

WHEN ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT CREATES SATISFACTION: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF JOB SATISFACTION IN STRENGTHENING THE EFFECT OF PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT ON YOUNG EMPLOYEES' INTENTION TO STAY

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Abstract

This article investigates the role of perceived organizational support (POS) in shaping young employees' intention to remain with their current organization, with job satisfaction positioned as an intervening psychological variable. The empirical setting is early-career workers in Bandung City, defined as employees aged 30 years or younger with a maximum tenure of two years. The study uses a quantitative explanatory design with a one-shot survey, gathering data through an online questionnaire distributed using purposive sampling. The responses are analyzed with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 4. The analysis reveals that POS significantly enhances job satisfaction, and that job satisfaction, in turn, significantly increases intention to stay. POS also has a significant direct effect on intention to stay, while the indirect path via job satisfaction is significant, confirming partial mediation. These results indicate that support from the organization will more effectively foster retention intentions when it is internalized by young employees as real satisfaction with their job, work climate, and how they are treated. The study contributes by detailing how POS translates into early-career retention intentions in an Indonesian urban context and by offering practical direction for HR strategies aimed at reducing early voluntary exits.

Keywords: *perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, intention to stay, young employees, Bandung.*

INTRODUCTION

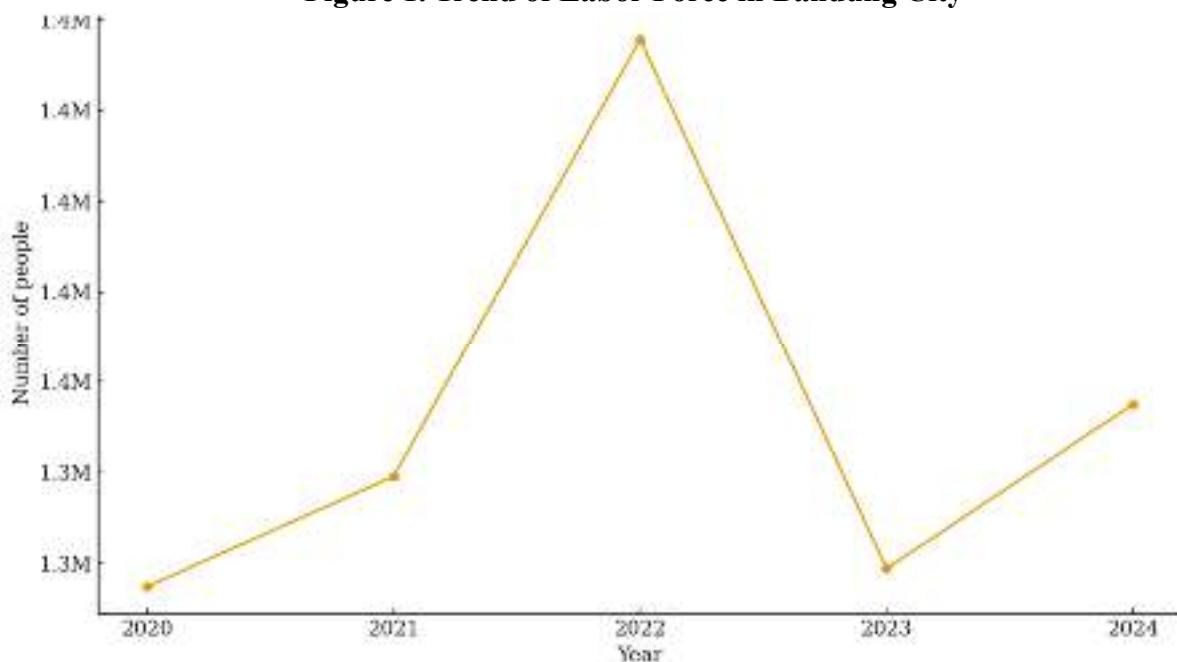
Transformations in today's world of work are reflected in the mobility and changing preferences of young talents, who increasingly expect meaningful work, well-being, flexibility, and learning opportunities. At the same time, organizations face declining work engagement and intense competition to retain employees from the earliest stages of their careers. Recent findings from Gallup (2024) show a decline in global employee engagement in 2024, indicating challenges for productivity and retention. The World Economic Forum (2025) highlights the acceleration of job transformation and the growing demand for new skills driven by technological developments, including generative AI. The Deloitte Global Survey (2025)

reveals that Gen Z and Millennials place strong emphasis on work-life balance, learning, and meaningful work. The LinkedIn Global Talent Trends Report (2024) notes that internal mobility is increasingly used as a strategy to retain employees. McKinsey's (2021) research on the "Great Attrition" also confirms that competition to attract and retain talent remains intense. The OECD (2025) likewise draws attention to shifting patterns in how young workers enter and navigate evolving career paths.

In many modern organizations, particularly in large cities, retaining young employees is no longer seen merely as an HR administrative issue, but as a strategic factor that directly affects organizational knowledge continuity, operational sustainability, service quality stability, and recruitment costs, as shown in studies by Oracle (2024), Visier (2023), and Al Kurdi, Alshurideh, and Al Afaishat (2020). Early-career job mobility has been rising, especially among younger generations who prioritize non-material aspects such as a supportive work environment, flexibility, fairness, and opportunities for self-development, as discussed in Deloitte (2016, 2018) and Hall (2019). This phenomenon has been widely observed among young employees, who tend to move quickly when their expectations are not met, often within less than two years, as found by Kusumawati, Sofiah, and Prasetyo (2021) and Deloitte (2018).

These dynamics are even more salient in large cities whose economies are driven by services, creative industries, and direct customer-facing activities. Bandung is one such city. As the economic and educational hub of West Java, Bandung has a very high proportion of working-age population, reaching around 70.52% of total residents (BPS Kota Bandung, 2023).

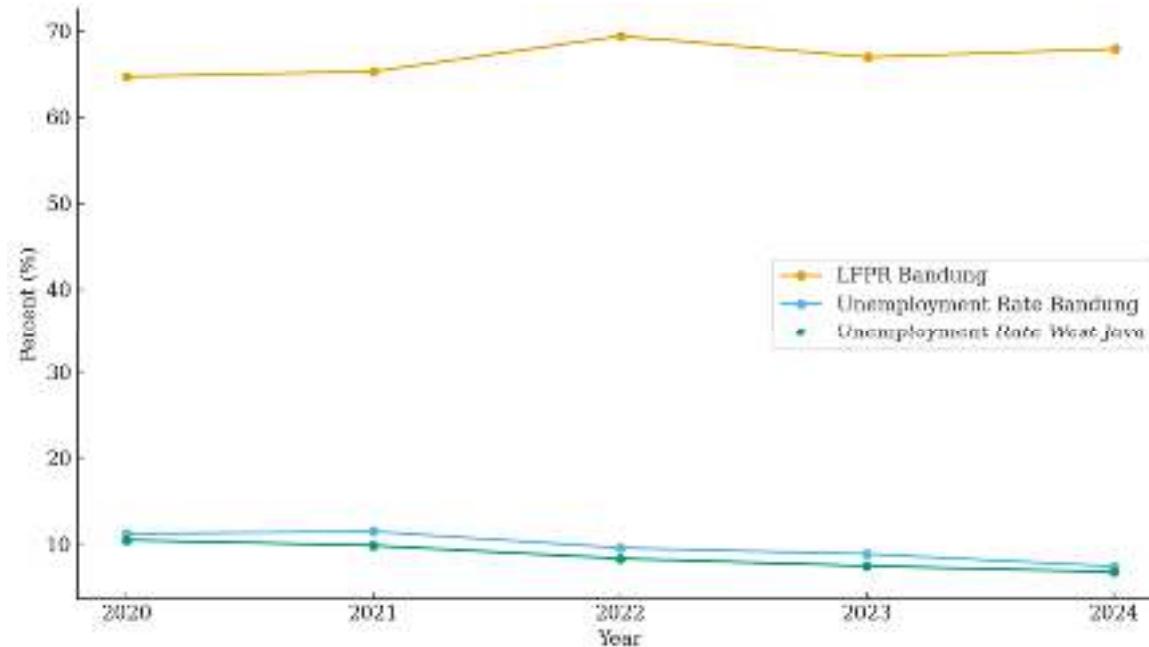
Figure 1. Trend of Labor Force in Bandung City



Data from the Bandung City Statistics Office (2024) show that the number of employed people in Bandung has fluctuated over the last five years. For example, in 2022, the labor force increased to around 1,435.6 thousand people. However, in 2023 the number fell to around 1,318.9 thousand, a decline of approximately 116.7 thousand people. In 2024, the labor force rose again to around 1,354.9 thousand people. The Labor Force Participation Rate

(LFPR/TPAK) in Bandung ranges between 65 and 69 percent, while the Open Unemployment Rate (TPT) decreased from around 11 percent in 2021 to 7.40 percent in 2024.

Figure 2. Trend of LFPR and Unemployment



Although labor force participation is relatively high, the Open Unemployment Rate remains a concern. After the COVID-19 pandemic, Bandung's open unemployment rate declined from 11.46 percent in 2021 to about 7.40 percent in 2024. Labor market changes are also reflected in data from BPS Bandung City (2024) showing that young people have high labor mobility; in 2020, the youth labor force participation rate in Bandung reached about 66.5 percent, much higher than that of adolescents. This indicates that many young people are actively entering and moving within the labor market early in their careers.

In general, this decline in unemployment can be viewed as a positive sign. However, two important issues must be noted. First, even though Bandung's open unemployment rate has fallen, it remains higher than the West Java provincial average of around 6.75 percent over the same period, indicating that the labor market in Bandung is still highly competitive. Second, a large share of unemployed individuals in Bandung are young and highly educated, meaning that the transition from completing education to securing stable employment has not yet run smoothly for many young workers. At the provincial level, youth unemployment in West Java is above 20 percent and has been reported to approach 23–24 percent. This suggests that the young age group is simultaneously the most vulnerable to exclusion and the most active in changing jobs.

The phenomenon of job changes or turnover among young employees thus becomes a critical issue for organizations. Kusumawati, Sofiah, and Prasetyo (2021) found that only 1 in 10 millennials plan to stay with the same company for 10 or more years, indicating that younger generations are more prone to job hopping and demand higher levels of job satisfaction compared with previous generations. Based on this context, the present study focuses specifically on young employees who are in the early stages of their careers. This focus is

consistent with the national definition of youth as stipulated in Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 40/2009 on Youth, which defines youth as individuals up to 30 years old, and with the turnover literature by Hom and Griffeth (1995) and Griffeth, Hom, and Gaertner (2000), which identifies the first two years of employment as a critical phase in forming loyalty and decisions to stay.

Prior studies have widely explored the relationship between organizational support and intention to stay, as well as between job satisfaction and intention to stay. Nonetheless, empirical work that focuses on the mediating role of job satisfaction specifically among young employees with short tenure in the Bandung context is still relatively scarce. In response to this gap, the present study pursues four main aims: (1) to examine the influence of perceived organizational support on job satisfaction among young employees in Bandung City; (2) to assess the effect of job satisfaction on intention to stay; (3) to determine whether perceived organizational support directly affects intention to stay; and (4) to evaluate whether job satisfaction functions as a mediating variable in the relationship between perceived organizational support and intention to stay.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived organizational support (POS) describes employees' general belief that their organization appreciates what they contribute and is genuinely concerned about their welfare. The construct was originally formulated by Eisenberger et al. (1986), who argued that workers integrate their everyday experiences at work into an overall judgment about how the organization treats them. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) later emphasized that perceptions of fairness, recognition, reasonable working conditions, adequate compensation, and supportive supervision are key sources that strengthen feelings of organizational support. Within Blau's (1964) Social Exchange Theory, the relationship between employees and organizations is viewed as a reciprocal exchange: when employees sense support, appreciation, and trust from the organization, they feel a moral obligation to respond with favorable attitudes and behaviours, such as better performance and a stronger tendency to remain. Empirical studies reinforce this logic; Lydia, Dewi, and Pamungkas (2023) find that work engagement, POS, and organizational culture jointly increase employees' intention to stay, while Almasreji, Seyedameri, and Sarlab (2024) show that young employees are more inclined to remain when they believe the organization genuinely cares about their contributions and well-being. Other evidence positions POS as a contextual factor that strengthens the impact of HR practices on retention: Ferdian, Hanafiah, and Suyuthie (2025) report that higher POS is associated with greater job satisfaction and intention to stay, and Baek et al. (2025) similarly demonstrate that a supportive work environment characterized by strong POS is linked to higher job satisfaction among nurses.

Job Satisfaction

Locke (1976) defines job satisfaction as a positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. In Social Exchange Theory, Blau (1964) argues that the relationship between employees and organizations is reciprocal: when employees feel they

are treated fairly and their contributions are reciprocated appropriately, they experience satisfaction. Job satisfaction does not depend solely on pay, but also on feeling appreciated, the quality of relationships with supervisors, role clarity, a healthy work environment, perceived fairness, and opportunities for growth. Fauzi, Handayani, and Rachmawati (2025) studied Gen Z teachers and found that employee engagement and job satisfaction are crucial in shaping their intention to stay. This generation is particularly sensitive to the support provided by organizations. Manganan (2025) reports that job satisfaction influences employees' perceptions of organizational support, while organizational commitment strengthens this relationship.

Intention to Stay

Intention to stay is employees' conscious willingness to remain with their current organization in the future, not actively seek alternative employment, and continue to develop within the organization. Ibrahim, Mahdani, and Mubarak (2016) state that intention to stay reflects the value employees perceive in remaining with their employer. Noor et al. (2020) describe intention to stay as the conceptual opposite of intention to leave: it is the deliberate decision to continue working in the current organization rather than searching for a job elsewhere.

De Sul and Lucas (2020), Kehoe and Wright (2013), Zigarmi et al. (2012), and Johari et al. (2012) conclude that indicators commonly used to measure intention to stay include the absence of plans to leave the current position, not actively searching for other jobs in the near future, and the willingness to remain with the company even when other job offers are available, as long as employees feel supported and receive fair compensation. These indicators are adapted and modified from validated intention-to-stay scales such as the Anticipated Turnover Scale, the intent-to-remain scale, and the Work Intention Inventory, so that they effectively capture employees' loyalty and commitment to the organization.

Hancock et al. (2013) show that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are strong predictors of intention to stay. Monica and Prasetyo (2021) report that organizational support and job satisfaction both have positive effects on Gen Z employees' intention to stay in the retail sector. Ramli et al. (2025) show that perceived organizational support and job satisfaction increase private-university lecturers' intention to stay because they feel valued and supported by the institution. Javing et al. (2025) emphasize that workplace support and job satisfaction are key factors motivating nurses to remain, as they create a sense of security and meaning in their work. Pithaloka and Ardiyanti (2024) demonstrate that without job satisfaction, organizational support alone may not be sufficient to retain millennial employees in state-owned enterprises.

Hypotheses Development

Anchored in Organizational Support Theory and Social Exchange Theory, this study formulates four mutually related hypotheses. First (H1), perceived organizational support is expected to exert a positive and significant effect on the intention of early-career employees in Bandung City to remain in their current organization. Second (H2), higher perceived organizational support is anticipated to be associated with higher job satisfaction among these young employees. Third (H3), job satisfaction is posited to have a positive and significant

influence on their intention to stay. Finally (H4), job satisfaction is proposed to serve as a significant mediating mechanism in the relationship between perceived organizational support and intention to stay, indicating that organizational support shapes early-career employees' retention intentions both directly and indirectly through its impact on job satisfaction.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research adopts a quantitative explanatory methodology with a cross-sectional survey design, consistent with methodological guidelines from Creswell and Creswell (2018) and Sekaran and Bougie (2016). The design is intended to test, at a single point in time, the relationships between perceived organizational support as the predictor, job satisfaction as the mediating construct, and intention to stay as the outcome variable. The target population consists of young employees in Bandung City who are no older than 30 years and have been employed in their current organization for less than two years, a tenure window often identified as the most vulnerable to voluntary turnover. Respondents were recruited using purposive sampling based on these criteria, and a minimum sample size of 385 was determined using Cochran's (1977) sample size formula ($Z = 1.96$; $p = 0.5$; $e = 0.05$) to secure sufficient statistical power for mediation testing.

Data were gathered through an online questionnaire administered via Google Forms, and all key constructs (perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, and intention to stay) were operationalized using five-point Likert-type items. Indicators of perceived organizational support were adapted from the literature on organizational support, including company concern, appreciation, supervisor assistance, and fairness, with one negatively worded item reverse-coded during analysis (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Job satisfaction indicators included overall satisfaction, work environment comfort, expectation fit, and pride in one's job, based on Spector (1997). Intention-to-stay indicators measured the intention to remain in the company, not to seek new jobs, and to prefer staying with the company even when opportunities elsewhere arise. Data were analyzed using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS 4 software.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Model evaluation was carried out in two main phases, namely the outer model and the inner model. The outer model assesses whether the indicators accurately and consistently represent their latent constructs by testing convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability. The inner model then analyzes the relationships between the latent variables and evaluates their strength and significance using R^2 values, path coefficients, and significance testing (Hair et al., 2022; Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Outer Model

a. Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is evaluated through factor loadings and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

Table 1. Outer Loadings for Convergent Validity

Instrument	Intention To Stay	Job Satisfaction	Perceived Organizational Support	Description
ITS1	0.872			Valid
ITS2	0.858			Valid
ITS3	0.872			Valid
ITS4	0.884			Valid
KK1		0.848		Valid
KK2		0.868		Valid
KK3		0.841		Valid
KK4		0.816		Valid
KK5		0.833		Valid
POS1			0.864	Valid
POS2			0.873	Valid
POS3			0.836	Valid
POS4			0.859	Valid
POS5			0.859	Valid
POS6			0.846	Valid
POS7			0.832	Valid

Source: Primary data (2025 survey), processed by the researcher; SmartPLS 4 output

All item loadings exceed 0.70, indicating good convergent validity.

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variable	Average Variance Extracted	Description
Intention To Stay	0.760	Valid
Job Satisfaction	0.708	Valid
Perceived Organizational Support	0.727	Valid

Source: Primary data (2025 survey), processed by the researcher; SmartPLS 4 output

All AVE values are above 0.50, confirming that each construct explains more than 50 percent of the variance of its indicators.

b. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity ensures that the constructs in the measurement model are truly distinct and not overlapping.

Table 3. Cross Loadings for Discriminant Validity

Instrument	Intention To Stay	Job Satisfaction	Perceived Organizational Support	Description
ITS1	0,606	0,362	0,328	Valid
ITS2	0,596	0,342	0,318	Valid
ITS3	0,606	0,381	0,321	Valid
ITS4	0,614	0,397	0,334	Valid

KK1	0,351	0,589	0,364	Valid
KK2	0,376	0,603	0,433	Valid
KK3	0,388	0,584	0,392	Valid
KK4	0,349	0,567	0,413	Valid
KK5	0,326	0,578	0,395	Valid
POS1	0,327	0,434	0,600	Valid
POS2	0,342	0,415	0,606	Valid
POS3	0,303	0,399	0,581	Valid
POS4	0,327	0,408	0,597	Valid
POS5	0,308	0,422	0,597	Valid
POS6	0,304	0,390	0,588	Valid
POS7	0,313	0,368	0,578	Valid

Source: Primary data (2025 survey), processed by the researcher; SmartPLS 4 output

Each indicator loads more strongly on its own construct than on other constructs, indicating acceptable discriminant validity.

c. Construct Reliability

Construct reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability.

Table 4. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	ComPerceived Organizational Supportite Reliability	Description
Intention To Stay	0.896	0.896	Reliable
Job Satisfaction	0.897	0.898	Reliable
Perceived Organizational Support	0.937	0.938	Reliable

Source: Primary data (2025 survey), processed by the researcher; SmartPLS 4 output

All Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values are ≥ 0.70 , indicating good internal consistency.

d. Model Fit

Model fit was evaluated using several indices from SmartPLS 4.

Table 5. Model Fit Indices

Parameter	Rule of Thumb	Parameter Value	Description
SRMR	Less than 0.10	0,040	Fit
d-ULS	$> 0,05$	0,219	Fit
d-G	$> 0,05$	0,111	Fit
Chi Square	χ^2 statistic $\geq \chi^2$ table	$242,648 \geq 26,2962$	Fit
NFI	Approaching the value of 1	0,946	Fit

Source: Primary data (2025 survey), processed by the researcher; SmartPLS 4 output

The indices indicate that the model fits the data well.

Inner Model

a. R-Square (R^2)

R^2 in PLS-SEM measures the proportion of variance in the dependent latent variables explained by the independent latent variables.

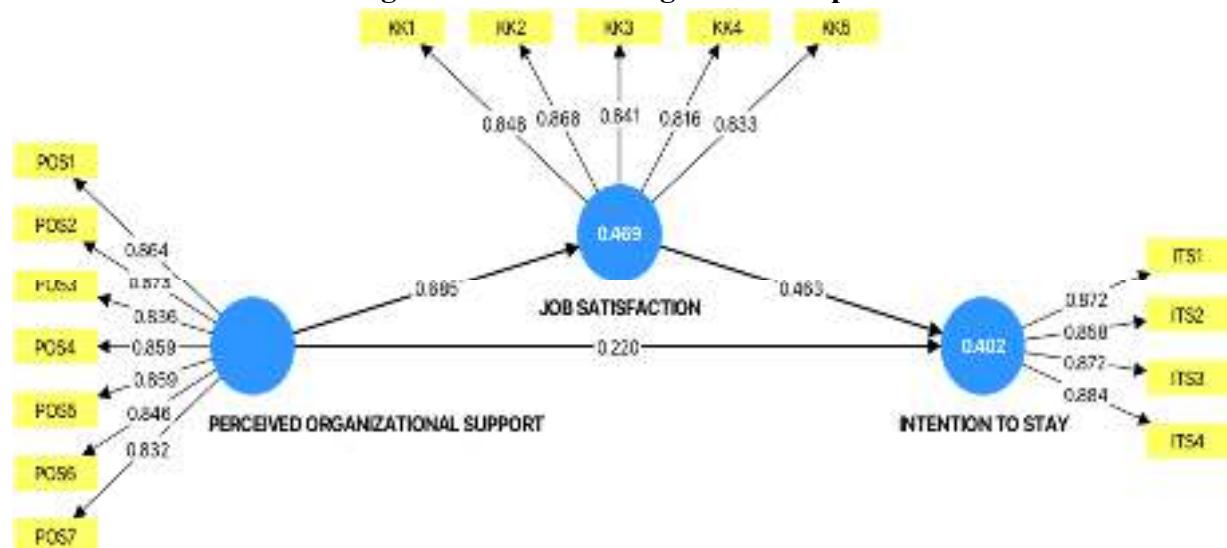
Table 6. R-Square Results

Dependent Variable	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Intention To Stay	0.402	0.399
Job Satisfaction	0.469	0.468

Source: Primary data (2025 survey), processed by the researcher; SmartPLS 4 output

The R^2 for intention to stay is 0.402, indicating that 40.2 percent of its variance is explained by the predictor variables, while 59.8 percent is due to other factors outside the model. This represents a moderate level of explanatory power. The R^2 for job satisfaction is 0.469, meaning that 46.9 percent of its variance is explained by perceived organizational support, also indicating a moderate relationship. Overall, the model captures a substantial portion of the variance in job satisfaction and intention to stay.

Figure 3. PLS-SEM Algorithm Output



b. Hypothesis Testing (Significance of Paths)

Bootstrapping was used to estimate path coefficients and their standard errors.

Table 7. Direct Effects (Bootstrapping Results)

Path Coefficient	Original Sample Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Remark
Perceived Organizational Support → Intention To Stay	0.153	0.154	0.064	3.438	0.000	Proven
Perceived Organizational Support → Job Satisfaction	0.476	0.476	0.027	25.069	0.000	Proven
Job Satisfaction → Intention To Stay	0.322	0.321	0.056	8.301	0.000	Proven

Source: Primary data (2025 survey), processed by the researcher; SmartPLS 4 output

Perceived organizational support has a positive and significant effect on intention to stay ($\beta = 0.153$; $T = 3.438 > 1.96$; $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), indicating that higher perceived organizational support is associated with stronger willingness to remain in the organization. Perceived organizational support also has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.476$; $T = 25.069 > 1.96$; $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), suggesting that supportive organizational practices increase satisfaction by making employees feel valued and cared for. Job satisfaction, in turn, has a positive and significant effect on intention to stay ($\beta = 0.322$; $T = 8.301 > 1.96$; $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), meaning that the more satisfied employees are, the stronger their commitment to remain in the organization.

Table 8. Indirect Effect (Mediation Path)

Path Coefficient	Original Sample Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Remark
Perceived Organizational Support → Job Satisfaction → Intention To Stay	0.317	0.317	0.043	7.419	0.000	Proven

Source: Primary data (2025 survey), processed by the researcher; SmartPLS 4 output

Perceived organizational support has a positive and significant indirect effect on intention to stay through job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.317$; $T = 7.419 > 1.96$; $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). This indicates that organizational support enhances job satisfaction, which in turn strengthens employees' intention to remain. Since the direct effect is also significant, job satisfaction functions as a **partial mediator** in this relationship.

c. Effect Size (f^2)

Effect size f^2 evaluates the specific contribution of each independent variable to the explained variance of a dependent variable.

Table 9. Effect Size (f^2)

Variable	Intention To Stay	Job Satisfaction	Perceived Organizational Support
Intention To Stay			
Job Satisfaction	0.190		
Perceived Organizational Support	0.043	0.885	

Source: Primary data (2025 survey), processed by the researcher; SmartPLS 4 output

Job satisfaction has a medium effect size on intention to stay ($f^2 = 0.190$), while perceived organizational support has a small-to-medium effect on intention to stay ($f^2 = 0.043$). In contrast, perceived organizational support has a very large effect size on job satisfaction ($f^2 = 0.885$), indicating a very strong and significant influence on how satisfied employees feel.

CONCLUSION

The results indicate that higher perceived organizational support significantly enhances job satisfaction, that greater job satisfaction significantly increases employees' intention to stay, and that perceived organizational support also directly predicts intention to stay. In this model, job satisfaction functions as a partial mediator that amplifies the impact of perceived organizational support on the retention intentions of young, early-career employees in Bandung City. These findings imply that organizations seeking to reduce early turnover need to ensure that various forms of support—such as fairness, appreciation, supervisory attention, and opportunities for development—are genuinely experienced by employees as satisfying work experiences, for example through training supervisors to be more supportive, implementing transparent reward systems, and communicating career paths clearly from the outset of employment. However, this study has several limitations, including its cross-sectional design, which cannot capture changes in intention to stay over time, the use of purposive sampling in a single city, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other contexts, and the reliance on self-reported data with only three main variables. In light of these limitations, future research is recommended to employ longitudinal or panel designs, extend the study to multiple cities or industry sectors, incorporate additional variables such as affective commitment, career opportunities, or work engagement, and combine quantitative data with qualitative interviews so that the psychological mechanisms underlying young employees' decisions to stay can be understood more comprehensively.

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