

The Effect Of Work Motivation On Employee Performance With Job Satisfaction As A Mediating Variable

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Abstract

Human resources play a strategic role in the hospitality industry because service quality is largely determined by employee performance. Three-star hotels in Bandar Lampung face intense competition, fluctuations in occupancy rates, and high service demands, making it important to improve employee performance. One factor that influences employee performance is work motivation, but high motivation does not necessarily result in optimal performance without the support of job satisfaction. Therefore, job satisfaction is seen as a variable that mediates the influence of work motivation on employee performance. This study uses a quantitative approach with purposive sampling techniques for employees of 3-star hotels in Bandar Lampung. Data collection was conducted by distributing questionnaires to 114 respondents who met the research criteria. The data obtained was then analyzed using Partial Least Squares (PLS)-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the help of SmartPLS 4.0 software. The results of this study indicate that it supports the proposed hypothesis, namely that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at 3-star hotels in Bandar Lampung. Furthermore, job satisfaction was found to mediate the relationship between work motivation and employee performance at 3-star hotels in Bandar Lampung. These findings imply that hotel management needs to improve working conditions, increase job satisfaction through fair systems, and strengthen training and interpersonal skills in order to encourage optimal employee performance.

Keywords: Work Motivation, Job Satisfaction, Employee Performance



INTRODUCTION

The hotel industry in Indonesia is rapidly developing alongside the growth of tourism and public mobility, leading to increased competition among hotels in providing quality service (Nurchahyo et al., 2017). The success of a hotel in maintaining service quality heavily relies on the performance of human resources as the primary operational implementers and creators of customer experiences (Kamel & Hassanain, 2022; Syahreza et al., 2023). In Bandar Lampung City, the presence of 13 three-star hotels makes this segment relevant for study, particularly regarding the role of employee performance in supporting service quality and hotel competitiveness.

Three-star hotels in Bandar Lampung City are a highly competitive segment because they are the primary choice for business and family travelers seeking quality service at a mid-range price. This segment also has high operational complexity due to the large volume of guests and the high intensity of employee-customer interactions. On the other hand, the hospitality industry faces challenges in employee retention, particularly in front-line positions, with relatively high turnover rates (Hilya & Ferdian, 2024). The changing expectations of the workforce, who desire a supportive work environment, career development opportunities, and a positive work culture, are increasingly demanding that hotel management improve human resource management (Luthans, 2011).

The performance of the hotel industry is reflected thru the Room Occupancy Rate (ROR), which is an important indicator of market demand, operational effectiveness, and hotel competitiveness (BPS Lampung, 2024). Fluctuations in ROR directly impact revenue, workforce stability, and managerial strategies. Data on hotel occupancy rates in Lampung Province for the period 2020–2024 show an unstable pattern due to post-pandemic recovery and changing tourism trends, which requires further study as a basis for understanding the current state of the hotel industry.

The Hotel Room Occupancy Rate (TPK) in Bandar Lampung has shown significant fluctuations post-pandemic. After peaking at 55.67% in 2022, the TPK declined to 53.52% in 2023 and then sharply declined again to 47.26% in 2024 (BPS Lampung, 2024). This decline indicates structural pressures in the hotel industry, impacting operational stability, including revenue, workload, and service quality. These conditions require hotels, particularly three-star hotels, to improve employee performance amid operational constraints. However, fluctuating occupancy rates have the potential to increase workloads and decrease employee motivation and job satisfaction. Therefore, internal factors such as work motivation, job satisfaction, and work climate are crucial in

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maintaining employee performance (Riyanto & Hermawan, 2020). This aligns with the concept of ethical work climate proposed by Karatepe and Tekinkus (2006), which states that employee perceptions of the work environment influence satisfaction, commitment, and performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on the relationship between work motivation, job satisfaction, and employee performance has been extensively conducted but yields inconsistent results. Studies by Azmy & Sigalingging (2025) in the manufacturing industry and Wardiansyah *et al.* (2024) in the retail sector found that work motivation has a significant positive influence on employee performance, both directly and through job satisfaction. These findings support the theory that fulfilling employees' basic and psychological needs drives productive work behavior.

However, contrasting findings were presented by Wijaya & Prawitowati (2023), who found that work motivation does not significantly affect employee performance, and job satisfaction does not significantly mediate this relationship. This inconsistency indicates a gap that requires further investigation, particularly regarding the role of mediating variables in strengthening the relationship.

Furthermore, the majority of previous studies have focused on the manufacturing, government, and banking sectors. Research specifically examining this dynamic in the hospitality industry, particularly in developing regions like Bandar Lampung, remains limited. The hospitality industry possesses unique characteristics with high pressure on front-line employees and dynamic occupancy fluctuations, making motivation and job satisfaction more crucial variables compared to other sectors. This study addresses this gap by testing the model of work motivation's effect on employee performance through job satisfaction using empirical data from 3-star hotel employees.

The theoretical framework of this study integrates work motivation theory from Elamalki *et al.* (2024), grounded in the *Hierarchy of Needs* and *ERG Theory*; job satisfaction concepts from Hanaysha and Tahir (2016); and employee performance theory developed by Bashir *et al.* (2020), which includes dimensions of service excellence and customer interaction.



METHODOLOGY

This research employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory survey design to examine the causal relationships between variables. The population in this study comprises all employees working at 3-star hotels in Bandar Lampung.

The sampling technique used is non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling method. The respondent criteria established are employees who have worked for a minimum of 6 months and are at least 17 years old, assuming they have sufficient experience to assess working conditions. Based on sample size calculations referencing Hair *et al.* (multiplied by 5-10 times the number of indicators), the sample used in this study consists of 114 respondents.

Data collection was conducted using a closed questionnaire with a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). The research instrument measures three main variables: Work Motivation (adapted from Elamalki *et al.*, 2024), Job Satisfaction (adapted from Hanaysha & Tahir, 2016), and Employee Performance (adapted from Bashir *et al.*, 2020). Data analysis was performed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS) with SmartPLS 4.0 software. The analysis stages include Outer Model testing (convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability) and Inner Model testing (hypothesis testing and mediation analysis).

DISCUSSION

Testing the Measurement Model (Outer Model)

Table 1. Outer Loading

Variable	Item Statement	Outer Loading	Description
Work Motivation (X)	X1	0.722	Valid
	X3	0.799	Valid
	X4	0.795	Valid
	X5	0.846	Valid
	X6	0.732	Valid
	X7	0.880	Valid
	X8	0.851	Valid
	X9	0.851	Valid
	X10	0.882	Valid



Variable	Item Statement	Outer Loading	Description
Employee Performance (Y)	X11	0.808	Valid
	X12	0.835	Valid
	X13	0.844	Valid
	Y1	0.832	Valid
	Y2	0.883	Valid
	Y3	0.860	Valid
	Y4	0.814	Valid
	Y5	0.822	Valid
Job Satisfaction (Z)	Z1	0.882	Valid
	Z2	0.905	Valid
	Z3	0.866	Valid
	Z4	0.889	Valid

Source: Data processed (2026)

Indicating that all remaining statement items after elimination have an outer loading value ≥ 0.70 and are declared valid.

Reliability Test

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Description
Work Motivation (X)	0,908	0.936	Reliable
Employee Performance (Y)	0,898	0.924	Reliable
Job Satisfaction (Z)	0,956	0.961	Reliable

Source: Data processed (2026)

Based on Table 2, all research variables show Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values that exceed the minimum threshold set by Hair et al. (2018). Work Motivation (X) has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.908 and Composite Reliability of 0.936, Employee Performance (Y) has a value of 0.898 and 0.924, and Job Satisfaction (Z) has a value of 0.956 and 0.961. These results indicate that all research instruments have met the reliability criteria and have an excellent level of consistency.



Model Evaluation (Internal Model)**Table 3. R-Square Value**

Variable	R-square	R-square adjusted
Job Satisfaction (Z)	0.526	0.522
Employee Performance (Y)	0.475	0.465

Source: Data processed (2026)

Structural model evaluation was conducted to assess the model's ability to explain the variance of the dependent variables. Based on the data analysis, the R-squared (R^2) value for Job Satisfaction is 0.526, and for Employee Performance is 0.475 . These values indicate that Work Motivation and Job Satisfaction collectively explain 47.5% of the variability in Employee Performance, which is categorized as a moderate effect .

Hypothesis Testing Results (Direct Effects)

Hypothesis testing was performed using the bootstrapping method to obtain Path Coefficients, T-Statistics, and P-Values. The criteria for accepting a hypothesis are a T-statistic ≥ 1.96 and a P-value ≥ 0.05 .

Table 4. Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Relationship	Original Sample (O)	T-Statistics	P-Values	Result
Work Motivation (X) - Employee Performance (Y)	0.327	3.013	0.003	Significant
Work Motivation (X) - Job Satisfaction (Z)	0.726	7.304	0.000	Significant
Job Satisfaction (Z) - Employee Performance (Y)	0.414	4.486	0.000	Significant

Source: Data processed (2026)

This Based on Table 4, the direct effect testing results are as follows:



1. The Effect of Work Motivation on Employee Performance (Direct Effect)

The statistical analysis confirms that Work Motivation has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance (Path Coefficient = 0.327, T-Statistics = 3.013, P-Values = 0.003). Thus, Hypothesis 1 (H1) is accepted.

This finding implies that in the context of 3-star hotels in Bandar Lampung, employees' drive both intrinsic (such as achievement and recognition) and extrinsic (such as salary and incentives) directly translates into better service delivery and task completion. This supports the theory put forward by Elamalki *et al.* (2024), which states that motivated employees are more likely to exert extra effort to achieve organizational goals. Empirically, this aligns with previous research by Kurniawan & Al Rizki (2022) and Wardiansyah *et al.* (2024), who found that motivation is a primary predictor of performance.

However, this finding contradicts the study by Wijaya & Prawitowati (2023), which stated that motivation had no effect. The difference in results is likely due to the specific conditions of the hospitality industry in Lampung, where fluctuating occupancy rates make employees highly reliant on motivational factors (such as job security and financial incentives) to maintain their performance levels during low seasons.

2. The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction (Indirect Effect)

The mediation analysis yields a specific indirect effect coefficient of 0.301 with a T-Statistic of 3.535 and a P-Value of 0.000, confirming that Hypothesis 2 (H2) is accepted.

The nature of this mediation is partial (complementary) mediation, as both the direct and indirect paths are significant. This statistical evidence suggests that while Work Motivation can directly improve performance, its impact is significantly amplified when employees feel satisfied with their jobs. In other words, Job Satisfaction acts as a psychological catalyst. When motivated employees feel satisfied with their work conditions, supervision, and coworkers (indicators of satisfaction), their commitment to high-performance standards increases.

This finding resolves the inconsistency in previous literature regarding the mechanism of performance improvement. It supports the study by Azmy & Sigalingging (2025), which highlights satisfaction as a crucial intervening variable. Theoretically, this validates the integration of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory within

the hospitality context, demonstrating that "hygiene factors" (creating satisfaction) are essential to convert "motivational factors" into tangible performance outcomes.

3. Practical Implications

The dominance of the influence of motivation on satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.526$) compared to performance alone indicates that hotel management cannot expect high performance solely through pressure or targets. Strategies must focus on building satisfaction first. Given the current trend of declining Room Occupancy Rates (ROR) in Bandar Lampung, maintaining employee morale through non-financial motivators (such as recognition and career development) becomes a cost-effective strategy to sustain high performance when financial bonuses are constrained by revenue drops.

Mediation Analysis Results (Indirect Effects)

Mediation testing was conducted to examine the Specific Indirect Effect of the job satisfaction variable.

Table 5. Mediation Analysis Results

Relationship	Indirect Effect	T-Statistics	P-Values	Result
Work Motivation - Job Satisfaction - Employee Performance	0.301	3.535	0.000	Significant

The statistical evidence in Table 5 demonstrates that the indirect effect of Work Motivation on Employee Performance through Job Satisfaction is significant, with a coefficient value of 0.301, a T-Statistic of 3.535 (> 1.96), and a P-Value of 0.000 (< 0.05). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 (H2) is accepted.

This finding indicates that Job Satisfaction plays a crucial role as a mediator. It suggests that while high work motivation (both intrinsic and extrinsic) is important, it becomes significantly more effective in boosting performance when it successfully creates a sense of satisfaction among employees. In this context, Job Satisfaction acts as a "psychological catalyst" that converts the energy from motivation into tangible high-quality work results.

Mediation Type Analysis: Since the direct effect of Work Motivation on Employee Performance (H1) was previously found to be significant (Path Coefficient = 0.327) and the indirect effect is also significant, the type of mediation occurring in this model is Partial Mediation (specifically, *Complementary Mediation*).



CONCLUSION

Based on the statistical analysis and discussion, the following conclusions are drawn:

The statistical results prove that Work Motivation has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance in 3-star hotels in Bandar Lampung (T-statistic $3.013 > 1.96$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 (H1), which states that work motivation affects employee performance, is accepted.

The mediation analysis demonstrates that Job Satisfaction plays a significant role in mediating the effect of Work Motivation on Employee Performance (T-statistic $3.535 > 1.96$). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 (H2), which states that job satisfaction mediates this relationship, is accepted. These findings emphasize that to achieve optimal performance, hotel management must ensure that the motivation built translates into high job satisfaction for employees.

The results of the study indicate that the indicator with the lowest value in the work motivation variable is the working conditions provided by the organization with an average value of 4.25, which indicates that employee working conditions are not yet fully optimal. In the job satisfaction variable, the indicator of satisfaction with current work obtained the lowest value of 4.32, indicating that there are still employees who are not satisfied with their jobs. Meanwhile, in the employee performance variable, the indicator of the ability to build interpersonal relationships with guests obtained the lowest value of 4.25, which indicates the need to improve the quality of service interactions. These findings emphasize the importance of the role of hotel management in improving working conditions, job satisfaction, and employee service and communication skills by providing a comfortable work environment, a fair reward system and career development, and service excellence training, in order to encourage continuous improvement in employee performance.

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