

The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction in the Relationship Between Work Motivation and Employee Performance: Evidence from a Government Institution

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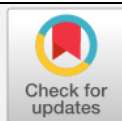
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ARTICLE INFO

Publication Info:

Research Article



How to cite:

Tambunan, R., Abbas, B., & Nur, M. (2025). The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction in the Relationship Between Work Motivation and Employee Performance: Evidence from a Government Institution. *Society*, 13(1), 553–572.

DOI: [10.33019/society.v13i1.819](https://doi.org/10.33019/society.v13i1.819)

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Received: March 2, 2025;

Accepted: March 28, 2025;

Published: March 31, 2025;

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the influence of job satisfaction on employee performance, the impact of work motivation on job satisfaction, and the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between motivation and performance among civil servants working at the Secretariat of the Regional House of Representatives (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah, DPRD) of Konawe Regency, Indonesia. A total of 53 employees participated as respondents. Data were collected through questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The Partial Least Squares (PLS) method was used to test the hypotheses, complemented by qualitative analysis to deepen understanding of the findings. Results indicate a strong correlation between motivation, job satisfaction, and performance, suggesting that increased motivation and satisfaction lead to better employee outcomes. However, intrinsic motivation alone is insufficient; external support, such as effective managerial practices, is needed to enhance performance. The findings underscore the significant mediating role of job satisfaction in the link between motivation and performance. Based on these insights, the study recommends that the DPRD Secretariat and related government institutions adopt targeted interventions to improve employee engagement and performance.

Keywords: Employee Performance; Government Institution; Job Satisfaction; Konawe Regency; Work Motivation

1. Introduction

Indonesia has undergone significant structural reforms, particularly following the enactment of Law No. 32 of 2004 on Regional Autonomy. This legislation transferred authority from the central government to regional administrations, allowing them to manage local affairs independently. The transition from a centralized to a decentralized governance system was intended to strengthen regional autonomy and promote principles of good governance (Lestari et al., 2024).

In this context, government institutions must remain adaptive and resilient to meet the evolving needs of society across various sectors, including law, politics, economics, and education. Among these, education holds particular importance for community development, with human resource enhancement emerging as a key focus under regional autonomy. Strengthening the capacity of civil servants (pegawai negeri sipil, or PNS) is essential to ensure effective institutional performance and regulatory compliance. Regional governments, empowered by delegated authority, hold full responsibility for managing and placing personnel within their administrative areas (Hafiz et al., 2022).

Within the governance structure of Konawe Regency, the Secretariat of the Regional People's Representative Council (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah, DPRD) plays a vital role in supporting both public and legislative functions. As the operational arm of the council, the Secretariat is expected to deliver high-quality public services and administrative support. Therefore, enhancing human resource management within the Secretariat is crucial for improving employee performance.

Any government institution's effectiveness largely depends on its personnel's competencies. Inadequate human resource management can hinder institutional progress and may lead to systemic inefficiencies. The Secretariat's staff performance directly influences the quality and effectiveness of local governance. When employees perform optimally, organizational processes become more efficient, results-driven, and responsive to public needs (Aryani et al., 2021). Motivation and job satisfaction are core elements influencing organizational performance in this setting.

Employee motivation is a critical aspect of workforce management that enhances enthusiasm and improves performance. Effective leadership can channel motivation to unlock employees' potential and convert it into measurable results. Maintaining employee morale and commitment is essential for achieving institutional goals. Managers must also understand the underlying drivers of employee behavior, as individual needs shape workplace engagement. A deep understanding of these motivational factors enables leaders to better align employees with the organization's strategic objectives (Putra et al., 2021).

Job satisfaction, meanwhile, reflects an employee's emotional response to their work environment. It significantly shapes attitudes, behaviors, and overall engagement. High levels of job satisfaction encourage initiative, commitment, and productivity. Lam et al. state that job satisfaction is an outcome and motivator, reinforcing employee engagement (Lam et al., 2020). It directly affects an employee's attitude, influencing performance outcomes (Zhu, 2012). Given its strong association with work quality, job satisfaction must be a strategic priority for organizations aiming to improve productivity (Mohyi, 2021).

Building on this theoretical understanding and observed institutional realities, this study posits that employee motivation strongly influences job satisfaction, enhancing the Konawe Regency DPRD Secretariat's performance. However, inconsistencies in previous empirical findings highlight the need for further investigation.

This research empirically examines the relationship between employee motivation and performance, with job satisfaction serving as a mediating variable, within the specific organizational context of the Konawe Regency DPRD Secretariat. While previous studies (Lam et al., 2020; Riyanto et al., 2021) affirm the relevance of motivation and job satisfaction in shaping performance, there is still a need to explore their interaction further, particularly within decentralized government institutions. Given ongoing theoretical debates and empirical gaps, this study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of these dynamics.

Preliminary field observations indicate that the Konawe Regency DPRD Secretariat has implemented several policy initiatives to improve employee performance, including direct task assignments. However, the organizational work system remains inefficient. A key challenge lies in the disparity of educational attainment among employees: only five staff members hold a master's degree, twenty-three hold bachelor's degrees, and twenty-five have only completed high school. This gap presents obstacles to effective public service delivery and institutional coordination. Moreover, several underlying structural and managerial issues within the Secretariat have yet to be fully diagnosed in earlier research efforts.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is fundamental to organizational behavior, yet it remains inherently subjective and varies according to individual values and expectations. The degree to which job characteristics align with personal aspirations often determines the level of satisfaction experienced by employees.

Judge et al. describe job satisfaction as an affective response to various aspects of one's work (Judge et al., 2020). Locke defines it as the emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences (Locke, 1970). Similarly, Robbins views job satisfaction as a general attitude toward work, shaped by the perceived gap between what employees expect and what they receive (Spector, 1997). In essence, job satisfaction reflects an individual's overall evaluation of their job, incorporating emotional, cognitive, and behavioral components. It arises from the perception that one's work fulfills personally meaningful values and contributes to a sense of professional achievement and recognition.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory provides a foundational framework for analyzing job satisfaction. As discussed by Sypniewska, Herzberg classifies the sources of satisfaction into two distinct categories (Sypniewska, 2014). Intrinsic factors, such as recognition, responsibility, and the nature of the work itself, contribute to positive job experiences. In contrast, extrinsic factors, including salary, supervision, and working conditions, may prevent dissatisfaction but do not necessarily enhance satisfaction. According to this theory, improving intrinsic aspects of a job is key to fostering genuine motivation and long-term engagement.

Job satisfaction is closely linked to work motivation, an internal drive that propels individuals to achieve organizational goals. Motivation strengthens the determination to fulfill both personal and professional needs. In organizational performance, high motivation is essential for maintaining productivity and reflects an individual's commitment to contributing meaningfully to institutional success.

2.2. Work Motivation

Work motivation is an internal drive that emerges from individual needs, encouraging people to adapt and act to pursue their goals. Motivation is the willingness to exert effort toward organizational objectives, influenced by the degree to which those efforts satisfy

personal needs (Spector, 1997). Motivation may arise from internal sources, such as ambition or self-fulfillment, or external factors, including expectations of recognition or material rewards.

This concept is grounded in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which classifies human motivation into five levels: physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization (Maslow & Lewis, 1987). Physiological and safety needs are basic, while the latter three reflect higher-order aspirations. Maslow's theory suggests that individuals progress through these levels sequentially as each set of needs is met.

As Acquah et al. discussed, Alderfer's ERG Theory refines Maslow's model by condensing human needs into existence, relatedness, and growth (Acquah et al., 2021). Existence covers basic material and physiological requirements; relatedness addresses social relationships and interpersonal connections; and growth refers to personal development and self-improvement. Unlike Maslow's linear hierarchy, the ERG Theory allows for flexibility; individuals can shift between needs depending on circumstances. If higher-order needs are unfulfilled, they may revert to lower-order concerns, reflecting human motivation's dynamic and cyclical nature.

McClelland offers another influential theory by identifying three key motivational drivers: the need for achievement (nAch), the need for affiliation (nAff), and the need for power (nPow) (Latham & Budworth, 2014). Individuals high in nAch are motivated by challenging but attainable goals; those with strong nAff seek social bonds and group harmony; and those driven by nPow aim to influence or control others, often through leadership or authority.

Among these, effective managerial performance is typically associated with a high need for power and a lower need for affiliation. Leaders must possess decision-making capacity and assertiveness, prioritizing influence and strategic control over social approval to ensure institutional effectiveness.

Pinder emphasizes that employee performance is shaped by task execution, the level of effort exerted, and perceptions of success (Pinder, 2014). These performance outcomes then influence the expectation of rewards. When employees perceive intrinsic rewards (such as recognition) and extrinsic rewards (such as financial compensation) as fair, job satisfaction increases, reinforcing motivation and sustaining performance.

Expectancy theory supports this logic, suggesting that the anticipation of rewards, intrinsic or extrinsic, is critical in motivating individuals to improve their performance. This theory intersects with Need Theory, particularly the roles of nAch and nPow, which are essential in shaping managerial capabilities and influencing workplace productivity.

Ultimately, motivation is an internal mechanism that energizes individuals to fulfill personal aspirations and organizational objectives. The stronger this motivational force, the greater the commitment to achieving success. Within organizational settings, sustained motivation enhances productivity and supports long-term institutional performance.

2.3. Employee Performance

Employee performance is a central concept in organizational behavior. However, scholars vary in how they define and approach it. "Performance" originates from work achievement or completing tasks toward a defined goal. Gibson defines performance as the outcome of behavior intended to achieve specific objectives (Alkhairi & Situmorang, 2022). Similarly, Hasibuan describes it as an individual's ability to deliver optimal results aligned with organizational aims (Hermina & Yosepha, 2019). Shahzadi et al. emphasize that performance can be measured by the quantity and quality of tasks completed within a specific period (Shahzadi et al., 2014).

Broadly, performance refers to the degree to which an individual or group fulfills assigned responsibilities to meet an organization's strategic goals. It encompasses the effectiveness of implementing policies, programs, or projects in line with an institution's mission and vision. Performance can be assessed at three levels: individual, team, and organizational.

Effective performance evaluation typically involves three key components: setting clear objectives, establishing measurement criteria, and conducting systematic assessments. Clear objectives provide direction and help align individual efforts with broader institutional goals. However, objectives alone are insufficient. Quantitative and qualitative benchmarks must accompany them to evaluate whether expectations are met. These benchmarks clarify performance standards and help ensure employees understand their responsibilities.

The third element of performance evaluation is regular and structured assessment. This process tracks progress toward individual and organizational goals, allowing for timely feedback and strategic adjustments. Regular assessments also help identify gaps and development needs, serving as a basis for interventions to improve effectiveness. In this context, performance becomes a comprehensive process that supports continuous improvement and enhances motivation at the individual level.

According to Armstrong and Baron, as cited in Atatsi et al., employee performance is generally assessed based on three primary dimensions: quantity, quality, and timeliness (Atatsi et al., 2019). This framework is widely used in public and private sector performance management systems.

- Quantity refers to the output volume, such as the number of completed tasks or the ratio of actual to targeted performance.
- Quality assesses the degree to which outputs meet defined standards, including accuracy, completeness, and appropriateness.
- Timeliness measures how efficiently tasks are completed within designated time frames, reflecting punctuality and scheduling discipline.

These dimensions provide standardized criteria for evaluating individual contributions, ensuring transparency and fairness in performance appraisals. They also enable organizations to maintain operational consistency across departments.

Employee performance is shaped by a combination of factors, which are often categorized into individual, organizational, and physiological domains. Individual factors include competencies, skills, and attitudes; organizational factors involve leadership, communication, and workplace culture; while physiological factors relate to health, fatigue, and overall physical condition. These variables influence work behavior, which in turn affects overall performance outcomes.

Understanding these dynamics allows institutions to develop targeted strategies for performance enhancement. By addressing systemic and individual factors, organizations can foster a productive work environment, improve service quality, and achieve long-term success.

2.4. Hypotheses Development

2.4.1. Work Motivation and Job Satisfaction

Work motivation plays a crucial role in shaping job satisfaction. Highly motivated employees tend to demonstrate greater enthusiasm, dedication, and persistence in their tasks, enhancing their overall job satisfaction. Conversely, low levels of motivation are often associated with disengagement and diminished satisfaction in the workplace.

Khairunnisa and Murwaningsih examined the relationship between work environment and motivation on job satisfaction at PT Adhi Karya (Persero), specifically within the Probowangi Toll Road Project (Khairunnisa & Murwaningsih, 2024). Using a simple random sampling method, the study involved 30 employees and found that work motivation significantly affected job satisfaction.

Supporting this perspective, William and Khuluq highlighted the mediating role of organizational culture in reinforcing the influence of motivation on job satisfaction (William & Khuluq, 2020). Their findings suggest increased motivation leads to higher employee satisfaction when a conducive organizational environment is supported. Furthermore, their study indicates that motivation affects satisfaction and contributes positively to the performance of civil servants, reinforcing its importance in public institutions.

These studies provide empirical evidence that motivation is a key determinant of job satisfaction. Motivated employees are more likely to find meaning and fulfillment in their work, leading to more positive attitudes and stronger organizational commitment. Based on the literature reviewed, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Work motivation has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction.

2.4.2. Work Motivation and Employee Performance

As introduced by Vroom, expectancy theory posits that employees are more likely to be motivated when they believe their efforts will lead to favorable performance evaluations (Aliyyah et al., 2021). These positive evaluations are generally expected to result in organizational rewards such as bonuses, promotions, or other forms of career advancement. In turn, these outcomes help fulfill personal goals and aspirations, reinforcing the cycle of motivation and performance.

Robbins defines motivation as the willingness to exert substantial effort toward organizational objectives, provided that the effort is perceived as a means to fulfill individual needs (Banin et al., 2020). This underscores the dual motivation orientation, serving institutional targets and personal fulfillment.

Further support for this relationship comes from Riyanto et al., who found that motivation significantly influences job satisfaction, which often acts as a precursor to improved performance (Riyanto et al., 2021). Their findings suggest that motivated employees display greater focus, initiative, and responsibility, all contributing to enhanced individual output.

These theoretical and empirical perspectives affirm that motivation is not merely an internal psychological condition but a key driver of performance outcomes in organizational settings. Based on the review, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Work motivation has a significant positive effect on employee performance.

2.4.3. Work Motivation and Employee Performance Mediated by Job Satisfaction

Much research has explored the relationship between work motivation and employee performance across diverse organizational settings. Workplace motivation, driven by internal and external factors, is widely recognized as a key determinant of productivity and a consistent predictor of individual success. Scholars have examined this relationship through various theoretical frameworks, often highlighting the role of mediating variables such as job satisfaction.

Dewi et al. tested the hypothesis that work motivation influences employee performance through job satisfaction as a mediating factor (Dewi et al., 2019). The findings revealed a strong correlation, emphasizing the importance of job satisfaction in strengthening the link between motivation and performance. The study reported a statistically significant result, with a t-count of 6.101 exceeding the t-table value of 1.998, confirming the mediating role of job satisfaction in this relationship.

This current study extends existing knowledge by offering empirical insights specific to the Secretariat of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) in Konawe Regency. Unlike prior research conducted in broader administrative institutions, such as the study by the Sukamara Regency government, this research provides a more context-specific understanding of how motivation and job satisfaction influence employee performance within a political and bureaucratic work environment. Enhanced research instruments and refined analytical methods improve the reliability of the findings, making them more applicable for comparative analysis and institutional policy development.

Further support for the mediating role of job satisfaction is provided by Komara and Nelliwati, who investigated the effects of compensation, motivation, and satisfaction on civil servant performance at the Bandung City Regional General Hospital (Komara & Nelliwati, 2014). Using path and correlation methods with 183 respondents, their analysis found that compensation directly influenced performance by 15.26 percent, with additional indirect effects through motivation and job satisfaction. Specifically, job satisfaction contributed 13.31 percent directly to performance and an additional 8.26 percent through its interactions with motivation and compensation, reinforcing its strategic importance.

Brahmasari and Suprayetno also examined how organizational culture, leadership, and motivation influence job satisfaction and performance (Brahmasari & Suprayetno, 2008). Using a census of 1,737 employees, the study found that while job satisfaction significantly impacted overall business success, motivation alone had a limited direct effect on organizational performance. Instead, leadership and corporate culture emerged as more powerful drivers. Nevertheless, job satisfaction remained a critical variable in shaping employee contributions.

Similarly, Prabu explored the relationship between motivation and job satisfaction among Muara Enim Regency's National Family Planning Coordinating Board employees (Prabu, 2005). Through multiple regression analysis, the study concluded that while basic needs were the dominant motivational driver, other internal and external variables also played significant roles in determining job satisfaction. Environmental conditions and educational attainment, however, showed minimal influence.

By situating this study within the specific setting of the DPRD Secretariat in Konawe Regency, it offers a more focused analysis of how motivation influences job satisfaction and, in turn, affects employee performance in a legislative institution. This context-specific approach addresses a gap in the literature, particularly concerning performance dynamics in bureaucratic and political environments. The use of improved research instruments and rigorous data analysis enhances the validity of the findings, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of performance-related behavior in public sector organizations.

Based on the theoretical and empirical insights reviewed, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3: Job satisfaction has a significant positive effect on employee performance.

H4: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between work motivation and employee performance.

3. Research Methodology

This study employs a quantitative research design supported by inferential statistical analysis to examine the relationships among work motivation, job satisfaction, and employee performance. The research was conducted at the Secretariat of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) in Konawe Regency, Indonesia. The population of this study consisted of all employees within the Secretariat, with a total sample of 53 respondents selected through a saturated sampling technique, considering the relatively small population size.

Data collection was conducted using structured questionnaires complemented by in-depth interviews to enhance the richness of the data and contextual understanding. The questionnaire was designed to measure three latent constructs, work motivation, job satisfaction, and employee performance, using multiple indicators adapted from validated instruments in previous studies.

The study analyzed the data using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) through SmartPLS 2.0 M3 software. This method is particularly suitable for exploratory and predictive modeling when dealing with complex relationships and small to moderate sample sizes. PLS-SEM allows for the simultaneous assessment of measurement models (outer models) and structural models (inner models), providing robust estimates of latent variable interactions.

The measurement model employed reflective indicators for each construct. Reflective indicators assume that the latent variable causes the observed measures, making them appropriate for constructs such as motivation and satisfaction. Convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite reliability were assessed to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the measurement model. All indicator loadings exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values surpassed 0.50, confirming the validity and reliability of the instruments used.

The structural model analysis evaluated the direct and indirect effects among variables, using bootstrapping techniques to test the significance of the path coefficients. The study also conducted R-squared (R^2) and Q-squared (Q^2) analyses to assess the model's explanatory power and predictive relevance. Furthermore, linearity assumption testing using SPSS 20.0 supported the model's validity by confirming linear relationships among the main variables.

The inclusion of mediation analysis allowed the study to explore whether job satisfaction is an intervening variable in the relationship between work motivation and employee performance. This was assessed by examining direct and indirect effects within the PLS framework, supported by t-statistics and p-values to determine statistical significance.

4. Results

4.1. Analysis of Inferential Statistical Data Through Outer Model Testing (Measurement Model)

The outer model testing, called the measurement model assessment, evaluates the constructs' reliability, validity, and associated indicators. This evaluation is based on three key criteria: convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite reliability. These criteria ensure that the indicators accurately represent the latent variables they are intended to measure.

The initial testing phase was conducted using SmartPLS 2.0 M3, which produced outer loading values for each indicator. These loadings indicate the strength of the relationship between each indicator and its underlying construct.

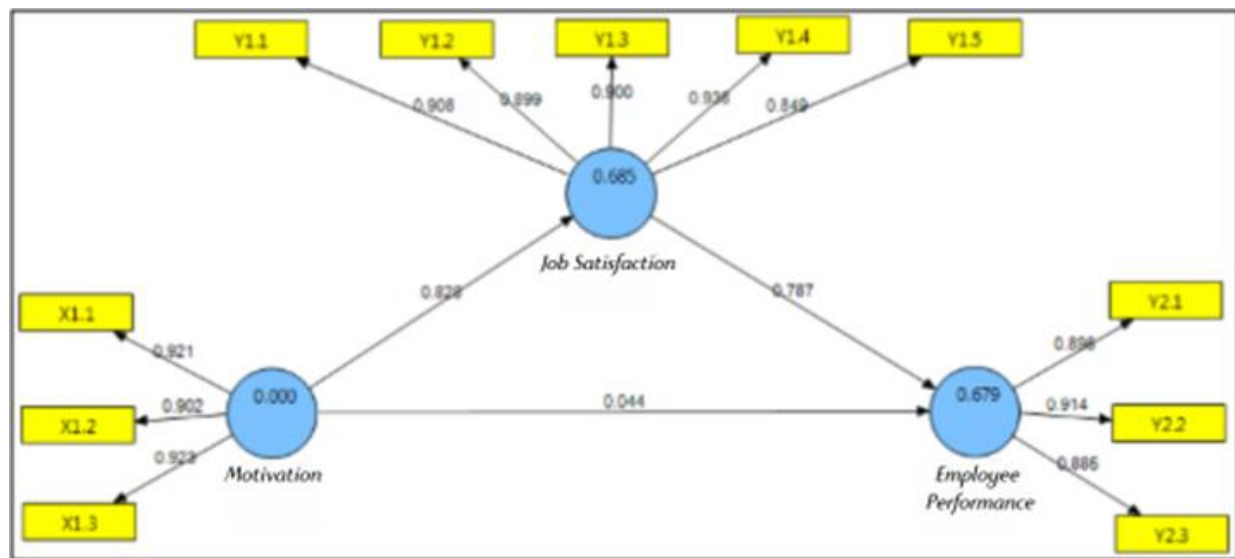


Figure 1. Outer Model Testing (Measurement Model)

The results presented in **Figure 1** show that all reflective indicators have outer loading values above the threshold of 0.50. This confirms that the indicators meet the minimum requirement for validity and are appropriately retained in the model. No indicator removal or re-specification was necessary, and the measurement model demonstrates acceptable reliability and construct validity.

4.2. Motivation Variable

The motivation construct was measured using three indicators: achievement requirements, affiliation needs, and the need for power. The outer model evaluation included tests for convergent validity, composite reliability, and discriminant validity, as summarized in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Unidimensionality Results for the Motivation Construct

Indicator	Coefficient	Standard Error	T-Statistics	Composite Reliability	AVE
Achievement Requirements	0.921	0.032	28.460	0.939	0.838
Affiliation Needs	0.902	0.039	22.912		
Need for Power	0.923	0.027	33.788		

Source: Primary Data Processed (2025)

All loading values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating strong convergent validity. The composite reliability score of 0.939 also exceeds the acceptable cut-off of 0.70, demonstrating that the indicators used to measure motivation are internally consistent and reliable.

To assess discriminant validity, the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for motivation, calculated at 0.915, is compared with its correlations with other constructs, such as job satisfaction and employee performance. Since the square root of AVE is greater than these inter-construct correlations, the motivation construct satisfies the criteria for discriminant validity.

4.3. Job Satisfaction Variables

The job satisfaction construct was measured using five indicators: salary satisfaction, promotion, supervision, the nature of the work, and co-worker relationships. **Table 2** presents the outer model results, including convergent validity, composite reliability, and discriminant validity.

Table 2. Unidimensionality Results for the Job Satisfaction Construct

Indicator	Coefficient	Standard Error	T-Statistics	Composite Reliability	AVE
Salary Satisfaction	0.908	0.038	23.763	0.955	0.808
Promotion	0.899	0.036	24.750		
Supervisor	0.900	0.042	21.460		
The Work Itself	0.938	0.022	43.525		
Co-workers	0.849	0.066	12.837		

Source: Primary Data Processed (2025)

All indicator loadings exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming good convergent validity. The composite reliability value of 0.955 is well above the acceptable minimum of 0.70, indicating strong internal consistency across the indicators.

Discriminant validity is assessed by comparing the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) square root for job satisfaction with the construct's correlations with other latent variables. The AVE for job satisfaction is 0.808, and its square root is 0.899. Since this value is greater than the correlations between job satisfaction and other constructs such as motivation and performance, discriminant validity is confirmed. These results indicate that job satisfaction is a distinct and well-measured construct within the model.

4.4. Employee Performance Variable

The employee performance construct was measured using three indicators: quantity of work, quality of output, and timeliness. **Table 3** summarizes the outer model assessment results, including convergent validity, composite reliability, and discriminant validity tests.

Table 3. Unidimensionality Results for the Employee Performance Construct

Indicator	Coefficient	Standard Error	T-Statistics	Composite Reliability	AVE
Quantity	0.896	0.028	31.938	0.926	0.807
Quality	0.914	0.025	36.575		
Time	0.885	0.042	21.313		

Source: Primary Data Processed (2025)

All indicator loadings exceed the acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory convergent validity. The composite reliability value of 0.926 also meets the recommended criterion, confirming the internal consistency of the employee performance indicators.

Discriminant validity was assessed by comparing the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) square root with inter-construct correlations. The AVE for the employee performance construct is 0.807, and its square root is 0.898. Since this value is higher than the correlations between employee performance and other latent constructs (motivation and job satisfaction), the discriminant validity of the employee performance construct is confirmed. These findings

suggest that the construct is statistically distinct and well-defined within the measurement model.

4.5. Linearity Assumption Testing

The Curve Fit method was employed using SPSS 20.0 software to assess the assumption of linearity. The principle of parsimony was applied as the basis for determining linearity, where a model is considered linear if the linear equation is statistically significant. If the linear model is non-significant, the complete model specification, consisting of alternative functions such as quadratic, cubic, inverse, logarithmic, power, compound, growth, logistic, and exponential, is evaluated. If none of these models are significant, the relationship is still classified as linear for analysis.

The results of the linearity tests for the key variable relationships are presented in **Table 4**.

Table 4. Linearity Assumption Testing

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Significance Value ($\alpha = 0.05$)	Test Result
Motivation (X1)	Job Satisfaction (Z1)	0.000	Significant Linearity
Job Satisfaction (Z1)	Employee Performance (Y2)	0.000	Significant Linearity
Motivation (X1)	Employee Performance (Y2)	0.000	Significant Linearity

Source: Primary Data Processed (2025)

The results in **Table 4** confirm that all examined relationships meet the assumption of linearity, as indicated by significance values below the 0.05 threshold. This finding validates using linear regression paths in subsequent analysis, supporting the structural model's reliability within the PLS framework.

4.6. Testing of Structural or Inner Models

The structural model, also called the inner model, was evaluated by analyzing the path coefficients between latent variables. This analysis includes R-squared (R^2) values to assess explanatory power and the Q-squared (Q^2) value to assess predictive relevance. The t-statistics generated through bootstrapping procedures were used to test the statistical significance of each path.

Table 5. R-Square Calculation Results

Construct	R-Square (R^2)
Job Satisfaction	0.685
Employee Performance	0.679

Source: Primary Data Processed (2025)

The R-squared values indicate that the independent variables in the model can explain 68.5% of the variance in job satisfaction and 67.9% of the variance in employee performance. These values suggest a substantial level of explanatory power.

To evaluate the model's predictive accuracy, the Q-square (Q^2) statistic was calculated using the following formula (Hair et al., 2012):

$$Q^2 = 1 - (1 - R_1^2) \times (1 - R_2^2)$$

Substituting the values from Table 5:

$$Q^2 = 1 - (1 - 0.685) \times (1 - 0.679)$$

$$Q^2 = 1 - (0.315 \times 0.321) = 1 - 0.101 = 0.899$$

The resulting Q-square value of 0.899 indicates that the model has high predictive relevance. In other words, the structural model can explain approximately 89.9% of the variance in the outcome variables, confirming its robustness and suitability for hypothesis testing.

4.7. Hypothesis Testing

This study tested four hypotheses using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach to evaluate the structural relationships among variables. The PLS method is suitable for analyzing complex models involving multiple latent variables and mediating effects. Hypotheses were tested by examining the path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values to determine the significance of each relationship.

Anderson et al. used a t-statistic value greater than 1.960 at a 95% confidence level ($\alpha = 0.05$) as the threshold for hypothesis acceptance (Anderson et al., 2000). The results of the hypothesis testing are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

Relationship	Path Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value	Conclusion
Motivation → Job Satisfaction	0.828	10.183	0.000	Significant
Motivation → Employee Performance	0.044	0.304	0.761	Not Significant
Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0.787	5.989	0.000	Significant
Motivation → Job Satisfaction → Performance	0.652	6.329	0.000	Significant (Mediated)

Source: Primary Data Processed (2025)

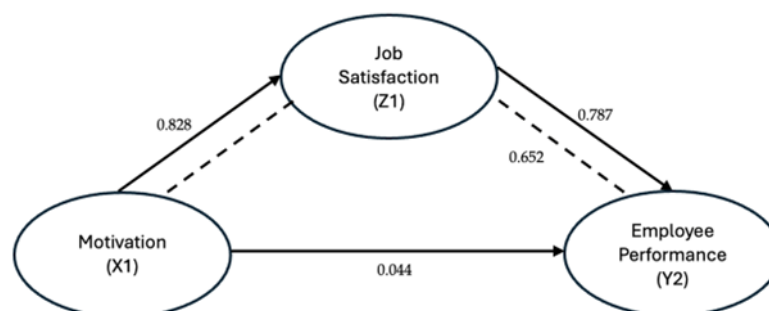


Figure 2. Structural Model Path Analysis (Direct Effects)

Table 6 and **Figure 2** results reveal significant and non-significant relationships among the variables.

First, work motivation has a strong and statistically significant positive effect on job satisfaction, as indicated by a path coefficient of 0.828, a t-statistic of 10.183, and a p-value of 0.000. This supports Hypothesis 1 (H1) and confirms that higher motivation employees report greater job satisfaction.

Second, the direct effect of motivation on employee performance is not statistically significant, with a path coefficient of 0.044, a t-statistic of 0.304, and a p-value of 0.761. This leads to rejecting Hypothesis 2 (H2), indicating that motivation alone does not directly enhance employee performance. It implies the presence of an intervening variable that may explain the relationship more comprehensively.

Third, job satisfaction significantly affects employee performance, with a path coefficient of 0.787, a t-statistic of 5.989, and a p-value of 0.000. This supports Hypothesis 3 (H3), suggesting that employees who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to perform effectively.

Finally, the mediation analysis confirms that job satisfaction plays a significant role in mediating the relationship between motivation and performance. The path coefficient of 0.652, t-statistic of 6.329, and p-value of 0.000 validate Hypothesis 4 (H4). This finding underscores the importance of job satisfaction as a critical mechanism through which motivation influences performance. In other words, motivated employees are more likely to perform well when motivated by job satisfaction.

4.8. Indirect Influence Analysis

The results of the indirect effect analysis are presented in **Table 7**, which highlights the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between motivation and employee performance.

Table 7. Indirect Influence Among Research Variables

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Mediating Variable	Path Coefficient	Remarks
Motivation (X1)	Employee Performance (Y2)	Job Satisfaction (Z1)	0.652	Significant

Source: Primary Data Processed (2025)

The analysis of indirect effects assumes that for an indirect relationship to be considered significant, all paths involved in the causal chain must also be significant. In this case, the effect of motivation on job satisfaction and the effect of job satisfaction on employee performance were statistically significant in the earlier stages of analysis. As a result, the indirect effect of motivation on employee performance, mediated by job satisfaction, is also significant.

The path coefficient for this indirect relationship is 0.652, indicating a substantial mediating effect. This supports the conclusion that job satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between motivation and performance, a condition known as full mediation. In practical terms, motivation alone is insufficient to enhance performance unless high job satisfaction accompanies it.

These findings suggest that in the context of the DPRD Secretariat of Konawe Regency, job satisfaction serves as a crucial psychological mechanism through which motivation is translated

into improved employee performance. Therefore, efforts to enhance performance should not focus solely on motivational strategies but address factors contributing to employee satisfaction.

4.9. Respondents' Perception

This section presents a comparative analysis of indicator means and outer loadings derived from the PLS analysis. The discussion focuses on identifying the indicators that significantly contribute to each latent variable. Outer loading values indicate the strength of the relationship between each indicator and its associated construct. In contrast, mean values reflect the respondents' overall perceptions of the statements used in the questionnaire.

Table 8. Respondents' Perception

Variable	Indicator	Loading Factor	Mean
Motivation (X1)	Achievement Requirements (X1.1)	0.921	4.18
	Affiliation Needs (X1.2)	0.902	4.15
	Need for Power (X1.3)	0.923	4.18
Job Satisfaction (Z1)	Salary Satisfaction (Z1.1)	0.908	3.93
	Promotion (Z1.2)	0.899	4.02
	Supervisor (Z1.3)	0.900	3.97
	The Work Itself (Z1.4)	0.938	3.95
	Coworkers (Z1.5)	0.849	3.69
Employee Performance (Y2)	Quantity (Y2.1)	0.896	3.63
	Quality (Y2.2)	0.914	3.87
	Time (Y2.3)	0.885	3.78

Source: Primary Data Processed (2025)

The results in **Table 8** highlight several noteworthy insights. For the motivation variable (X1), the indicator "Need for Power" (X1.3) recorded the highest outer loading at 0.923, closely followed by "Achievement Requirements" (X1.1) at 0.921. This suggests that the motivation construct is primarily shaped by respondents' emphasis on personal influence and goal attainment. These two dimensions are seen as central motivators in the context of public sector employment at the DPRD Secretariat.

Regarding the job satisfaction variable (Z1), the indicator "The Work Itself" (Z1.4) achieved the highest loading factor at 0.938, signifying its strong influence in shaping job satisfaction. However, the highest mean score was recorded for "Promotion" (Z1.2) at 4.02, indicating that while intrinsic factors such as job content drive satisfaction structurally, employees still place a high subjective value on advancement opportunities. This contrast points to a distinction between the theoretical strength of satisfaction drivers and employees' practical aspirations.

For the employee performance variable (Y2), the indicator "Quality" (Y2.2) had both the highest loading (0.914) and the highest mean (3.87). This alignment confirms that the quality of work is the strongest statistical determinant of performance and the most valued by respondents. It suggests that employees recognize and prioritize output quality as a key indicator of their performance effectiveness.

In summary, the analysis reveals congruence between structural contributions and employee perceptions in most cases, particularly concerning quality in performance. However, for variables like job satisfaction, perceptual emphasis on promotion contrasts with the stronger

statistical influence of intrinsic job characteristics, offering valuable insight for human resource and institutional policy development.

5. Discussion

5.1. The Effect of Work Motivation on Job Satisfaction

The findings of this study align with existing literature and established theoretical frameworks, confirming that motivation is a key determinant of job satisfaction. The statistical analysis yielded a path coefficient of 0.828, a t-statistic of 10.183 (well above the critical value of 1.960), and a p-value of 0.000, all indicating a strong and statistically significant relationship. These results support Hypothesis 1 (H1) and affirm that motivation plays a substantial role in shaping employees' levels of job satisfaction at the Konawe Regency DPRD Secretariat.

Motivation helps explain the variance in job satisfaction across the Secretariat, particularly about employees' participation in public sector functions such as educational outreach and community engagement initiatives in Konawe Regency. When employees feel motivated, their sense of involvement and purpose in these broader societal contributions increases, which enhances their overall satisfaction at work.

Among the three motivational indicators used in this study, the need for power emerged as the most influential factor, with an outer loading value of 0.923. This suggests that employees are primarily driven by intrinsic authority, leadership, and responsibility aspirations. The strong presence of power-oriented motivation reflects an organizational culture in which individuals value recognition, influence, and structured advancement. These findings suggest that employees are motivated by the prospect of attaining positions of influence, where they can take on greater responsibilities and be recognized for their contributions.

The perceived alignment between personal achievement and institutional goals further reinforces this motivation. The Konawe Regency DPRD Secretariat emphasizes performance-based advancement, which provides tangible incentives for employees to pursue excellence. Opportunities for promotion and increased responsibility are motivating factors that contribute to satisfaction and engagement. These observations are consistent with the conclusions of previous studies, which found no significant direct effect of motivation on performance but acknowledged its indirect influence through mediating variables such as job satisfaction (Brahmasari & Suprayetno, 2008; Komara & Nelliwati, 2014).

In this study, motivation indirectly affects employee performance through job satisfaction, with a path coefficient of 0.652. This highlights the mediating role of satisfaction in translating motivation into improved performance outcomes. In other words, motivation, whether driven by internal or external factors, is insufficient. Its effectiveness is fully realized when employees also experience high job satisfaction. This confirms that job satisfaction is a full mediator, supporting the argument that performance is enhanced when a fulfilling and supportive work environment complements motivation.

5.2. The Effect of Work Motivation on Employee Performance

The direct effect of work motivation on employee performance was examined using inferential statistical analysis. The results yielded a path coefficient of 0.044, a t-statistic of 0.304, and a p-value of 0.761. Since the t-statistic is far below the critical value of 1.960, and the p-value exceeds the standard significance level of 0.05, the relationship is not statistically significant. These findings lead to the rejection of Hypothesis 2 (H2), indicating that motivation does not directly and significantly affect employee performance at the Konawe Regency DPRD Secretariat.

Although the path coefficient is positive, suggesting a potential directional relationship, its low magnitude and lack of statistical significance imply that motivation alone is insufficient to enhance employee performance. This suggests the need to consider other contributing factors, such as organizational incentives, performance-based rewards, or workplace conditions, that may better explain variations in performance outcomes. In this context, job satisfaction plays a more central mediating role in translating motivation into performance improvements.

These findings are consistent with those of Fransiska and Tupti, who examined the relationship between motivation and employee performance at the North Labuhanbatu Population and Civil Registration Office (Fransiska & Tupti, 2020). Their study also rejected the alternative hypothesis, with a t-count value of 0.962 falling below the t-table value of 1.701. This suggests that motivation alone does not significantly determine employee performance in similar public institutions and must be supported by other structural or psychological factors.

Theoretically, motivation is often associated with enhanced performance. Employees with high levels of motivation are typically expected to exhibit greater initiative, effort, and persistence in achieving organizational goals; however, effective performance results from motivation, individual competence, and access to necessary resources. Motivation may drive effort, but performance outcomes remain limited without corresponding skills or support systems.

Descriptive analysis of the current study reveals that respondents perceive motivation as insufficient overall. Among the motivation indicators, the Need for Power had the highest average score (4.18), suggesting that employees at the DPRD Secretariat associate motivation with opportunities for authority, leadership, and career advancement. While this may be a valid form of intrinsic motivation, its effectiveness is contingent on how such aspirations are channeled. If the desire for power is not grounded in professional development or institutional goals, it may result in unfocused ambition and declining performance.

In summary, the findings underscore that motivation, while important, does not directly translate into improved performance. Other variables, such as job satisfaction, organizational support, or perceived reward fairness, likely mediate its influence. Therefore, improving employee performance requires an integrated approach beyond motivational efforts and addresses the broader ecosystem in which employees operate.

5.3. The Effect of Work Motivation on Employee Performance Mediated by Job Satisfaction

The findings of this study demonstrate that employee motivation plays an essential role in improving performance at the Konawe Regency DPRD Secretariat, particularly when high levels of job satisfaction accompany it. The indirect effect of motivation on performance, mediated by job satisfaction, produced a significant path coefficient of 0.652, indicating that motivation, in and of itself, is insufficient to enhance performance unless it contributes to higher employee satisfaction.

This result highlights that intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors are necessary to foster job satisfaction. Intrinsic factors may include personal ambition and a sense of purpose, while extrinsic factors could involve recognition, fair compensation, and supportive leadership. When these elements are present, job satisfaction increases, serving as a psychological mechanism that transforms motivational energy into improved work performance.

The study supports this conclusion through the strength of the relationships among the relevant constructs. The path coefficient between motivation and job satisfaction was 0.828, while the coefficient between job satisfaction and performance was 0.787. In contrast, the direct effect of motivation on performance was relatively weak at 0.044 and not statistically

significant. These findings confirm that job satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between motivation and performance, thereby validating Hypotheses 3 and 4 (H3 and H4).

The descriptive analysis also reinforces these results. The average employee performance score was 3.87, suggesting that staff members at the DPRD Secretariat generally perceive themselves as performing well. Moreover, the outer loading for the “quality” indicator within the performance variable was 0.914, the highest among performance indicators. This implies that employees consider the quality of their work as the most important dimension of performance and are likely to be driven to maintain or improve it when they experience job satisfaction.

These findings are consistent with previous studies that have emphasized the mediating role of job satisfaction in the motivation–performance nexus. Dewi et al. found that job satisfaction significantly strengthens the impact of motivation on performance among employees in service-based institutions (Dewi et al., 2019). Similarly, Komara and Nelliwati demonstrated that the indirect effect of motivation on performance is more substantial than its direct effect, reinforcing the idea that motivation enhances performance primarily through improved job satisfaction (Komara & Nelliwati, 2014). Brahmasari and Suprayetno further observed that motivation alone may not directly influence organizational performance but contributes indirectly through job satisfaction and organizational culture (Brahmasari & Suprayetno, 2008). These studies align with the current research, particularly in the public sector context, where bureaucratic structures often require more than just motivational incentives to achieve high performance.

The findings suggest that meaningful and satisfying work experiences must support employee motivation to improve performance. When employees feel valued, have opportunities to grow, and see their work as meaningful, their motivation translates into higher productivity and service quality. This underscores the strategic importance of nurturing job satisfaction as a mediating factor in workforce development policies and performance management systems within public sector institutions.

6. Conclusion

The findings of this study underscore the significant role of employee motivation in enhancing job satisfaction at the Konawe Regency DPRD Secretariat. Variations in job satisfaction levels among employees can be largely attributed to differences in their motivational drive. In this regard, increased motivation contributes to personal and professional fulfillment and supports broader institutional functions, including contributions to national education and community service initiatives within the region.

The study also reveals a strong and positive relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance. Employees who are more satisfied with their jobs tend to demonstrate higher levels of commitment and productivity, leading to improved service delivery. However, the direct effect of motivation on performance was statistically insignificant. This suggests that motivation alone cannot enhance performance outcomes unless other enabling conditions mediate it, such as a supportive work environment, cohesive teamwork, and constructive leadership.

Moreover, the research highlights the importance of combining intrinsic motivation with extrinsic rewards. While intrinsic factors, such as a desire for achievement or responsibility, form the foundation of sustained engagement, extrinsic elements such as financial incentives, recognition, and supervisor support play a complementary role. These factors create a work environment where employees feel valued, empowered, and driven to perform at their best.

The study concludes that high motivation levels contribute to greater job satisfaction, significantly enhancing employee performance. Fostering a culture that promotes satisfaction through well-targeted motivational strategies is essential to improving institutional productivity and service quality. These strategies may include structural interventions initiated by management and opportunities for employees to pursue meaningful and self-directed professional goals.

7. Acknowledgment

The authors would like to express their sincere appreciation to all individuals who contributed to completing this research. Special thanks are extended to the respondents for their willingness to share their time, insights, and experiences, greatly enriching the study. The authors are also grateful for the constructive input provided by colleagues throughout the research process, particularly during the stages of instrument development, data interpretation, and manuscript preparation.

8. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author has declared no potential conflicts of interest regarding this article's research, authorship, and/or publication.

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