

The Influence of Work Motivation and Supervision on Employee Performance through Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of work motivation and supervision on employee performance through job satisfaction at the Population Control and Family Planning Office (DPPKB) of East Kutai Regency. A quantitative approach was employed using census sampling technique involving 84 employees. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS software. The results reveal that: (1) work motivation positively and significantly affects job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.263$, $p = 0.039$); (2) supervision has a stronger positive effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.409$, $p = 0.000$); (3) work motivation does not directly affect employee performance ($\beta = 0.136$, $p = 0.248$); (4) supervision does not directly affect employee performance ($\beta = 0.140$, $p = 0.186$); (5) job satisfaction is the strongest predictor of employee performance ($\beta = 0.565$, $p = 0.000$); (6) job satisfaction does not significantly mediate the work motivation–performance relationship ($\beta = 0.149$, $p = 0.056$); and (7) job satisfaction fully mediates the supervision–performance relationship ($\beta = 0.231$, $p = 0.001$). These findings suggest that improving public-sector employee performance requires a humanistic supervisory approach centered on employee psychological well-being.

Keywords: Work Motivation; Supervision; Job Satisfaction; Employee Performance; SEM-PLS

Introduction

Human resources are a key factor in achieving organizational goals because the success of programs and services is determined by the quality of the people performing the work. Armstrong & Taylor (2020) emphasize that the focus of human resource management lies in increasing organizational effectiveness through targeted management of people and work relationships. Employee performance is a crucial measure in public organizations because it reflects work results that support agency accountability. The Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) framework explains that optimal performance occurs when organizations build capabilities, strengthen motivation, and provide opportunities for participation (Boon et al.,

2019). The Population Control and Family Planning Office (DPPKB) of East Kutai Regency plays a strategic role in implementing population control programs. The 2024 DPPKB Government Agency Performance Accountability Report noted limited human resources in the field as a major operational constraint. Repeated performance evaluations, including direct field checks, indicated persistent issues with employee attendance and task completion.

Work motivation is a crucial factor related to performance because it serves as a driver of work behavior. Hasibuan (2020) defines motivation as the process of providing a driving force that creates work enthusiasm so that someone is willing to work effectively and in an integrated manner. Supervision is also a crucial managerial factor because it ensures that activities are carried out according to standards. Siagian (2018) defines supervision as the process of observing and measuring operational implementation against established standards. Job satisfaction is understood as a positive emotional state arising from the assessment of work or work experiences (Luthans, 2016). Previous research by Riyanto et al. (2021) showed that motivation and job satisfaction jointly have a positive effect on employee performance, while Tambunan et al. (2025) explained the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between motivation and performance in government agencies. Based on field phenomena and gaps in previous research, this study aims to simultaneously examine the influence of work motivation and supervision on employee performance through job satisfaction as a mediating variable in the East Kutai Regency Employee Relations Office (DPPKB).

Literature Review

Work motivation is the internal and external drives that direct work behavior toward fulfilling employee needs in the workplace (Luthans, 2021). Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory distinguishes motivating factors such as recognition, responsibility, and achievement, which are sources of intrinsic satisfaction, from hygiene factors such as pay and working conditions, which prevent dissatisfaction. Ryan & Deci's (2017) Self-Determination Theory explains that fulfilling the needs for autonomy, competence, and social connectedness forms intrinsic motivation that drives work engagement and quality performance. Supervision is the process of monitoring work activities, comparing results to standards, and taking corrective action if deviations occur (Williams, 2020). Control Theory explains that satisfaction increases when work standards are clear and oversight mechanisms support goal achievement (Edwards, 2019). Equity Theory places fairness as the basis for employee assessment of organizational treatment, so fair and consistent supervision promotes job satisfaction (Greenberg, 2017).

Job satisfaction is a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the assessment of work experiences that influences employee attitudes and engagement (Luthans, 2016). Attitude-Behavior Theory explains that job satisfaction, as a form of attitude, will encourage productive

work behavior in the form of increased effort and effectiveness (Colquitt et al., 2021). Employee performance is influenced by motivation because motivation provides energy and direction for work behavior, which determines the level of effort required to achieve performance standards (Lussier & Hendon, 2019). This research's conceptual framework positions job satisfaction as a mediator in the relationship between work motivation and supervision on employee performance.

Method

This research used a quantitative approach with an explanatory approach. The study was conducted at the Population Control and Family Planning Office of East Kutai Regency in 2025–2026. The study population consisted of all 84 active employees of the East Kutai Regency Population and Family Planning Office (DPPKB), consisting of 40 Civil Servants, 8 Prospective Civil Servants, and 36 Government Employees with Employment Contracts. The sampling technique used was a census, involving all members of the population as respondents. The research instrument was a closed-ended questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale measuring four variables: work motivation (X_1) with 5 indicators, supervision (X_2) with 5 indicators, job satisfaction (Y_1) with 5 indicators, and employee performance (Y_2) with 6 indicators. Data were collected by distributing the questionnaire directly to all employees. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with the assistance of SmartPLS software. The analysis stages include evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) which includes convergent validity tests (outer loading and AVE), discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion), and construct reliability (Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability); as well as evaluation of the structural model (inner model) which includes R-Square assessment, direct influence testing, and indirect influence testing through bootstrapping procedures to test mediation effects.

Results and Discussion

Outer Model

The results of the outer loading test showed that all indicators met the validity criteria after eliminating two indicators that did not meet the standards ($Y_{1.4}$ and $X_{1.6}$). The AVE values for the Supervision (0.536), Job Satisfaction (0.518), and Employee Performance (0.512) variables were above the threshold of 0.50, while Work Motivation had a marginal AVE value of 0.493, which was still acceptable. All variables had Cronbach's Alpha > 0.70 and Composite Reliability > 0.80, indicating excellent reliability (Table 1).

Table 1. Results of Reliability and AVEv Tests

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Work Motivation (X ₁)	0,753	0,828	0,493
Supervision (X ₂)	0,780	0,850	0,536
Job Satisfaction (Y ₁)	0,762	0,841	0,518
Employee Performance (Y ₂)	0,807	0,862	0,512

Source: Processed Primary Data (SmartPLS), 2026

Inner Model

The R-Square value for the Job Satisfaction variable of 0.380 (weak-moderate) explains 38.0% of the variation in job satisfaction explained by work motivation and supervision. The R-Square value for the Employee Performance variable of 0.557 (moderate) indicates that 55.7% of the variation in performance is explained jointly by the three predictor variables.

Table 2. Results of Direct Effects Test

H	Relationship Path	β	T-Stat	P-Value	Ket.
H ₁	Work Motivation → Job Satisfaction	0,263	2,067	0,039	Sig.
H ₂	Supervision → Job Satisfaction	0,409	3,575	0,000	Sig.
H ₃	Work Motivation → Employee Performance	0,136	1,154	0,248	Tdk Sig.
H ₄	Supervision → Employee Performance	0,140	1,322	0,186	Tdk Sig.
H ₅	Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0,565	7,076	0,000	Sig.

Source: Processed Primary Data (SmartPLS Bootstrapping), 2026

Table 3. Results of Indirect Effects Test

H	Mediation Pathway	β	T-Stat	P-Value	Ket.
H ₆	MK → KK → KP	0,149	1,915	0,056	Tdk Sig.
H ₇	PW → KK → KP	0,231	3,333	0,001	Sig. (Full)

Description: MK = Work Motivation; PW = Supervision; KK = Job Satisfaction; KP = Employee Performance

Source: Processed Primary Data (SmartPLS Bootstrapping), 2026

The Influence of Work Motivation on Job Satisfaction

The first hypothesis (H_1) was accepted with a path coefficient of $\beta = 0.263$ and a P-Value = 0.039 (<0.05). Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction of DPPKB employees in East Kutai Regency. This result aligns with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory in Luthans (2021) that intrinsic motivating factors such as recognition and achievement are the main sources of job satisfaction. Khan et al. (2019) and Sudiarditha et al. (2020) also demonstrated a significant positive relationship between work motivation and job satisfaction in the public sector.

The Effect of Supervision on Job Satisfaction

The second hypothesis (H_2) was accepted with a path coefficient of $\beta = 0.409$ and a P-Value = 0.000. Supervision had a positive and highly significant effect on job satisfaction, with a more dominant impact than work motivation. These findings indicate that the supervisory mechanism at the East Kutai Regency DPPKB, characterized by transparency, fairness, and clear standards, successfully created a sense of security for employees. Williams (2020) explained that fair supervision reduces uncertainty and strengthens positive employee perceptions. Abdullah et al. (2020) and Nartey (2018) confirmed that effective supervision increases employee job satisfaction.

The Influence of Work Motivation and Supervision on Employee Performance

The third hypothesis (H_3) was rejected ($\beta = 0.136$, $p = 0.248$), and the fourth hypothesis (H_4) was also rejected ($\beta = 0.140$, $p = 0.186$). Work motivation and supervision did not have a direct, significant effect on employee performance. This finding indicates that high motivation and intense supervision are not strong enough to drive performance improvement without intermediary variables. Lussier & Hendon (2019) explain that motivation provides energy for work behavior, but hard work alone does not guarantee standard results without adequate work environment support. Ibrahim et al. (2020) found that formal supervision does not always have a significant effect in organizations with established job descriptions.

The Influence of Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance

The fifth hypothesis (H_5) was accepted with the highest path coefficient in the model ($\beta = 0.565$, $p = 0.000$). Job satisfaction has a positive and highly significant effect on employee performance, making it the most dominant predictor. Luthans (2016) explained that emotional stability from positive job assessments allows employees to work with focus. Robbins & Judge (2021) stated that satisfied employees exhibit a stronger achievement orientation. Al-Haroon & Al-Qahtani (2020) and Riyanto et al. (2021) also demonstrated the significant influence of job satisfaction on performance through increased commitment and work engagement.

The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction

The sixth hypothesis (H_6) was rejected ($\beta = 0.149$, $p = 0.056 > 0.05$): job satisfaction was not proven to significantly mediate the relationship between work motivation and employee performance. This indicates that satisfaction derived from motivation is more of a personal psychological satisfaction that is not strong enough to transform motivational drives into measurable performance outputs.

The seventh hypothesis (H_7) was accepted ($\beta = 0.231$, $p = 0.001$): job satisfaction significantly mediates the effect of supervision on employee performance. Full mediation means that supervision does not have a direct, effective pathway to performance; instead, it must first create job satisfaction, which then drives performance. Adeyemi (2019) and Chukwuma & Osei (2020) demonstrated that transparent supervision increases employee trust, which engenders satisfaction and encourages voluntary performance improvement.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis, it was concluded that: (1) work motivation has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction; (2) supervision has a positive and highly significant effect on job satisfaction, with a more dominant impact; (3) work motivation does not have a significant direct effect on employee performance; (4) supervision does not have a significant direct effect on employee performance; (5) job satisfaction is the strongest predictor of employee performance; (6) job satisfaction does not significantly mediate the relationship between work motivation and performance; and (7) job satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between supervision and employee performance.

Recommendations for the leadership of the East Kutai Regency DPPKB: (1) prioritize job satisfaction management as the primary strategy for achieving performance targets; (2) transform the supervisory style from an inspection approach to a humanistic coaching approach based on two-way dialogue; (3) improve the transparent career and promotion system so that high motivation can be converted into quality performance; (4) improve the quality of corrective actions so that responses to problems are more specific and comprehensive. For future researchers, it is recommended to include competency or organizational culture variables, expand the research object, and use mixed methods.

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