

Gender Policy, Work Environment, and Social Support on Job Satisfaction in Elite Police Units

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Abstract

Purpose: This study investigates the direct and indirect effects of gender policy and work environment on job satisfaction, with social support as a mediating variable, among personnel of the Investigation Directorate of Densus 88 AT POLRI, a high-pressure tactical unit of the Indonesian National Police.

Methodology: A quantitative correlational design was employed with 150 active personnel selected via purposive sampling. Data were collected through a structured Likert-scale questionnaire measuring gender inclusivity, work environment conditions, social support, and job satisfaction. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS 4.0 was used for analysis.

Results: Gender policy (beta = 0.34), work environment (beta = 0.39), and social support (beta = 0.42) each exerted significant positive direct effects on job satisfaction. Social support partially mediated the gender policy-job satisfaction relationship (beta = 0.18) and the work environment-job satisfaction relationship (beta = 0.21). The model explained 67% of variance in job satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.67$).

Conclusions: Inclusive gender policies, supportive work environments, and strong social support networks are essential co-determinants of job satisfaction in elite police contexts.

Limitations: The study is limited to a single tactical unit, uses cross-sectional data, and relies on self-reported measures.

Contributions: This research extends job satisfaction theory to high-risk policing environments and offers evidence-based recommendations for gender equity, psychosocial support, and HR policy reform in Indonesian law enforcement.

Keywords: *Gender Policy, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Performance, Social Support, Work Environment*

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1. Introduction

High-pressure institutional environments, particularly those encountered in elite law enforcement and tactical police units, pose distinctive challenges to workforce management and employee well-being (Kim & Stoner, 2021). Organizations of this nature are characterised by heightened operational risk, rigid hierarchical command structures, intense psychological demands, and a historically masculine occupational culture that can marginalise women and perpetuate inequitable workplace practices (Morash & Haarr, 2012). Within this context, job satisfaction emerges not merely as an indicator of individual well-being but as a strategic organisational variable linked to operational effectiveness,

personnel retention, and institutional legitimacy ([Spector, 1997](#)). Understanding the antecedents of job satisfaction in these environments is therefore both theoretically significant and practically urgent ([Creswell & Creswell, 2018](#)).

The Directorate of Investigation Densus 88 AT POLRI (Detachment 88) is Indonesia's premier counter-terrorism tactical unit, operating under the Indonesian National Police (POLRI). Established in 2003 with international technical and financial assistance following the 2002 Bali bombings, Densus 88 operates under conditions of extreme operational pressure, elevated psychological risk, and strict institutional confidentiality ([Jones, 2016](#)). Personnel are subjected to prolonged operational cycles, exposure to traumatic events, and significant demands for physical and psychological resilience. These conditions make the unit an exceptionally relevant and theoretically generative context for examining the organisational and psychosocial determinants of job satisfaction.

Gender policy, defined as the systematic institutional efforts to promote equality between men and women across recruitment, promotion, compensation, and career development processes, has received growing scholarly attention in the policing literature ([Ramadhani & Khoirunnisa, 2019](#)). Research consistently demonstrates that perceptions of gender fairness positively influence employee satisfaction, organisational commitment, and retention, particularly in patriarchal institutional cultures where informal discriminatory norms persist despite formal policy reforms ([Wardhani & Hartono, 2021](#)). In Indonesian policing, gender representation has improved incrementally through institutional reforms, yet qualitative and quantitative evidence suggests that the lived experience of female officers continues to be shaped by structural and cultural barriers that formal policy alone cannot resolve ([Febrian, Ardista, & Harwiki, 2022](#)).

Work environment, encompassing both the physical conditions of the workplace and the broader psychological climate including interpersonal relationships, managerial communication, and organisational fairness, is equally well-established as a determinant of job satisfaction ([Sedarmayanti, 2020](#)). In high-risk operational units, where personnel regularly encounter violence, moral injury, and institutional bureaucracy, the quality of the work environment is particularly salient for personnel well-being ([Indrasari, 2017](#)). The Job Characteristics Model ([Hackman & Oldham, 1976](#)) provides a theoretical foundation for understanding how task variety, autonomy, feedback, and skill utilisation interact with environmental conditions to shape job satisfaction, while more recent research in Indonesian law enforcement has highlighted team cohesion and supervisory leadership quality as critical environmental determinants of personnel outcomes ([Putra & Prianggono, 2022](#)).

Social support, encompassing the emotional, informational, and instrumental assistance provided by peers, supervisors, family, and community, has been theorised and empirically demonstrated as a critical buffer against occupational stress in law enforcement settings ([Sanwari, 2021](#); [Isnovijanti, 2022](#)). Drawing on Hobfoll's (1989) Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, researchers argue that social support functions as a psychological resource that mitigates the depletion of well-being under conditions of sustained occupational stress, thereby sustaining job satisfaction even in demanding environments. Importantly, social support not only exerts direct effects on job satisfaction but may also mediate the pathways through which organisational variables such as gender policy and work environment influence personnel outcomes, constituting a theoretically and practically important mediating mechanism.

Despite the growing body of literature on these variables in general police contexts, there remains a significant gap in research specifically addressing their integrated effects within elite tactical units such as Densus 88. The psychological toll, operational pressures, and gender dynamics within such units may generate distinctive patterns of influence that cannot be extrapolated from studies of general policing populations ([Raditya, Suharto, & Supriyanto, 2019](#)). Furthermore, most existing studies examine these variables individually rather than within a comprehensive structural model that captures both direct and mediated pathways, limiting their capacity to inform integrated HR policy interventions.

This study addresses these gaps by testing an integrated structural model in which gender policy and work environment function as independent variables, social support serves as a mediating variable, and job satisfaction constitutes the outcome variable, all within the specific institutional context of Densus 88 AT POLRI. The novelty of this research resides in its simultaneous modelling of direct and mediated pathways within a high-pressure elite tactical unit, a context that has been theoretically proposed as analytically important but empirically underexplored. The study aims to examine the direct effects of gender policy and work environment on job satisfaction, assess the direct effect of social support on job satisfaction, determine the mediating role of social support in the relationship between gender policy, work environment, and job satisfaction and derive evidence-based recommendations for HR policy reform and organizational well-being interventions in elite Indonesian law enforcement institutions.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis/es Development

2.1 Gender Policy and Job Satisfaction in Law Enforcement

Gender policy in organizational contexts refers to the formal and informal institutional mechanisms through which gender equality is pursued across all dimensions of employment, including recruitment, training, promotion, compensation, and protection from harassment and discrimination ([Stamarski & Son, 2015](#)). In law enforcement settings, gender policy has attracted increasing scholarly and policy attention as part of broader efforts to diversify police forces, improve community relations, and address systemic inequities that disadvantage women in predominantly male-dominated institutions ([Silvestri, 2017](#)). Research consistently demonstrates that perceptions of gender fairness and institutional equity are positively associated with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and retention among police personnel ([Ramadhani & Khoirunnisa, 2019](#)).

The theoretical basis for the gender policy-job satisfaction relationship draws on organizational justice theory, which distinguishes between distributive justice (equity in outcomes), procedural justice (fairness of decision-making processes), and interactional justice (quality of interpersonal treatment) as determinants of employee satisfaction ([Colquitt, 2001](#)). [Nguyen and Tran \(2022\)](#) demonstrated that perceptions of distributive and procedural justice with respect to gender were significantly predictive of job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior among women in male-dominated organizations, findings that have since been replicated in Indonesian policing contexts ([Febrian, Ardista, & Harwika, 2022](#); [Wardhani, & Hartono, 2021](#)). More recently, [Baek, Dierenfeldt, and Morash \(2023\)](#) confirmed in a cross-national study of law enforcement personnel that gender-inclusive policy environments were associated with stronger organizational identification and reduced intentions to leave, suggesting that the satisfaction-enhancing effects of gender policy extend beyond the individual level to shape workforce stability ([Lim & Lee, 2022](#)).

In the Indonesian context, gender policy in policing is shaped by the intersection of formal regulatory frameworks, organizational culture, and societal gender norms that continue to assign differential status and expectations to men and women in professional roles ([Wardhani & Hartono, 2021](#)). While POLRI has implemented formal gender mainstreaming initiatives, including targets for female officer recruitment and anti-harassment policies, evidence suggests that informal patriarchal norms persist in many units, limiting the lived impact of formal policy commitments ([Febrian et al., 2022](#)). This gap between policy as designed and policy as experienced highlights the importance of examining not merely the existence of gender policies but their perceived fairness and implementation quality as predictors of job satisfaction among Densus 88 personnel ([Nguyen & Tran, 2022](#)).

2.2 Work Environment and Job Satisfaction

The work environment as a determinant of job satisfaction encompasses both objective physical conditions and subjective psychological perceptions of the organizational climate. [Sedarmayanti \(2020\)](#) conceptualizes the work environment along two primary dimensions: the physical environment, which includes factors such as lighting, temperature, noise level, ergonomic design, and access to facilities; and the non-physical environment, which encompasses interpersonal relationships, managerial communication styles, organizational fairness, and psychological safety. Both dimensions

have been empirically linked to job satisfaction across diverse occupational settings, with the non-physical environment increasingly recognized as the more influential determinant of employee attitudes and behaviors ([Indrasari, 2017](#)).

The Job Characteristics Model ([Hackman & Oldham, 1976](#)), one of the most influential theoretical frameworks in work environment research, proposes that five core job dimensions, specifically skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback, shape employees' psychological states and thereby influence job satisfaction, motivation, and performance. Applied to elite tactical police units, this model predicts that while task significance is likely to be highly salient for Densus 88 personnel, autonomy and feedback may be constrained by hierarchical command structures, potentially generating dissatisfaction despite the inherent meaningfulness of the work ([Putra & Prianggono, 2022](#)). More recent extensions of the model, such as the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) framework ([Bakker & Demerouti, 2017](#)), explicitly incorporate social support as a job resource that buffers the negative effects of high job demands on employee well-being, providing a direct theoretical linkage between work environment quality, social support, and job satisfaction.

Empirical research in Indonesian policing has confirmed the significance of work environment variables for personnel satisfaction and performance. [Raditya et al. \(2019\)](#) found that compensation adequacy and work environment quality were significant positive predictors of employee performance in Indonesian organizational settings. [Putra and Prianggono \(2022\)](#) demonstrated that team cohesion, clarity of task objectives, and quality of supervisory leadership were particularly important environmental determinants of satisfaction in units with high operational mobility. These findings collectively suggest that for Densus 88 personnel, who operate under intense task demands and hierarchical command structures, the quality of the non-physical work environment, including interpersonal trust, supervisory fairness, and clarity of communication, may be as critical as physical working conditions in determining job satisfaction ([Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2020](#)).

2.3 Social Support as a Mediating Variable

Social support is broadly defined as the perceived availability and receipt of emotional, informational, and instrumental assistance from one's social network, including colleagues, supervisors, family members, and community contacts ([Sarafino & Smith, 2021](#)). In occupational health psychology, social support has been extensively theorised and empirically demonstrated as a critical resource for managing workplace stress and sustaining job satisfaction, particularly in high-demand occupational contexts ([Viswesvaran et al., 1999](#)). Hobfoll's (1989) Conservation of Resources (COR) theory provides a foundational theoretical framework for understanding social support as a psychological resource: individuals invest resources to protect against stress-induced resource loss, and social support functions as a critical resource that enables personnel to maintain well-being in the face of sustained occupational demands.

In Indonesian law enforcement, [Sanwari \(2021\)](#) demonstrated that social support from peers and supervisors significantly moderated the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among police personnel, while [Isnovijanti \(2022\)](#) found that access to emotional and informational support from within the institutional environment was associated with reduced burnout and enhanced work engagement. These findings align with the broader international evidence base reviewed by [Viswesvaran et al. \(1999\)](#), who conducted a meta-analysis of 68 studies and found that social support consistently attenuated the stress-satisfaction relationship across occupational settings. Importantly for the present study, social support has been theorised and empirically examined as not merely a direct predictor of job satisfaction but as a mediating mechanism that channels the effects of structural and environmental variables onto individual outcomes, making it particularly suited to the integrative mediation model tested in this study ([Bakker & Demerouti, 2017](#)).

2.4 Integrated Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis Development

The integrated theoretical framework underpinning this study draws on three complementary theoretical traditions: organizational justice theory ([Colquitt, 2001](#)) to explain the gender policy-job

satisfaction relationship; the Job Demands-Resources framework ([Bakker & Demerouti, 2017](#)) to model the work environment-job satisfaction relationship; and Conservation of Resources theory ([Hobfoll, 1989](#)) to conceptualize the mediating role of social support. Together, these frameworks predict that inclusive gender policies generate perceptions of fairness and institutional equity that directly enhance job satisfaction, while supportive work environments provide the psychological resources necessary for sustained satisfaction under conditions of high operational demand ([Wirawan, Kawiana, Sari, & Darma, 2021](#)). Social support is theorized to amplify these effects by providing the relational and informational resources through which policy and environmental stimuli are translated into individual well-being outcomes. Based on this framework, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H₁: Gender policy has a significant positive direct effect on job satisfaction

H₂: Work environment has a significant positive direct effect on job satisfaction

H₃: social support has a significant positive direct effect on job satisfaction

H₄: social support significantly mediates the relationship between gender policy and job satisfaction

H₅: social support significantly mediates the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction

3. Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative correlational design incorporating a path analysis framework to examine the direct and indirect effects of gender policy and work environment on job satisfaction, mediated by social support, among active personnel of the Investigation Directorate of Densus 88 AT POLRI. The quantitative correlational approach was selected for its suitability in testing theoretically derived directional hypotheses, establishing the magnitude of relationships among measured constructs, and evaluating mediating pathways within a structural equation modelling framework ([Creswell & Creswell, 2018](#)). The study population comprised all active personnel assigned to the Investigation Directorate of Densus 88 AT POLRI, a specialised tactical unit characterised by distinct operational demands, psychological risks, and organisational characteristics that differentiate it from standard police units. A purposive sampling strategy was employed to select 150 personnel who met the following inclusion criteria: minimum tenure of two years within the directorate, active assignment status at the time of data collection, and willingness to provide informed consent for participation. This sampling strategy was considered appropriate given the closed and security-sensitive nature of the institution and the need to ensure that respondents possessed adequate experiential familiarity with the constructs under investigation ([Sugjono, 2019](#)). The sample size was verified as statistically adequate for PLS-SEM analysis using the rule-of-thumb criterion proposed by [Hair et al. \(2019\)](#), which requires a minimum sample of ten times the maximum number of structural paths directed at any endogenous variable in the model.

Data were collected through a structured, self-administered questionnaire comprising four sections corresponding to the study's four latent constructs. Gender policy was measured using a 10-item scale adapted from [Stamarski and Son Hing \(2015\)](#), assessing perceptions of institutional fairness in recruitment, promotion, compensation, and protection from gender-based discrimination. Work environment was measured using a 12-item scale based on the framework developed by [Sedarmayanti \(2020\)](#) and [Hackman and Oldham \(1976\)](#), covering physical environment quality, psychological safety, managerial communication, and interpersonal relationships. Social support was operationalised using a 10-item scale derived from [Sarafino and Smith \(2021\)](#), capturing emotional, informational, and instrumental support from peers, supervisors, and family members. Job satisfaction was measured using an eight-item scale adapted from [Spector \(1997\)](#) and informed by Herzberg's two-factor theory, assessing satisfaction with task content, supervisory relationships, compensation, and professional development opportunities. All items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). Prior to full-scale deployment, the questionnaire was pre-tested with 30 personnel from a comparable POLRI unit, with feedback incorporated to refine item phrasing and ensure conceptual clarity. Validity was assessed using the product-moment correlation

with a significance threshold of alpha equal to 0.05, and reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha with a minimum acceptable threshold of 0.70 (Ghozali, 2018). Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) implemented in SmartPLS 4.0 software. The measurement model was evaluated for internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability), convergent validity (Average Variance Extracted (AVE) greater than 0.50), and discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. Structural model assessment included examination of path coefficients, t-statistics generated through bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples, and variance explained (R^2) for endogenous constructs. Mediation effects were tested using the indirect effect estimates and bias-corrected confidence intervals from the bootstrapping procedure (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 1. Research instrument summary

Construct	Items	Source	Key Dimensions
Gender Policy	10	Stamarski and Son (2015)	Fairness, equal opportunity, anti-discrimination
Work Environment	12	Sedarmayanti (2020); Hackman and Oldham (1976)	Physical conditions, psychological safety, communication
Social Support	10	Sarafino and Smith (2021)	Emotional, informational, instrumental support
Job Satisfaction	8	Spector (1997); Herzberg (1966)	Task content, supervisory relations, compensation

Table 1 Gender Policy refers to organizational policies that ensure fairness, equal opportunity, and non-discrimination in the workplace; Work Environment describes the physical and psychological conditions of the workplace, including safety, communication, and comfort that influence employee performance; Social Support is the perceived assistance received from colleagues or others in the form of emotional, informational, and instrumental support that helps reduce stress; and Job Satisfaction represents employees' overall evaluation of their job based on factors such as task content, supervision, and compensation.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Results

Measurement model assessment confirmed the psychometric adequacy of all four constructs.

Table 2. Measurement model results

Construct	Cronbach Alpha	CR	AVE	HTMT	R^2
Gender Policy	0.87	0.91	0.57	n/a	n/a
Work Environment	0.89	0.93	0.61	0.72	n/a
Social Support	0.83	0.89	0.52	0.68	0.53
Job Satisfaction	0.92	0.94	0.59	0.79	0.67

Table 2 All indicator loadings exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.70, with individual loadings ranging from 0.71 to 0.88 across the four constructs. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranged from 0.52 to 0.61, exceeding the minimum criterion of 0.50 and confirming convergent validity. Composite Reliability (CR) scores ranged from 0.89 to 0.94, and Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.83 to 0.92, both substantially exceeding the 0.70 threshold, confirming strong internal consistency reliability. Discriminant validity was established through both the Fornell-Larcker criterion (square root of AVE for each construct exceeded its highest correlation with any other construct) and the HTMT ratio (all values below 0.85), confirming that the four constructs are empirically distinct. Table 2 presents a summary of the measurement model results for all constructs.

The structural model demonstrated strong explanatory power, with an R^2 of 0.67 for job satisfaction, indicating that the model accounts for 67% of the variance in job satisfaction, a value considered large

according to the benchmarks established by [Chin \(1998\)](#). The R^2 for social support was 0.53, reflecting moderate predictive power for this endogenous mediator. Q^2 values for both endogenous constructs exceeded zero ($Q^2 = 0.41$ for job satisfaction; $Q^2 = 0.29$ for social support), confirming the model's predictive relevance in accordance with the Stone-Geisser criterion ([Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019](#)).

Table 3. Hypothesis testing: Path coefficients

Hypothesis / Path	Beta	Std. Error	t-value	p-value	Decision
H_1 : Gender Policy -> Job Satisfaction	0.34	0.066	5.12	< 0.001	Supported
H_2 : Work Environment -> Job Satisfaction	0.39	0.063	6.21	< 0.001	Supported
H_3 : Social Support -> Job Satisfaction	0.42	0.056	7.48	< 0.001	Supported
H_4 : Gender Policy -> Social Support -> Job Satisfaction	0.18	0.045	4.03	< 0.001	Supported
H_5 : Work Environment -> Social Support -> Job Satisfaction	0.21	0.045	4.69	< 0.001	Supported

Table 3 show presents the path coefficient estimates, t-statistics, and p-values for all direct and indirect hypothesised paths. H_1 was supported: gender policy exerted a significant positive direct effect on job satisfaction (beta = 0.34, $t = 5.12$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that personnel who perceive institutional gender policies as fair and effectively implemented report higher levels of job satisfaction. H_2 was supported: work environment had a significant positive direct effect on job satisfaction (beta = 0.39, $t = 6.21$, $p < 0.001$), representing the largest direct effect in the model and underscoring the critical role of both physical and psychosocial environmental conditions in shaping personnel satisfaction within Densus 88. H_3 was supported: social support exerted a significant positive direct effect on job satisfaction (beta = 0.42, $t = 7.48$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that the availability of emotional, instrumental, and informational support from peers and supervisors is the single strongest predictor of job satisfaction in the model.

H_4 and H_5 , testing the mediating role of social support, were both supported. The indirect effect of gender policy on job satisfaction through social support was significant (beta = 0.18, $t = 4.03$, $p < 0.001$), with a 95% bias-corrected confidence interval that did not include zero [0.092, 0.271], confirming partial mediation. Similarly, the indirect effect of work environment on job satisfaction through social support was significant (beta = 0.21, $t = 4.69$, $p < 0.001$), with a confidence interval of (0.121, 0.302), also confirming partial mediation. The partial nature of both mediations indicates that gender policy and work environment influence job satisfaction through two pathways: a direct pathway and an indirect pathway mediated by social support. This finding is consistent with the theoretical predictions of the JD-R framework and COR theory and contributes importantly to understanding the mechanisms through which structural and environmental variables shape personnel satisfaction in high-pressure institutional contexts.

4.2 Discussion

The finding that gender policy significantly predicts job satisfaction (H_1 supported, beta = 0.34) in the context of Densus 88 AT POLRI is consistent with the body of evidence reviewed by [Stamarski and Son \(2015\)](#) and the Indonesian policing literature of [Ramadhani and Khoirunnisa \(2019\)](#) and [Wardhani and Hartono \(2021\)](#). The magnitude of this effect is theoretically meaningful: in a unit that has historically operated within a strongly masculine institutional culture, the perception of gender policy as fair and effectively implemented exerts a substantial positive influence on the job satisfaction of personnel across all demographic groups. This finding corroborates [Baek, Dierenfeldt, and Morash \(2023\)](#), who demonstrated in a cross-national study that gender-inclusive environments generate organisation-wide satisfaction benefits by fostering cultures of respect, procedural fairness,

and professional meritocracy. It also suggests that in the context of Indonesian elite police units, formal gender policy reforms are perceived by personnel as substantively meaningful rather than merely symbolic, a finding that challenges sceptical perspectives on the impact of diversity policies in patriarchal institutions ([Febrian, Ardista, & Harwiki, 2022](#)).

The work environment emerged as the strongest direct predictor of job satisfaction in the model (H_2 supported, $\beta = 0.39$), a result that aligns with the theoretical predictions of both the Job Characteristics Model ([Hackman & Oldham, 1976](#)) and the JD-R framework ([Bakker & Demerouti, 2017](#)) and replicates the empirical findings of [Indrasari \(2017\)](#) and [Putra and Prianggono \(2022\)](#) in Indonesian policing contexts. Qualitative data from open-ended questionnaire responses (not formally coded) indicated that respondents cited interpersonal trust, clear communication from supervisors, and mutual respect among team members as the most influential environmental determinants of satisfaction, suggesting that the non-physical dimensions of the work environment, rather than physical infrastructure, are primary drivers of well-being within Densus 88. This finding has direct practical implications: investment in improving physical facilities without corresponding attention to organizational climate, leadership communication quality, and interpersonal relationship development is unlikely to produce the satisfaction improvements anticipated by management.

Social support demonstrated the largest total direct effect on job satisfaction (H_3 supported, $\beta = 0.42$), confirming its status as the most powerful individual predictor of personnel satisfaction in the Densus 88 context. This result is consistent with the meta-analytic evidence of [Viswesvaran, Sanchez, and Fisher \(1999\)](#), the Indonesian policing studies of [Sanwari \(2021\)](#) and [Isnovijanti \(2022\)](#), and the theoretical predictions of Hobfoll's in 1989 COR theory. The especially strong effect of social support in this particular context likely reflects the distinctive operational characteristics of Densus 88: in a unit where personnel regularly confront traumatic events, psychological stress, and high-stakes operational decisions, the availability of emotional validation, informational guidance, and practical assistance from peers and supervisors constitutes a critical psychological resource that directly sustains well-being and job satisfaction. This finding reinforces the argument that in high-pressure tactical units, social support systems are not peripheral welfare provisions but core organizational capabilities that directly determine personnel effectiveness and retention.

The confirmation of social support's partial mediating role in both the gender policy-job satisfaction pathway (H_4 supported, $\beta = 0.18$) and the work environment-job satisfaction pathway (H_5 supported, $\beta = 0.21$) represents the most theoretically novel contribution of this study. The mediation finding reveals that inclusive gender policies and supportive work environments enhance job satisfaction in part by cultivating stronger social support networks within the unit, suggesting that the relational and psychosocial fabric of the organisation is a critical transmission mechanism through which structural and environmental variables produce their satisfaction-enhancing effects. This finding extends the theoretical models proposed by [Bakker and Demerouti \(2017\)](#) and [Hobfoll \(1989\)](#) to the specific institutional context of elite police units and provides empirical support for the integrated framework proposed in this study. Practically, this mediating pathway has important implications for HR strategy: structural interventions aimed at improving gender policy and work environment quality will produce amplified satisfaction outcomes when they are simultaneously accompanied by investments in peer support programmed, supervisory mentoring, and structured psychological debriefing systems that strengthen the social support resources available to Densus 88 personnels.

A supplementary analysis of demographic subgroups revealed meaningful variation in the salience of the study's constructs across gender and age groups. Female personnel assigned higher importance to gender policy and social support than their male counterparts, reflecting the distinctive challenges they face in navigating institutional barriers and cultural expectations within a male-dominated tactical unit. Younger officers (below 35 years of age) placed greater value on peer solidarity, supportive work environments, and work-life integration than more senior personnel, suggesting generational shifts in expectations regarding psychosocial support and organizational justice in law

enforcement careers. These subgroup findings have important practical implications for the design of differentiated HR interventions that address the specific needs of different demographic groups rather than applying uniform policies that may be more responsive to the experiences of dominant demographic groups. The practical implications drawn from these findings collectively support the development of integrated HR strategies for Densus 88 and comparable elite police units, encompassing the operationalization of gender equity beyond formal policy statements to include promotion practices, field assignments, and leadership representation, the intentional cultivation of psychologically safe and communicatively open work environments through supervisory leadership development, and the institutionalization of social support systems through peer mentoring programmed, structured team debriefings, and professional mental health support services.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Conclusion

This study has demonstrated through rigorous PLS-SEM analysis that gender policy, work environment, and social support are significant and interrelated determinants of job satisfaction among personnel of the Investigation Directorate of Densus 88 AT POLRI. All five hypotheses were supported at the $p < 0.001$ significance level, confirming significant positive direct effects of gender policy (beta = 0.34), work environment (beta = 0.39), and social support (beta = 0.42) on job satisfaction, as well as the partial mediating role of social support in the relationships from both gender policy (beta = 0.18) and work environment (beta = 0.21) to job satisfaction. The model explained 67% of the variance in job satisfaction, representing strong explanatory power and affirming the theoretical coherence of the integrated framework. These findings establish that job satisfaction in elite tactical police units is shaped not only by individual psychological characteristics but by the organisational, environmental, and relational conditions within which personnel operate, and that these conditions interact in meaningful ways. The practical implication is unambiguous: institutional leaders in elite police units must adopt integrated HR strategies that simultaneously address gender equity, work environment quality, and social support development to maximise personnel satisfaction, resilience, and operational effectiveness.

5.2 Research Limitations

Several limitations qualify the interpretation and generalisability of this study's findings. First, the cross-sectional research design precludes causal inference in the strict sense and does not allow for the examination of how variable relationships evolve over time or in response to institutional interventions. Longitudinal designs would be needed to establish causal directionality with confidence. Second, the study is confined to a single directorate within Densus 88 AT POLRI, limiting geographic and institutional generalisability: the findings may not be directly transferable to other Indonesian police units, international law enforcement organisations, or other high-pressure institutional contexts with different operational cultures and gender demographics. Third, reliance on self-reported questionnaire data introduces the risk of common method variance, social desirability bias, and recall inaccuracy, all of which may attenuate measurement precision. Fourth, the purposive sampling strategy, while appropriate for this research context, limits the statistical representativeness of the sample and may introduce selection bias if systematically more satisfied or dissatisfied personnel chose to participate. Fifth, the model does not include potentially important additional constructs such as organisational commitment, leadership style, psychological safety climate, or work-life conflict, all of which prior research suggests may contribute to job satisfaction in law enforcement settings and whose inclusion in future models could improve explanatory power.

5.3 Directions and Future Study

The limitations identified above suggest several productive directions for future research. First, longitudinal panel studies using repeated-measures designs would allow researchers to examine how changes in gender policy implementation, work environment conditions, and social support provision over time translate into changes in job satisfaction among Densus 88 personnel, enabling stronger causal inference and assessment of policy intervention effectiveness. Second, comparative studies across multiple POLRI units, including both elite tactical and general policing contexts, would allow

for the identification of contextual moderators that amplify or attenuate the relationships found in this study, potentially generating insights applicable to broader police workforce management policy. Third, future research should expand the conceptual model to incorporate additional variables identified in the literature as important determinants of job satisfaction in law enforcement, including supervisory leadership style, organisational commitment, psychological capital, and work-life conflict. Fourth, the integration of qualitative research methods, such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with Densus 88 personnel, would provide richer contextual insight into the subjective mechanisms and experiential dimensions of the quantitative relationships identified in this study. Fifth, intervention studies employing pre-post designs to evaluate the effectiveness of specific HR programmes, such as gender equity training, peer mentoring initiatives, and structured psychological support programmes, in improving social support and job satisfaction outcomes would generate directly actionable evidence for institutional policy development.

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Author Contributions

APD contributed to conceptualization, methodology, data curation, formal analysis, investigation, writing, original draft, writing, review and editing, project administration. WH conceptualization, supervision, writing, review and editing, validation, funding acquisition. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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