivery processes.

Respondents. The respondents were distributed across various departments to capture diverse perspectives. Of the 100 participants, 23% came from Sales and Marketing, while the remaining 77% were evenly distributed across Administration, Customer Relations, Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Operations, and Product. The workforce profile revealed a relatively young demographic, with the largest proportion belonging to the 26–32 age group, and near gender parity between male and female

employees. Respondents also reflected a wide range of tenure, from early-career professionals with one to five years of experience to senior employees with over 20 years of service.

Table 1
Profile of the respondents

Profile Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
26 years old – 32 years old	35	35
33 years old – 39 years old	21	21
40 years old – 47 years old	17	17
47 years old – 53 years old	12	12
54 years old and above	15	15
Gender		
Female	49	49
Male	50	50
Non-binary	1	1
Educational Attainment		
High School Graduate	60	60
College Level	12	12
College Graduate	3	3
Masters Graduate	20	20
Doctoral Graduate	5	5
Department		
Administration	11	11
Customer Relations	11	11
Finance	11	11
Human Resources	11	11
Information Technology	11	11
Sales and Marketing	23	23
Operation	11	11
Product	11	11
Length of Service		
1 to 5 years	38	38
6 to 10 years	18	18
11 to 15 years	12	12
16 to 20 years	13	13
21 to 25 years	10	10
26 to 30 years	7	7
Did not provide information	2	2

Research Instruments. Data were collected using a structured survey questionnaire divided into four parts:

The Profile Questionnaire gathered demographic data such as age, gender, educational background, department, and length of service.

The Perceived Organizational Support Questionnaire, adapted from Eisenberger et al. (2020), measured three facets: fair treatment, recognition and rewards, and communication and cooperation between departments.

The Employee Engagement Questionnaire, based on the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale and validated by So et al. (2021), assessed three dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption. Finally, the Service Delivery Efficiency Questionnaire was developed by the researcher to measure two outcome areas: service quality and turnaround time. All items were rated on a Likert scale, and interpretations followed established scoring guides.

Data Gathering Procedure. Before data collection, formal approval was obtained from the management of participating organizations, and clearance was secured from the university's ethics review board. Respondents were provided with an informed consent form outlining the study's purpose, voluntary participation, confidentiality measures, and the right to withdraw at any stage. The survey was distributed both online and in printed form to maximize accessibility. Respondents completed the questionnaire at their own convenience within a specified period. Completed surveys were collected, encoded, and stored in a secure database for analysis.

Data Analysis. The collected data were processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequency and percentage distributions were used to describe the demographic characteristics of respondents. Weighted means were computed to determine levels of perceived organizational support, employee engagement, and service delivery efficiency. The interpretations followed four-point descriptive scales ranging from Very Low to Very High. To test the study's hypotheses, Pearson's r correlation coefficient was employed to determine the strength and significance of the relationships between perceived organizational support, employee engagement, and service delivery efficiency. A 0.05 level of significance was used as the criterion for hypothesis testing.

Ethical Consideration. The study followed ethical standards by securing approval from the university's ethics review board and authorization from participating organizations. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents, emphasizing voluntary participation, the right to withdraw, and the assurance of confidentiality. Data were treated with strict anonymity and used solely for academic purposes.

Results and Discussions

1. Perceived level of organizational support

The findings on perceived organizational support (POS) revealed that employees generally rated the three dimensions—fair treatment, recognition and rewards, and communication and cooperation—as “High.” Specifically, fair treatment obtained a mean of 2.85 (SD = 0.84), recognition and rewards had a mean of 2.82 (SD = 0.81), and communication and cooperation also received a mean of 2.85 (SD = 0.84). These results indicate that employees view their organizations as supportive, equitable, and communicative, though not to the level of “Very High.”

Proportional treatment was awarded high scores, showing that employees are treated with respect by superiors and view grievance handling as just. But a slightly lower ranking was given to jobs based on merit and fair application of policies, which suggests possible avenues for greater openness. This is supportive of Eisenberger et al.'s (2020) finding that fairness and justice have significant impacts on employee attitudes toward organizations. When fairness is always acted upon, employees are most likely to respond with greater commitment and engagement (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

Rewards and recognition were also rated “High,” with supervisory recognition and recognition of hard work being of significant importance. Yet, the lower ratings of reward congruence with effort mean that, at times, reward programs are not perceived as equitable. As Fetriah and Hermingsih (2023) explained, recognition and reward practices are critical to generating greater engagement, but only if employees perceive them as equitable and based upon performance. If reward inequities do exist, they will tend to undo motivation, regardless of overall appreciation.

In relation to communication and cooperation, questionnaire feedback was positive regarding information exchange and respect across departments. The relatively lower ranking of communication across departments regarding shared objectives, however, indicates that issues regarding functional integration remain. This is congruent with Tao (2023), who mentioned that multi-department organizations are commonly plagued by a silo mentality that hinders the congruence of objectives. Similarly, Kabwama et al. (2024) found that poor communication among units that is poor causes bottlenecks with harmful effects regarding service efficiency. As such, while communication channels are found to be effective, greater emphasis on mutual accountability across departments should be pursued.

Overall, the findings indicate that support structures of the organization are in place and viewed positively, but they need reinforcement so that they are implemented into daily practices. The Social Exchange Theory suggests that employees repay positive handling through favorable conduct (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). The “High” score indicates that employees are aware of support mechanisms, but no “Very High” score suggests possible avenues of weakness in the way such mechanisms are put into action. Bolstering more transparent processes of promotions, fair reward structures, and more effective inter-departmental cooperation could make organizational support even more robust and consequently boost employee engagement.

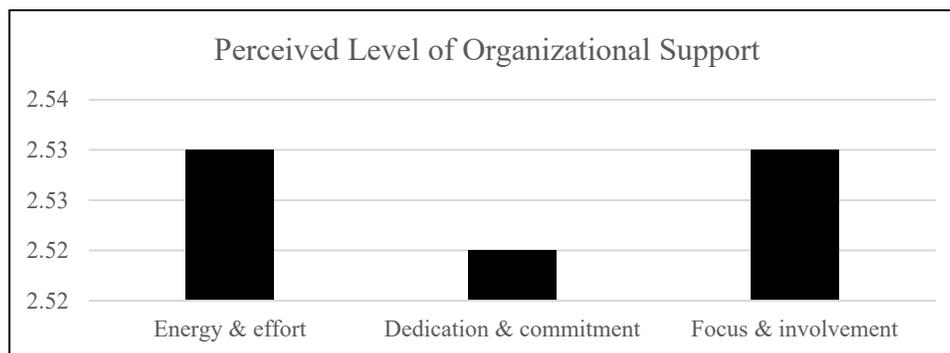


Figure 1. *Perceived Level of Organizational Support*. The figure presents the mean scores of employees' perceptions across three dimensions of organizational support. Fair treatment ($M = 2.85$, $SD =$

0.84), recognition and rewards ($M = 2.82$, $SD = 0.81$), and communication and cooperation ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 0.84$) were all rated as “High,” indicating generally favorable views of organizational support among employees.

2. Employee engagement

The findings of employee engagement indicated that all three aspects—energy and effort at work (vigor), dedication and commitment, and focus and involvement at work (absorption)—were rated steadily as “High.” Energy and effort at work had a mean of 2.53 ($SD = 0.28$), dedication and commitment had a mean of 2.52 ($SD = 0.23$), and focus and involvement at work had a mean of 2.53 ($SD = 0.28$). These indicate that employees tend to feel enthusiasm, motivation, and cognitive involvement at work, although they have yet to achieve the maximum of the “Very High” range.

Vigor, which captures employees' energy and perseverance at work, was positively rated, which means that most of the respondents tend to feel mentally potent and dedicated to applying effort into their work. Nevertheless, items such as maintaining energy for long durations without feeling fatigued yielded relatively lower ratings, which means that pressures from workloads tend to influence long-duration stamina. This is supported by Yusuf et al. (2024), whose findings stressed that support from the organization acts to cushion exhaustion and maintain engagement. Likewise, Rahman et al. (2022) noted that sustained energy helps maintain performance amidst changing work environments.

Dedication, also mirrored through pride, goal commitment, and extra effort, was rated “High” as well. Although employees felt extremely dedicated and found meaning in their jobs, the slightly lower rating of “willingness to go the extra mile” implies possible recognition or workload balance concerns. As Kossyva et al. (2023) suggest, dedication is strengthened by employees observing the values congruence of personal and organizational mission. Imam et al. (2022) also suggest that recognition initiatives and supportive leadership build stronger dedication by enhancing employees' sense of purpose. Absorption, meaning immersion and concentration into tasks, also achieved a “High” rating, with employees reporting that they tend to lose track of time and focus intensely on their jobs. However, the lowest rating within this dimension was achieved at handling focus during stressful moments, which suggests that employees tend to perform poorly at maintaining focus while under stress. This finding corresponds with So et al. (2021), who reported that absorption into tasks is highly responsive to conditions at the workplace, such as clarity of workload and support mechanisms. Ogueyungbo et al. (2020) also stressed that supportive supervisory guidance improves employees' focus retention during stressful conditions.

Overall, the results demonstrate that employees maintain healthy levels of vigor, dedication, and absorption, confirming that the workforce is generally engaged in their roles. This supports Kahn's foundational theory of engagement, which conceptualizes it as the psychological presence of individuals in their work roles (Kossyva et al., 2022). From the perspective of Social Exchange Theory, engagement reflects employees' reciprocation to organizational support and positive treatment (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). However, the absence of “Very High” ratings suggests that engagement can be further enhanced through targeted interventions such as wellness programs to sustain energy, recognition systems to strengthen dedication, and workload management strategies to improve absorption during high-pressure situations.

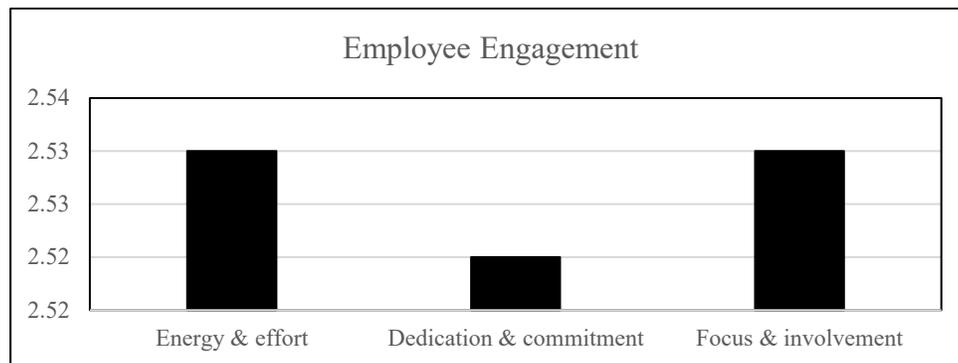


Figure 2. Perceived Level of Employee Engagement. The figure shows the mean scores of employees' engagement across three dimensions. Energy and effort at work ($M = 2.53$, $SD = 0.28$), dedication and commitment ($M = 2.52$, $SD = 0.23$), and focus and involvement in tasks ($M = 2.53$, $SD = 0.28$) were all rated “High,” indicating that employees generally demonstrate positive levels of vigor, dedication, and absorption in their roles.

3. Efficiency of Service Delivery

The results showed that service delivery efficiency was rated as “High” across its two dimensions: quality of service and turnaround time. Quality of service obtained a mean of 2.52 ($SD = 0.32$), while turnaround time recorded a mean of 2.52 ($SD = 0.27$). These findings indicate that employees perceive their organizations as capable of delivering reliable, accurate, and timely services, although improvements are needed to reach the “Very High” level.

In terms of service quality, employees generally agreed that services were dependable, accurate, and aligned with standards. However, slightly lower ratings were observed in overall satisfaction, suggesting that while specific service elements are strong, the holistic service experience may not consistently meet expectations. This aligns with Kabwama et al. (2024), who emphasized that service quality requires not only technical competence but also consistent delivery across all touchpoints. Sony et al. (2022) similarly noted that efficiency in service processes is influenced by both system reliability and human performance.

Turnaround time, or the speed with which services are delivered, was likewise rated “High.” Employees agreed that services are generally delivered within acceptable time frames and that staff respond promptly to inquiries. The lowest score was recorded for handling urgent matters, which may indicate bottlenecks in escalation procedures or limited resources during peak demands. According to Hannon et al. (2022), delays in urgent service cases often result from weak interdepartmental coordination. Widiyanto (2023) also found that streamlining processes and strengthening real-time communication are crucial for improving responsiveness in multi-department operations.

The overall findings highlight that while service delivery is functioning at a high level, the areas of urgent case management and overall satisfaction require further attention. This is consistent with Sahur and Amiruddin (2023), who argued that service delivery efficiency depends not only on speed but also on the alignment of departmental goals and coordination mechanisms. Moreover, Sreerangapuri (2024) stressed

that technological innovations and workload balancing can enhance efficiency by minimizing delays and ensuring consistency.

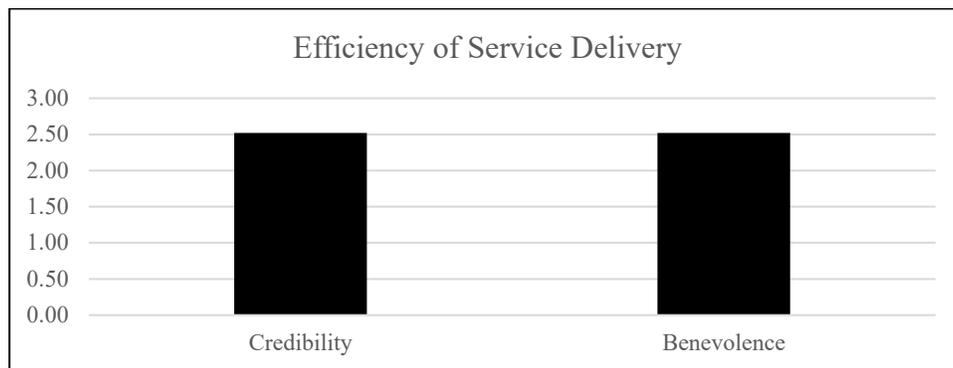


Figure 3. Efficiency of Service Delivery. The figure shows that both quality of service ($M = 2.52$, $SD = 0.32$) and turnaround time ($M = 2.52$, $SD = 0.27$) were rated “High,” indicating that employees perceive their organizations as capable of delivering reliable services within acceptable time frames.

From a theoretical perspective, service efficiency reflects the operational outcomes of employee engagement. When employees exhibit vigor, dedication, and absorption, they are more likely to deliver services that are both timely and of high quality. This supports the premise of Social Exchange Theory, where engaged employees reciprocate organizational support with behaviors that contribute to efficiency (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Suharto & Suprpto, 2023). However, the results also suggest that engagement alone may not eliminate structural inefficiencies, particularly in handling urgent matters, underscoring the importance of combining human engagement with systemic improvements.

Overall, the findings indicate that organizations maintain a strong baseline of service delivery efficiency but need to refine processes that handle time-sensitive cases and enhance overall client satisfaction. Strengthening interdepartmental coordination, integrating technology-driven solutions, and providing employees with clearer escalation protocols could elevate service efficiency to “Very High” levels.

4. Relationship between Perceived Inventory Management Practices and Customer Satisfaction

The correlation analysis revealed mixed results in examining the relationship between perceived organizational support, employee engagement, and service delivery efficiency. The three facets of organizational support—fair treatment ($r = 0.18$, $p = 0.15$), recognition and rewards ($r = 0.12$, $p = 0.50$), and communication and cooperation ($r = 0.19$, $p = 0.17$)—showed no significant relationships with service delivery. In contrast, the three dimensions of employee engagement—energy and effort (vigor) ($r = 0.51$, $p = 0.03$), dedication and commitment ($r = 0.52$, $p = 0.01$), and focus and involvement in tasks (absorption) ($r = 0.51$, $p = 0.001$)—demonstrated significant moderate positive correlations with service delivery efficiency. These findings indicate that while organizational support creates a favorable environment, it is employee engagement that serves as the more direct predictor of service outcomes.

Table 2

Relationship between organizational support, employee engagement and service delivery

Variables	r-value	Sig. value	Decision on H ₀	Interpretation
Fair treatment	0.18	0.15	Failed to Reject H ₀	Not Significant
Recognition and rewards	0.12	0.50	Failed to Reject H ₀	Not Significant
Communication and cooperation between departments	0.19	0.17	Failed to Reject H ₀	Not Significant
Energy and effort at work	0.51	0.03	Reject H ₀	Significant
Dedication and commitment	0.52	0.01	Reject H ₀	Significant
Focus and involvement in tasks	0.51	0.001	Reject H ₀	Significant

The lack of significant correlations between organizational support and service delivery suggests that supportive structures, though important, may not immediately translate into improved performance unless they actively foster engagement. Eisenberger et al. (2020) emphasized that perceived organizational support primarily functions by enhancing employees' psychological states, which then influence their work behavior. This is further supported by Ferawati (2023), who argued that organizational support influences outcomes indirectly through engagement, particularly among younger workforce cohorts. Thus, while support mechanisms such as fairness, recognition, and interdepartmental communication were rated "High," their direct effect on efficiency may be minimal without being channeled through engagement.

On the other hand, the significant positive correlations between engagement dimensions and service delivery efficiency reinforce prior evidence that engaged employees are critical drivers of operational outcomes. Imam et al. (2022) found that engagement, manifested in vigor, dedication, and absorption, enhances performance by increasing motivation and focus on tasks. Similarly, Kossyva et al. (2023) highlighted that engagement not only drives individual productivity but also strengthens coordination across teams, which is essential in multi-departmental settings. The current findings support these perspectives by showing that employees who report higher engagement levels are also those who perceive better service quality and faster turnaround times.

Theoretically, these findings are consistent with Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). When employees perceive fair treatment and recognition, they may develop a sense of obligation to reciprocate with positive behaviors. However, the study suggests that reciprocity operates most strongly when such support translates into psychological engagement. Suharto and Suprpto (2023) further affirmed this by demonstrating that engagement mediates the relationship between organizational support and performance outcomes. Therefore, engagement serves as the behavioral mechanism that connects supportive structures to tangible service efficiency.

Overall, the results underscore that organizational support alone is insufficient to guarantee higher service delivery performance. Instead, support must be strategically leveraged to build and sustain engagement. The evidence confirms that engaged employees—those who are energetic, committed, and fully absorbed in their roles—are the ones most likely to deliver services that are both timely and of high quality. For managers, this highlights the need to go beyond designing support policies to ensuring that such policies translate into meaningful engagement experiences for employees.

Conclusion

The findings of this study confirmed that perceived organizational support, while rated “High,” did not exhibit a significant direct relationship with service delivery efficiency, thereby leading to the rejection of the first hypothesis that support alone strongly predicts performance. In contrast, the second hypothesis was supported, as employee engagement—measured through vigor, dedication, and absorption—demonstrated significant positive correlations with service delivery, highlighting engagement as the more proximal driver of efficiency. Theoretically, this reinforces Social Exchange Theory by showing that organizational support influences outcomes indirectly by fostering engagement, which in turn translates into improved quality and timeliness of services. Conceptually, the study contributes to clarifying the mediating role of engagement in multi-department contexts where interdependence is high, thus extending existing models of organizational performance. Practically, the results emphasize the need for managers to focus not only on formal support mechanisms but also on programs that actively cultivate energy, commitment, and focus among employees to sustain operational excellence.

Recommendations

It is recommended that organizations prioritize engagement-focused initiatives—such as wellness and recovery programs to sustain vigor, recognition systems to deepen dedication, and workload management strategies to strengthen task absorption—as these dimensions were found to significantly influence service delivery efficiency. Support mechanisms, including fair treatment, transparent promotion policies, and interdepartmental collaboration, should be aligned more closely with daily employee experiences to ensure they translate into meaningful engagement. For future research, the study’s limitations suggest several directions: adopting a longitudinal design to establish causality between engagement and service efficiency, employing probability sampling to improve generalizability, and integrating objective performance indicators alongside self-reported data to reduce bias. Conceptual refinements could also include testing engagement as a mediator between organizational support and efficiency, as well as examining departmental or tenure-based differences in engagement patterns.

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