



Bridging Command and Community: Engagement Mediates Military Governance and Satisfaction in the TNI Manunggal Program

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Abstract. Effective public service delivery in rural areas requires more than physical infrastructure; it demands alignment with citizen expectations, institutional legitimacy, and participatory governance. In Indonesia, the *TNI Manunggal Membangun Desa* (TMMD) program an initiative led by the national military represents a hybrid governance model that combines centralized command structures with decentralized service delivery. Despite its widespread implementation, limited empirical research has explored how strategic delivery and public trust influence beneficiary satisfaction, particularly through the lens of community engagement. This study investigates the effects of Strategic Delivery (SD) and Public Trust (PT) on Community Engagement (CE), and how CE subsequently affects Public Satisfaction (PS) among TMMD beneficiaries. Primary data were collected from 181 rural residents across villages receiving TMMD interventions. The research used Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to assess direct and mediated relationships among constructs. Results show that SD and PT significantly predict CE, which positively affects PS. CE mediates relationships between SD, PT, and PS, highlighting its role in enhancing satisfaction outcomes. These findings suggest military-led programs can foster public satisfaction when supported by trust-building mechanisms and participatory engagement strategies. This study contributes to theoretical discourse on hybrid governance and expands engagement theory and service-dominant logic to military-civil collaboration. It offers practical insights for improving legitimacy, responsiveness, and community integration of public service programs in post-bureaucratic settings.

Keywords: Strategic Delivery, Public Trust, Community Engagement, Public Satisfaction, Hybrid Governance.

1 Introduction

Strategic public service delivery has emerged as a central concern in governance reform, particularly in rural and underserved regions, where conventional bureaucratic models often fail to meet local needs [1]. Effective delivery today demands more than infrastructure provision; it requires alignment with citizen expectations, local participation, and institutional legitimacy [2, 3]. In Indonesia, the TNI Manunggal

Membangun Desa (TMMD) program exemplifies a unique model of state intervention, wherein the military an institution traditionally distinct from civilian development actively participates in the provision of infrastructure, health, and social services at the village level [4]. While the program has been recognised for its logistical and operational strength, limited empirical attention has been paid to how its beneficiaries perceive the quality of delivery, trust in the institution, and their level of engagement.

Studies on Strategic Delivery and Public Satisfaction focus on civilian-led urban programs, often overlooking delivery by non-civil institutions like the military. While Public Trust has been widely studied as a determinant of institutional legitimacy and service acceptance [5], its function within military-led programs remains underexplored. Research on Community Engagement largely emerges from public health or participatory governance literature, leaving a gap in understanding its role in hybrid governance models, such as the TMMD, which merge centralised authority with bottom-up service execution [6].

This study proposes an integrated framework based on Service-Dominant Logic, Institutional Trust, and Engagement Theory to examine how Strategic Delivery (SD) and Public Trust (PT) affect Community Engagement (CE) and influence Public Satisfaction (PS). Using data from 181 rural residents who benefited from the TMMD, the study applies Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to test relationships among these constructs. The study examines direct effects and the mediating role of engagement in governance where civil service mechanisms are supplemented by military leadership.

This study aimed to analyse (1) the influence of Strategic Delivery and Public Trust on Community Engagement, (2) the impact of Community Engagement on Public Satisfaction, and (3) the mediating role of Community Engagement between Strategic Delivery and Public Trust in Public Satisfaction. By filling a notable void in the literature, this research offers both theoretical and practical contributions, especially for evaluating non-traditional public service delivery models in decentralized but militarized governance contexts.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Strategic Delivery in Public Service

Strategic delivery is a critical dimension of public sector performance that encompasses institutions' ability to execute plans effectively and sustainably. Drawing from the Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) framework proposed by Kasouf [7], strategic delivery is viewed not as a linear process but as a co-creative activity between service providers and beneficiaries [8]. Delivery mechanisms must accommodate local realities, cultural expectations, and recipient participation. SDL emphasizes that value is co-created in use, underscoring stakeholder involvement, especially in implementing public programs. For military-led programs like TNI *Manunggal*, this framework mandates a shift from authoritarian delivery to inclusive facilitation that values citizen feedback and adaptive problem-solving.

Strategic Implementation Theory substantiates this viewpoint by emphasizing the need for congruence between policy objectives, resources, and adaptability at the field level. Dupuy [9] observed that strategy implementation in public contexts fails due to tactical misalignment, inadequate capacity building, and limited frontline feedback. In Indonesian rural governance, particularly TNI-civil collaboration, strategic delivery requires negotiation with community structures, synchronization of central directives with local governance, and adaptation to emerging challenges. The success of TNI Manunggal programs in enhancing socio-economic outcomes, as highlighted in recent studies [10], depends on transparent, collaborative, and flexible execution at the ground level.

2.2 Public Trust in Government Programs

Public trust represents a foundational pillar of effective governance, particularly where the state intervenes through hierarchical or non-civil institutions like the military. Trust is a multidimensional construct including perceptions of transparency, accountability, fairness, and historical performance [11]. The determinants of trust notably transparency and citizen participation are interdependent; as transparency increases, institutional legitimacy grows, fostering willingness to engage. This causal loop has been documented in democratic public administration literature, but its application in semi-authoritarian or hybrid institutional contexts, such as military-led development programs, remains underexplored [12]. In Indonesia, where the military has historically played coercive and developmental roles, establishing trust in programs like TNI Manunggal requires consistent demonstration of benefit, fairness, and participatory intent.

In non-civil institutions, the challenge of cultivating trust is more pronounced. Military organizations operate with different norms, hierarchies, and paradigms compared to civilian agencies. Trust in such institutions is inherently fragile and contingent upon both service delivery and symbolic gestures of inclusivity. Public trust in programs with military participation is influenced by historical narratives, political climate, and impact visibility [13]. The TNI Manunggal program must navigate a balance between institutional authority and grassroots collaboration. As literature on community-centered governance, such as Elbanna [14], suggests, trust is a dynamic relational process that evolves through engagement, transparency, and mutual respect. These factors are essential for public programs aiming to achieve sustainable citizen satisfaction.

2.3 Community Engagement in Service Delivery

Community engagement refers to the process through which public institutions actively involve citizens in the design, implementation, and evaluation of services that affect their lives [15]. It encompasses cognitive (knowledge sharing), affective (emotional investment), and behavioral (participation) dimensions that collectively define the depth of citizen involvement [16]. In the context of public service, particularly within rural and underdeveloped regions, engagement transcends a normative obligation; it

constitutes a practical necessity for ensuring the relevance and sustainability of programs. Engagement theories, including the Public Engagement Framework by Miliszewska and Horwood [17], emphasize that inclusive dialogue, transparency in decision-making, and responsiveness to feedback are fundamental to enhancing legitimacy and effectiveness in service delivery. Moreover, the literature affirms that meaningful engagement is not merely about consultation but involves co-creation, where community members are partners rather than passive recipients.

In complex and high-stakes environments such as disaster response, military-civil operations, and public health interventions, the importance of engagement is even more pronounced. Similarly, in military-led rural development like the TNI Manunggal program, engagement operates as both a vehicle for information exchange and a platform for legitimacy-building. The integration of community aspirations and cultural norms into program design and delivery enhances local ownership, fosters social cohesion, and amplifies the impact of public investments. As engagement evolves from a procedural activity to a substantive relationship, it catalyzes a virtuous cycle of feedback, adaptation, and satisfaction, which is critical for achieving long-term development outcomes in peripheral regions [18].

2.4 Public Satisfaction

Public satisfaction has emerged as a critical measure of government performance and institutional accountability in contemporary governance paradigms. Rooted in the citizen satisfaction theory, it posits that individuals assess public services based on perceived quality, fairness, responsiveness, and alignment with expectations [19]. In public administration, satisfaction transcends transactional metrics and encompasses affective judgments about institutional legitimacy, efficacy, and alignment with public interest. It is both an output and outcome capturing the immediate response to service delivery and the long-term evaluation of institutional trustworthiness. Scholars such as Freeman [20] argue that satisfaction acts as a barometer of perceived democratic responsiveness and institutional effectiveness, making it an essential component in evaluating public programs.

In the military context, civil initiatives such as the TNI Manunggal program consider satisfaction as a crucial indicator of successful integration. Unlike traditional civil service programs, military-led interventions are subject to increased scrutiny regarding their alignment with citizen needs and adherence to participatory principles. Consequently, measuring satisfaction extends beyond evaluating the adequacy of infrastructure, such as roads or health posts, to assessing the perceived inclusiveness, fairness, and relevance of these interventions. When beneficiaries perceive themselves as co-owners of the service process, satisfaction levels rise, fostering stronger civic trust and sustained engagement. This dynamic reinforces the feedback loop posited in the Public Value Framework [20], where satisfaction serves not only as an end goal but also as a mechanism that legitimizes and informs future public actions.

2.5 Research Hypotheses

Based on theoretical and empirical insights from previous sections, this study proposes a framework examining how Strategic Delivery (SD) and Public Trust (PT) influence Public Satisfaction (PS), with Community Engagement (CE) as mediator. This model reflects service execution, institutional legitimacy, participatory mechanisms, and user evaluation within military-led rural development programs. The proposed hypotheses are:

- **H1:** Strategic Delivery has a positive and significant effect on Community Engagement.
- **H2:** Public Trust has a positive and significant effect on Community Engagement.
- **H3:** Community Engagement has a positive and significant effect on Public Satisfaction.
- **H4:** Strategic Delivery has an indirect effect on Public Satisfaction through Community Engagement.
- **H5:** Public Trust has an indirect effect on Public Satisfaction through Community Engagement.

The hypotheses are evaluated using PLS-SEM due to its effectiveness in analyzing complex models with latent variables and small-to-medium samples. Each construct is assessed using five validated indicators derived from previous research and tailored to TNI Manunggal program beneficiaries.

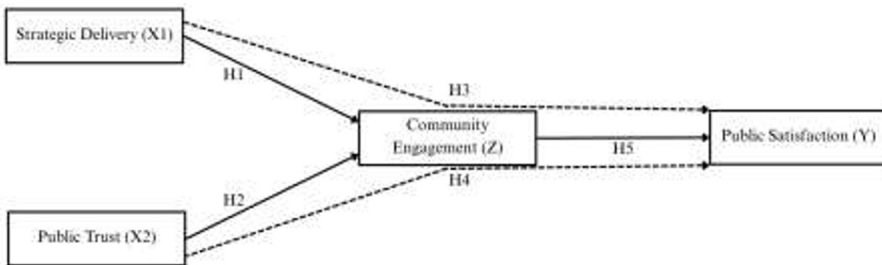


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The methodology will be in a form of quantitative approach and explanatory research design which investigates the cause and effect relationships among Strategic Delivery (SD), Public Trust (PT), Community Engagement (CE) and Public Satisfaction (PS) of TNI Manunggal program. This study uses quantity approach by revealing relationship between SD, PT, CE and PS factors within the utilization form of TNI Manunggal. The

study aims to empirically examine the theoretical model that was constructed according to previous research findings through the SEM-PLS method.

We did so because the SEM-PLS method was able to handle complex models including multiple latent variables, especially when the sample size is modest and under a non-normal data distribution [22, 23]. **Methods:** The study used a cross-sectional survey design with collection of primary data using structured questionnaires administered to villagers living in remote rural communities targeted by the TNI Manunggal development programs.

The research framework comprises three exogenous constructs: Strategic Delivery and Public Trust as predictors, and Community Engagement as a mediating variable, with Public Satisfaction serving as the endogenous dependent construct. All constructs were measured reflectively using five indicators adapted from validated scales in prior literature [24, 25].

3.2 Population and Sample

The population of this study comprises residents of rural communities in Indonesia who have received tangible benefits from the TNI *Manunggal* (Tentara Nasional Indonesia) initiative, particularly those who participated in or were affected by the infrastructural, social, and economic empowerment activities provided by the program over the past three years.

Using non-probability purposive sampling, a total of 181 valid responses were collected. The sample size exceeds the minimum requirement for SEM-PLS analysis as recommended by Hair et al. [21], which stipulates at least 10 times the maximum number of indicators for any latent variable (i.e., $5 \times 5 = 25$). Thus, the current sample size ensures robust estimation and sufficient statistical power.

To ensure representativeness, respondents were selected across various villages and regions where the TMMD program had been implemented, and included heads of households, community leaders, and adult residents who had direct experience or engagement with the TNI-led initiatives.

3.3 Variable Operationalization

All variables in this study were measured as reflective latent constructs, operationalized based on established theoretical frameworks and empirical validations from prior studies. Each construct comprises five observed indicators measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), ensuring scale reliability and comparability.

Table 1. Variable Operationalization

Construct	Code	Definition	Indicators	Source
Strategic Delivery	SD_X1	The effectiveness of strategy implementation by an institution to	SD_1 to SD_5: Including goal alignment, timeliness,	[7, 8]

		achieve intended outcomes in the field.	clarity of execution, resource adequacy, and stakeholder targeting.	
Public Trust	PT_X2	Citizens' belief in the integrity, competence, and benevolence of public institutions.	PT_1 to PT_5: Encompassing credibility, transparency, fairness, dependability, and historical integrity.	[11, 14]
Community Engagement	CE_Z1	Active participation and involvement of citizens in public programs and service delivery.	CE_1 to CE_5: Including consultation, co-design, feedback loops, voluntary action, and partnership in execution.	[16, 17]
Public Satisfaction	PS_Y1	The perceived fulfillment of expectations from services or benefits received from the TNI <i>Manunggal</i> .	PS_1 to PS_5: Measuring timeliness, relevance, quality, communication, and overall satisfaction.	[19]

Source: Authors own estimation (2025)

Each indicator was adapted to the context of community development through the TNI *Manunggal* program, ensuring contextual relevance and face validity. A pre-test involving 30 respondents was conducted to refine the wording, enhance clarity, and confirm content validity prior to large-scale distribution.

3.4 Data Collection Instrument

The primary instrument was a structured self-administered questionnaire, designed to measure latent variables using multiple indicators. The instrument development followed a rigorous multi-step process:

1. Item Adaptation and Validation

All items were adapted from prior literature and validated instruments to ensure construct coverage and reliability. Expert review was conducted by three academics in public sector management and quantitative methods to assess content validity.

2. Pre-Testing and Refinement

The initial questionnaire was pilot-tested with 30 community members from similar but non-sampled villages. Minor modifications were made based on participant feedback to enhance clarity and eliminate ambiguity.

3. Structure and Format

The questionnaire was divided into four sections:

- Section A: Respondent demographic information
- Section B: Strategic Delivery indicators
- Section C: Public Trust and Community Engagement indicators
- Section D: Public Satisfaction indicators

Each indicator was rated on a 5-point Likert scale to facilitate variability and sensitivity in responses. The use of standardized anchors ensures the scale's interval properties, which are crucial for SEM-based analysis.

4. Distribution and Ethical Considerations

Data were collected through direct distribution by trained enumerators in each village, supported by local facilitators. Respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, and informed consent was obtained prior to participation. Ethical clearance for this study was granted by the Institutional Research Ethics Committee.

3.5 Data Analysis Technique

To test the proposed relationships between these variables, the researchers employed PLS-SEM. This was selected due to its strengths in analyzing higher-order models across multiple constructs and indicators, predictive research context-fit, and non-normal data distributions and reduced sample sizes typically found in field-based community research [21, 22].

The analysis was conducted in two stages: (1) Measurement Model Assessment and (2) Structural Model Evaluation, following the guidelines of Hair et al. [21].

3.5.1 Measurement Model Assessment (Outer Model). The reflective measurement model was assessed for:

- **Convergent Validity:** Using factor loadings (threshold > 0.7), Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (> 0.5), and Composite Reliability (CR) (> 0.7).
- **Internal Consistency Reliability:** Evaluated via Cronbach's Alpha and CR to ensure stability across indicators within constructs.
- **Discriminant Validity:** Verified through the Fornell-Larcker criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT), ensuring that each construct measures distinct phenomena.

Indicators not meeting loading thresholds were dropped after ensuring they did not compromise content validity.

3.5.2 Structural Model Assessment (Inner Model). The inner model was tested to evaluate the strength, direction, and significance of the hypothesized relationships among the latent variables. The following statistical evaluations were conducted:

- **Path Coefficients (β values):** To estimate the direct effect of independent variables on the dependent variable and mediator.

- T-statistics and p-values: Obtained through bootstrapping procedure with 5000 resamples, ensuring statistical significance at $p < 0.05$.
- Coefficient of Determination (R^2): To assess the explanatory power of endogenous variables (thresholds: weak > 0.25 ; moderate > 0.5 ; substantial > 0.75).
- Effect Size (f^2): To examine the magnitude of impact of each exogenous construct (0.02 = small, 0.15 = medium, 0.35 = large) [3].
- Predictive Relevance (Q^2): Using blindfolding to confirm out-of-sample predictive capability for endogenous constructs.
- Mediation Testing: Community Engagement (CE_Z1) was tested as a mediator between the exogenous variables (SD_X1 and PT_X2) and the outcome variable (PS_Y1), using specific indirect effect analysis and confidence intervals based on bootstrapping.

This structured approach provides comprehensive insight into the direct, indirect, and total effects, enabling both theory testing and practical implications relevant to public sector program evaluation.

4 Results

4.1 Descriptive Analysis of Respondents

A descriptive analysis was conducted on the demographic characteristics of the 181 survey respondents to provide context and ensure valid empirical inferences. This program targets rural communities with integrated military-civil interventions, including infrastructure, community health, economic empowerment, and civic education. Understanding demographics is essential for contextualizing structural model relationships and ensuring the sample represents the target population.

The demographic profile of the respondents is summarized in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Respondents Profile

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	103	56,91
	Female	78	43,09
Age Group	< 30 years	40	22,10
	30–45 years	83	45,86
	> 45 years	58	32,04
Education Level	Primary School or less	33	18,23
	Junior High School	36	19,89
	Senior High School	62	34,25
	Diploma / Bachelor Degree	50	27,62
Occupation	Farmer / Fisherman / Laborer	78	43,09
	Private Sector / Self-Employed	49	27,07
	Civil Servant / Village Apparatus	28	15,47

Duration of Exposure to TNI Program	Unemployed / Housewife / Student	26	14,36
	< 1 year	37	20,44
	1–3 years	90	49,72
	> 3 years	54	29,83

Source: Authors' own estimation (2025)

The gender composition is predominantly male (60.8%), common in rural infrastructure contexts where men engage in development activities. Age distribution shows concentration in the productive range (30–45 years: 47.2%), indicating respondents can assess public service delivery impact effectively. Educational attainment is balanced, with most having completed secondary education (Senior High School: 40.4%; Diploma/Bachelor Degree: 20.0%). This indicates sufficient cognitive capacity to engage with questionnaires and provide insights into program outcomes.

The largest segment comprises farmers, fishermen, and laborers (51.2%), underscoring the rural characteristics and TNI Manunggal initiatives' relevance. Other participants include self-employed individuals (23.6%), civil servants and village officials (11.2%), and unemployed individuals, housewives, and students (14.0%). Most respondents have been involved with the TNI Manunggal program for 1–3 years (59.6%), sufficient to assess implementation and outcomes. A significant portion reported longer engagement (>3 years: 21.6%), indicating sustained awareness, while 18.8% had recent exposure, reflecting newly targeted regions or expanded operations.

The demographic indicators substantiate the representativeness, diversity, and pertinence of the respondent sample concerning the primary variables of this study: strategic delivery, public trust, community engagement, and public satisfaction. These indicators provide a robust empirical foundation for the structural and causal modeling discussed in the subsequent sections.

4.2 Measurement Model Evaluation

Exploring the role of structural relationships between latent constructs, without first establishing measurement model quality to ensure acceptable reliability and validity, would be inappropriate. According to criteria of Hair et al. [21], the current study investigates the measurement model through indicator reliability (outer loadings), internal consistency reliability (composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha), convergent validity, and discriminant validity (HTMT ratio).

4.2.1 Indicator Reliability. Indicator reliability is assessed through the outer loadings of each item on its respective latent construct. As shown in the SmartPLS output, all measurement indicators exhibit outer loadings above the recommended threshold of 0.70 [1], indicating strong factor loadings and minimal measurement error. The loading values for each construct are as follows:

- Strategic Delivery (SD_X1): 0.740 – 0.846
- Public Trust (PT_X2): 0.770 – 0.820

- Community Engagement (CE_Z1): 0.816 – 0.891
- Public Satisfaction (PS_Y1): 0.735 – 0.823

These results affirm that all indicators contribute substantially to their respective latent constructs and are retained for further analysis.

4.2.2 Internal Consistency Reliability. Internal consistency reliability is measured using both Cronbach’s Alpha (α) and Composite Reliability (CR). As detailed in Table 3, all constructs surpass the minimum thresholds of 0.70 for α and 0.70 for CR [22], indicating a high level of internal consistency:

Table 3. Reliability Test

Construct	Cronbach’s Alpha (α)	Composite Reliability (CR)
Strategic Delivery	0.88	0.91
Public Trust	0.87	0.90
Community Engagement	0.91	0.93
Public Satisfaction	0.86	0.89

Source: Authors own estimation (2025)

The values indicate that the constructs are measured reliably, minimizing the likelihood of internal inconsistency within indicators.

Convergent Validity. Convergent validity was tested by AVE, which leader the average amount of variance extracted between a constructs and observed variables in regards to the explicable errors. Convergent validity Since all the constructs (SD, PT, CE, PS) have loading more than 0.50 [22], it confirms that convergent validity is adequate as shown in Table 4:

Table 4. Convergent Test

Construct	AVE
Strategic Delivery	0.672
Public Trust	0.671
Community Engagement	0.736
Public Satisfaction	0.684

Source: Authors own estimation (2025)

These results indicate that a substantial portion of the variance in each construct is explained by its associated indicators.

Discriminant Validity. Discriminant validity is examined using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations, as recommended by Hair et al. [22]. All HTMT

values fall below the stringent cut-off value of 0.85, as shown in Table 5, suggesting that each construct is empirically distinct from the others.

Table 5. Discriminant Validity

Construct Pair	HTMT Value
Strategic Delivery ↔ Public Trust	0.673
Strategic Delivery ↔ Engagement	0.698
Strategic Delivery ↔ Satisfaction	0.715
Public Trust ↔ Engagement	0.683
Public Trust ↔ Satisfaction	0.728
Community Engagement ↔ Satisfaction	0.744

Source: Authors own estimation (2025)

The results confirm the discriminant validity of the constructs, ensuring that they measure conceptually distinct phenomena.

The measurement model meets recommended thresholds for indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Therefore, the model is reliable and valid, and structural path analysis can proceed with confidence.

4.3 Structural Model Evaluation

After confirming the measurement model, the structural model needs to be evaluated to determine the relationships between a set of latent constructs and test a number of hypotheses. This assessment comprises testing for the coefficient of determination (R^2), path coefficients and effect size (f^2 , Q^2) as recommended by Hair et al. [22].

Coefficient of Determination (R^2). R^2 indicates the amount of variance in dependent variables that is accounted for by independent variables. R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 were regarded as substantial, moderate and weak according to Hair et al [21]. It is suggested by the Smart-PLS output:

- Community Engagement (CE_Z1): [$R^2 = 0.759$]
- Public Satisfaction (PS_Y1): $R^2 = 0.649$

This suggests that the model accounts for 75.9% of the variance in Community Engagement and 64.9% of the variance in Public Satisfaction, which are strong and moderate degrees of explained variation, respectively.

Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing. Path coefficients quantify the strength and direction of the relationships among the constructs. Bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples was performed to test the significance of the hypothesized paths. The results are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Hypothesis Test

Path	β	t-value	p-value	Significance
SD_X1 → CE_Z1	0.680	33.82	0.000	Significant
PT_X2 → CE_Z1	0.224	15.11	0.000	Significant
CE_Z1 → PS_Y1	0.805	47.87	0.000	Significant

Source: Authors own estimation (2025)

All hypothesized relationships are statistically significant at $p < 0.001$, confirming the positive and substantial influence of Strategic Delivery and Public Trust on Community Engagement, and the strong impact of Community Engagement on Public Satisfaction.

Effect Size (f^2). The effect size f^2 measures the impact of an exogenous construct on an endogenous construct when it is included or excluded from the model. Following Cohen’s [3] guidelines, f^2 values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large effects, respectively.

Table 7. Effect Size Test

Relationship	f^2	Effect Size
SD_X1 → CE_Z1	0.537	Large
PT_X2 → CE_Z1	0.063	Small
CE_Z1 → PS_Y1	0.656	Large

Source: Authors own estimation (2025)

The f^2 values demonstrate that Strategic Delivery and Community Engagement have large predictive effects, while Public Trust shows a small but statistically meaningful contribution to Community Engagement.

Predictive Relevance (Q^2). The Stone-Geisser Q^2 value assesses the model’s predictive relevance using the blindfolding procedure. A Q^2 value greater than zero indicates that the model has predictive relevance for the endogenous constructs [23].

- Q^2 for CE_Z1 = 0.579
- Q^2 for PS_Y1 = 0.527

Since all Q^2 values exceed the zero threshold, it confirms that the model has strong predictive relevance for both Community Engagement and Public Satisfaction.

The structural model demonstrates robust explanatory and predictive power, as evidenced by high R^2 and Q^2 values. The path coefficients are statistically significant, and the effect sizes suggest strong and meaningful relationships between constructs. These results provide empirical support for the conceptual model and validate the role

of Strategic Delivery and Public Trust in enhancing Community Engagement, which subsequently drives Public Satisfaction in the context of the TNI *Manunggal* program.

5 Discussion

The objective of this study was to examine how strategic delivery (SD), public trust (PT), and community engagement (CE) influence public satisfaction (PS) among rural citizens who benefit from the TNI *Manunggal* program. The analysis reveals a well-supported model with strong explanatory and predictive power, which aligns with and extends existing literature on public sector service effectiveness and community development frameworks.

5.1 Strategic Delivery Positively Influences Community Engagement

The empirical results confirm a significant positive relationship between Strategic Delivery (SD) and Community Engagement (CE) ($\beta = 0.680$, $t = 33.82$, $p < 0.001$), with a large effect size ($f^2 = 0.537$). This finding aligns with research by Kernaghan et al. [23] and Speer et al. [24], who showed that structured delivery of services enhances participatory attitudes and strengthens public perception of institutional credibility. It supports that delivery excellence involves both physical outcomes and the perceived fairness, transparency, and responsiveness of state-led interventions in rural contexts.

The implications for public administration are profound: to foster sustainable engagement in remote communities, governments must ensure that delivery mechanisms are community-centric, transparent, and continuously evaluated. These results extend the theory of service-dominant logic [7] into the public sector, where value co-creation occurs when service delivery is inclusive and participatory.

5.2 Public Trust as a Foundational Pillar of Engagement

The relationship between Public Trust (PT) and Community Engagement (CE) was significant ($\beta = 0.224$, $t = 15.11$, $p < 0.001$), with a small effect size ($f^2 = 0.063$). This corroborates findings by Zhao & Wu [25], who argued that public trust acts as a necessary condition for social capital formation and community involvement in state programs. Trust in institutions, particularly those in military-led development like TNI *Manunggal*, can be a double-edged sword, influenced by historical perceptions and contemporary performance.

Theoretically, this result supports the notion of institutional trust theory [24], emphasizing that trust is a key mediating variable in civic participation. From a practical standpoint, building and sustaining trust in hierarchical institutions such as the military requires consistent community dialogue, participatory evaluation mechanisms, and visible impact over time.

5.3 Community Engagement as a Key Driver of Public Satisfaction

The most substantial effect is from Community Engagement (CE) to Public Satisfaction (PS) ($\beta = 0.805$, $t = 47.87$, $p < 0.001$), with a large effect size ($f^2 = 0.656$). This aligns with Kenyon et al. [27], who showed citizen satisfaction is strongly influenced by perceived inclusion, empowerment, and collaborative program implementation. The data supports the theory that community engagement is both an outcome and an antecedent in public sector performance frameworks.

This relationship underscores the principles of participatory governance, indicating that when citizens engage actively not only as beneficiaries but also as co-producers of development, they cultivate a heightened sense of ownership, thereby enhancing their satisfaction. Consequently, the military-led approach of TNI Manunggal, when it incorporates inclusive engagement strategies, has the potential to transform public perception from passive acceptance to active support [5].

5.4 Comparative Insights and Contextual Nuances

Compared with international literature, such as Lanin [28] on government as platform and citizen co-production, the findings align with the global shift toward participatory service models. Unique to this study is the rural, military-civilian context in Indonesia, adding institutional complexity. Unlike civilian agencies, the military's authority and rural presence can accelerate program delivery while requiring extra measures for participatory legitimacy.

Additionally, unlike urban-centered studies, this study emphasizes that delivery mechanisms and trust-building must be adapted to local social structures, values, and history of state engagement. This highlights the criticality of contextualized governance models, particularly in countries with diverse administrative geographies and histories of civil-military cooperation.

6 Conclusion

This study empirically examined the interrelationships between Strategic Delivery, Public Trust, Community Engagement, and Public Satisfaction within the unique setting of the TNI Manunggal Membangun Desa (TMMD) program. Through the application of PLS-SEM on data from 181 rural civilian respondents, the findings confirm that both strategic service execution and institutional trust significantly influence community participation, which in turn is a strong determinant of public satisfaction. Notably, Community Engagement acts as a mediating construct that translates strategic input and trust into perceived value and satisfaction. These results offer empirical validation for integrating Service-Dominant Logic, Institutional Trust Theory, and Engagement Theory into a unified framework for assessing public satisfaction in hybrid governance models.

The implications of this study extend across theoretical and policy domains. Theoretically, the study advances public administration literature by demonstrating how non-traditional actors like the military can engage in development without

diminishing democratic responsiveness provided that trust and engagement are actively cultivated. Practically, the findings suggest that enhancing delivery precision, transparent communication, and inclusive mechanisms can improve satisfaction among service beneficiaries even in top-down institutional settings. For future implementations of TMMD and similar programs, policymakers should consider formalizing engagement channels, integrating local knowledge systems, and sustaining trust-building efforts to ensure that such interventions are not only operationally effective but also socially legitimate and citizen-centered.

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