DOES MOTIVATION LINK JOB SATISFACTION AND WORK ENVIRONMENT TO PERFORMANCE?

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Abstract: This study examines the impact of the Work Environment and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance, with Work Motivation as a mediating variable, focusing on 177 active employees in Central Java using SEM-PLS analysis. The results show that Job Satisfaction significantly enhances both Work Motivation and Employee Performance, while the Work Environment significantly affects Work Motivation but not Employee Performance directly. Work Motivation plays a crucial mediating role in linking the Work Environment and Job Satisfactio to Eemployee Performance. The findings highlight the importance of fostering Job Satisfaction and creating a supportive Work Environment to boost employee motivation and overall performance

Keywords: *Employee Performance (EP); Work Environment (WE); Job Satisfaction (JS); Work Motivation (WM)*

In today's dynamic and competitive business environment, EP has become a crucial determinant of organizational success. High-performing employees contribute not only to operational efficiency but also to innovation, adaptability, and sustainable growth. Human resources, therefore, are not merely functional tools but are strategic assets whose potential must be continuously developed and optimized (Asfar & Anggraeni, 2020).

Organizations increasingly recognize that EP is shaped by multiple, interconnected factors. Beyond skills and competence, psychosocial aspects such as motivation, JS, and the quality of the WE have a significant impact on how employees perform their tasks (Sukaisih et al., 2022). This understanding has shifted attention toward creating supportive and engaging workplaces that empower employees, encourage commitment, and enhance overall productivity (Alfain et al., 2024)

Performance, as defined by Syahreza et al., (2017), reflects both the quality and quantity of output aligned with organizational responsibilities. It is not an inherent trait but rather an outcome influenced by internal drivers like motivation, as well as external conditions such as workplace environment and leadership (Kurnianto & Kharisudin, 2022). Research increasingly highlights that these factors do not operate in isolation; instead, they interact to shape performance outcomes in complex ways (Dethan et al., 2023).

To understand how these dynamics influence EP, this study adopts the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory proposed by Hobfoll (1989), which posits that individuals strive to obtain, retain, and protect valued resources including tangible resources (e.g., physical conditions, compensation) and intangible resources (e.g., motivation, social support, recognition). Stress and performance decline occur when these resources are threatened, lost, or insufficient to meet the demands of the WE. Thus, a supportive WE and high JS can be seen as critical reservoirs of resources that buffer stress and foster sustained motivation and performance. Conversely, resource loss due to poor facilities, inadequate leadership, or limited growth opportunities can trigger a negative spiral, leading to disengagement and reduced productivity.

Motivation is a key mediating factor that links contextual and psychological variables to performance outcomes. It refers to the internal drive that compels individuals to act with purpose, strive for excellence, and engage with organizational goals (Hafidzi et al., 2023). A motivated workforce is typically more productive, resilient, and aligned with organizational objectives (Kurniawan, 2020).

Equally important is the WE, encompassing physical, psychological, and social aspects of the workplace. A conducive environment enhances employee comfort, reduces stress, and facilitates better task performance. Conversely, poor working conditions ranging from inadequate facilities to strained interpersonal relationships can lead to demotivation, dissatisfaction, and declining productivity (Dethan et al., 2023).

JS is another critical construct. It reflects employees' emotional responses to their jobs, encompassing perceptions of compensation, recognition, relationships, and growth opportunities (Omolo., 2015). Dissatisfaction in these domains can manifest in reduced engagement, absenteeism, or turnover, thereby impairing overall organizational performance (Jasmine & Edalmen, 2020).

The context of Central Java, Indonesia, adds further urgency to these issues. As one of the nation's major industrial hubs, Central Java plays a significant role in Indonesia's economic landscape. According to BPS (2023), the province's GDP grew by 4.98% in 2023, with the manufacturing sector contributing over one-third to this figure. However, this growth has not been without challenges. Preliminary observations suggest that many industrial organizations face issues related to suboptimal EP, marked by inefficiencies, delays, and incomplete task execution.

Moreover, survey data from this study reveal widespread dissatisfaction among employees in Central Java regarding multiple aspects of their work. Key concerns include inadequate facilities, uncomfortable physical conditions, ineffective leadership, and weak coworker relations. Similarly, dissatisfaction with salaries, job roles, supervisory support, and promotion prospects underscores the need for a more holistic approach to employee engagement.

Existing literature has produced mixed findings regarding the relationship between motivation, the WE, JS, and performance. While some studies underscore the mediating role of motivation (Sukaisih et al., 2022; Jasmine & Edalmen, 2022), others find minimal or no significant effect (Wahyuni & Budiono, 2022; Asnawi, 2022). This inconsistency suggests a need for further empirical investigation, particularly within specific regional and industrial contexts.

Against this backdrop, the present study aims to examine the direct and indirect influence of the WE and JS on EP, using WM as a mediating variable. By focusing on active employees across various industries in Central Java, this research seeks to provide empirical evidence that can inform organizational strategies to enhance employee well-being and productivity.

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT
The Effect of WE on EP

The WE consists of individuals who plan tasks both individually and collectively, the methods used, as well as the readily available equipment and resources. One significant factor that may impact an individual's performance is their WE. If someone works in a friendly and comfortable environment that inspires them to complete their tasks (Shidiq et al., 2024), creating a productive WE is essential to increase revenue in any organization, company, or small business.

A good WE provides employees with a sense of security, helping them become more productive. Employees' emotions can be influenced by their WE. They will feel more comfortable working if they appreciate the environment in which they work, allowing them to perform their tasks more efficiently. High

productivity will automatically lead to high EP (Kamil Hafidzi et al., 2023).

EP increases when they operate in a collaborative environment, such as in facilities that enhance service and foster good relationships with supervisors. This encourages employees to perform their tasks correctly and maintain high morale. EP also improves when they work in a clean, comfortable environment that fosters positive relationships between coworkers and supervisors (Wahyuni and Budiono, 2022). This demonstrates the significant influence of the WE on EP.

H1: WE has a positive and significant impact on EP
The Effect of JS on EP

An employee's performance is undoubtedly influenced by various factors that are essential for enhancing a series of specific actions to meet the company's goals within a certain timeframe (Sabuhari et al., 2020). JS is defined as a state of happiness and joy brought about by one's work. This mindset is reflected in productivity, morale, and discipline. An individual may experience JS while working, not working, or in both scenarios (Fitriani & Lerebulan, 2023).

JS is largely a personal matter. Each individual experiences varying levels of satisfaction depending on their value system. The higher the value placed on an activity, the better the perceived alignment. The greater the individual's desires, the more satisfied they are with their actions. In other words, satisfaction is an assessment of one's feelings of happiness or despair, and satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their job. Job happiness is not a singular concept; an individual may feel comfortable with one component of their job but dissatisfied with one or more other components. JS also reflects the positive or negative feelings employees have towards their work. People strive to be satisfied with their jobs. For organizations, JS is related to productivity, and for society, JS is related to the fulfillment of needs. Every employee in an organization is required to make a positive contribution through good performance, considering the organization's success depends on the performance of its employees. Improving performance, both individually and in groups, becomes a focal point in efforts to enhance organizational performance (Alfain et al., 2024). This indicates that there is an influence of JS on EP.

H2: JS has a positive and significant impact on EP
The Effect of WE on WM

A positive WE enables individuals to fulfill their responsibilities according to the organization's performance objectives, enhancing workplace satisfaction and increasing employee engagement. Improving workplace comfort will boost motivation, thereby helping to achieve performance targets (Lianasari and Ahmadi, 2022). Employee motivation is influenced by their WE. Workers are surrounded by both physical and non-physical WEs, which can affect how they perform their duties. A comfortable physical WE will enhance employee morale, while an appropriate non-physical WE can help improve staff performance. The WE has the power to foster strong bonds among individuals. Therefore, efforts should be made to ensure that the WE is conducive, making employees feel at ease in the office, happy, and constantly motivated to carry out their tasks (Kamil Hafidzi et al., 2023). This demonstrates the significant influence of the WE on employee motivation.

H3: WE has a positive and significant impact on WM
The Effect of JS on WM

JS is an emotional state that positively influences how employees view their work. It refers to an individual's feelings toward their job, which is demonstrated through their attitude towards their work and everything else in their WE. Beyond JS, it is also essential

to consider how to maintain and manage employee motivation at work to keep it high and focused on the company's goals. Motivation is the provision of a driving force that fosters someone's work enthusiasm, leading to cooperation, productive work, and the integration of all efforts to achieve satisfaction. Motivation is akin to a motive, a driving force, or an urge to do something (Siwij, 2022). This indicates a significant influence of JS on employee motivation.

H4: JS has a positive and significant impact on WM
The Effect of WM on EP

Employee motivation is crucial for successfully completing tasks according to the company's operational standards. Motivation is a desire that drives an individual to achieve specific goals. It involves automatic support, suggesting that organizational managers evaluate each decision that could enhance employee welfare. Motivated workers value autonomy and independence more than their less motivated counterparts, giving them an advantage in professional advancement (Paais and Pattiruhu, 2020). This demonstrates a significant influence of employee motivation on their performance.

H5: WM has a positive and significant impact on EP
WM Mediates the Influence of WE on EP

The WE has both physical and psychological effects on employees, meaning that the WE influences performance through employee motivation. Good working conditions help individuals achieve personal and organizational goals, making the WE more enjoyable and thus increasing employee engagement (Lianasari and Ahmadi, 2022). This demonstrates the influence of the WE on EP through employee motivation.

H6: WM can significantly and positively mediate the effect of WE on EP

WM Mediates the Influence of Job performance on EP

People strive to feel satisfied with their jobs. JS is associated with organizational productivity and the fulfillment of societal needs. Each member of an organization is expected to contribute positively through good performance, understanding that the success of the organization depends on the performance of its employees. Efforts to improve organizational performance primarily relate to individual and group performance (Alfain et al., 2024). JS is a crucial component to consider when evaluating employee productivity, as dissatisfaction is often linked to high work expectations and complaints. Extremely unhappy employees are more likely to engage in sabotage and passive-aggressive behavior.

WM refers to the conditions that drive or cause an individual to perform a job or activity, occurring consciously. WM is the process that drives or encourages someone to do a job to achieve the desired goals (Sukaisih et al., 2022). This indicates that there is a significant influence of JS on EP, mediated by employee motivation.
H7: WM can significantly and positively mediate the influence of JS on EP.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative research methodology, focusing on exploring the relationships or correlations between two or more variables. The design aims to examine how independent variables influence dependent variables, as outlined by Ferdinand (2014). Specifically, the research investigates the direct effects of WE and JS on EP while also analyzing the mediating role of WM in these relationships.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

No	Gender	Quantity	Percentage
1	Male	98	55,4%
2	Female	79	44,6%
Total		**177**	**100%**

No	Type of Industry	Quantity	Percentage
1	A	108	61,0%
2	B	47	26,5%
3	C	15	8,5%
4	D	7	4,0%
Total		**177**	**100%**

No	Age Range	Quantity	Percentage
1	<30's	120	67,8%
2	30 – 50's	23	13,0%
3	>50's	34	19,2%
Total		**177**	**100%**

No	Level of Education	Quantity	Percentage
1	High School	55	31,1%
2	D3/S1	116	65,5%
3	S2	6	3,4%
Total		**177**	**100%**

No	Working Period	Quantity	Percentage
1	<1 year	62	35,0%
2	1 – 5 's	55	31,1%
3	>5 's	60	33,9%
Total		**177**	**100%**

No	Industrial Sector	Quantity	Percentage
1	Government/public	133	31,1%
2	Private	44	65,5%
Total		**177**	**100%**

No	Working Period	Quantity	Percentage
1	<50 year	76	35,0%
2	50 – 100 's	50	31,1%
3	>100 's	51	33,9%
Total		**177**	**100%**

Source: Research data processed (2025)

RESULT
Research Instrument Feasibility Test
a) Instrument Validity

The researchers evaluated the validity of each questionnaire item using data processing techniques based on Partial Least Square (PLS) to assess the construct reliability of variables in the analysis model. They utilized SmartPLS software for data analysis due to the clear placement of variables and the results generated. Two types of instrument validity were employed: convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity measures the extent to which an indicator correlates positively with other indicators of the same construct. It is achieved when the instrument produces data that exhibit similar patterns to other instruments used to measure the same construct (Ferdinand, 2014). Convergent validity is confirmed when indicators within a construct are highly correlated and have sufficient outer loading scores, with values

greater than 0.06 - 0.07, indicating that the indicators in this study meet the convergent validity criteria (Ghozali, 2014). Additionally, convergent validity can be assessed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value, with values above 0.5 indicating adequate convergent validity (Ghozali & Latan, 2015). Table 3.3 presents the tabulation of the PLS convergent validity test results.

b) Reliability Instrument

According to Hair et al. (2014), an indicator is considered valid if it has a loading factor of 0.7 or higher. Reliability testing is conducted to evaluate the consistency of the research instruments. A measurement tool is deemed reliable or dependable when it produces consistent measurements under different conditions. The commonly used test is internal consistency reliability, measured using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The recommended coefficient level is 0.7 (Hair et al., 2014). There are three levels of reliability coefficients: a Cronbach's alpha less than 0.6 indicates poor reliability, a Cronbach's alpha between 0.6 and 0.8 indicates acceptable reliability, and a Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.8 indicates good reliability.

Table 2. Scale and Measurement

Variable	Item	Factor Loadings	AVE	Note
WE (Singgih et al., 2020)	X1.1	0.800		Valid
	X1.2	0.819		Valid
	X1.3	0.787		Valid
	X1.4	0.749		Valid
	X1.5	0.819		Valid
	X1.6	0.800		Valid
	X1.7	0.733	0.666	Valid
	X1.8	0.820		Valid
	X1.9	0.817		Valid
	X1.10	0.819		Valid
	X1.11	0.800		Valid
	X1.12	0.820		Valid
	X1.13	0.775		Valid
	X1.14	0.762		Valid
JS (Gondokusumo & Sutanto, 2015).	X2.1	0.755		Valid
	X2.2	0.732		Valid
	X2.3	0.835		Valid
	X2.4	0.849		Valid
	X2.5	0.832		Valid
	X2.6	0.804	0.629	Valid
	X2.7	0.787		Valid
	X2.8	0.783		Valid
	X2.9	0.859		Valid
	X2.10	0.717		Valid
	X2.11	0.715		Valid
EP	Y1	0.786	0.624	Valid

(Singgih et al., 2020)	Y2	0.865	Valid
	Y3	0.865	Valid
	Y4	0.865	Valid
	Y5	0.865	Valid
	Y6	0.865	Valid
	Y7	0.865	Valid
	Y8	0.865	Valid
	Y9	0.865	Valid
	Y10	0.696	Valid
	Y11	0.836	Valid
WM (Gondokusumo & Sutanto, 2015).	Z1	0.666	Valid
	Z2	0.604	Valid
	Z3	0.833	Valid
	Z4	0.860	Valid
	Z5	0.851	Valid
	Z6	0.864	Valid
	Z7	0.850 0.667	Valid
	Z8	0.840	Valid
	Z9	0.844	Valid
	Z10	0.849	Valid
	Z11	0.825	Valid
	Z12	0.868	Valid

Source: Ouput SmartPLS 3.0 Primary Data Processed (2025)

Based on the outer loading and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values presented in Table 2, it can be explained that all indicators used in this study meet the threshold criteria of outer loadings >0.5-0.6 and AVE values >0.5. Thus, it can be concluded that the collected data is valid and demonstrates good convergent validity.

c) Coefficient of determination

The coefficient of determination (R^2) ranges from 0 to 1. Higher R^2 values indicate better predictive accuracy, while lower values indicate poorer predictive accuracy (Ghozali & Latan, 2014). Specifically, R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 are considered to reflect strong, moderate, and weak effects, respectively (Ghozali & Latan, 2014). For this study, the R^2 values are as follows:

Table 4. R-Square Score

Variable	R Square (R^2)
EP	0,889
WM	0,724

Source: Research Data Processed (2025)

The coefficient of determination (R^2) is used to measure the degree of variation in the dependent variable (endogenous) explained by the independent variables (exogenous). The rule of thumb for interpreting R^2 values in a structural model is as follows: 0.19 (weak), 0.33 (moderate), and 0.67 (good). According to the R^2 calculations shown in Table 4.14, the R^2 value for EP is 0.889, and for WM, it is 0.724. These figures

indicate that 88.9% of the variance in EP can be explained by the WE, JS, and WM. Thus, the remaining 11.1% is explained by factors outside the model. For the coefficient of determination of WM, 72.4% can be explained by the WE and JS, while the remaining 27.6% is explained by factors outside the model.

Hypothesis Test Results

The original sample value and t-statistic in direct effects are critical for evaluating direct hypothesis testing. The original sample value indicates the direction of the effect whether positive or negativeand the magnitude of the independent variable's impact on the dependent variable. Meanwhile, the t-statistic assesses the estimated relationship between latent variables, obtained through the bootstrapping method (Ghozali, 2014). A t-statistic greater than 1.96 and a p-value less than 0.05 signify a significant effect. Similarly, indirect or mediation effects can be examined using the original sample value to determine whether the independent variable has a positive or negative impact on the dependent variable. Additionally, the t-statistic provides an estimation of latent variable relationships, with a p-value below 0.05 at a 5% significance level, ensuring robust and reliable findings (Hair, 2014).

Table 4. Hypothesis Test Results

Hypo-thesis	Variables	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P-values	Result
H1	WE (X1) → EP (Y)	-0.111	1.485	0.138	Not Significant
H2	JS (X2) → EP (Y)	0.494	5.187	0.000	Significant
H3	WE (Z) → WM (Z)	0.256	2.190	0.000	Significant
H4	JS (X1) → WM (Z)	0.627	5.756	0.000	Significant
H5	WM (X2) → EP (Y)	0.584	9.319	0.000	Significant
H6	WE → WM → EP	0.149	2.285	0.000	Significant

Hypo-thesis	Variables	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P-values	Result
H7	JS → WM → EP	0.366	4.115	0.000	Significant

Source: Research data is processed (2025)

The Influence of WM on EP

The first hypothesis tested whether the WE has a positive and significant effect on EP. The results indicate an original sample value of -0.111, a t-statistic of 1.485 (which is less than 1.96), and a p-value of 0.138 (which is greater than 0.05). These findings reject H1, which proposed a positive and significant effect of the WE on EP. Thus, the WE does not significantly influence EP.

The Influence of JS on EP

The second hypothesis examined whether JS positively and significantly affects EP. The analysis revealed an original sample value of 0.494, a t-statistic of 5.187 (greater than 1.96), and a p-value of 0.000 (less than 0.05). These results support H2, confirming that JS positively and significantly impacts EP.

The Influence of WE on WM

The third hypothesis investigated whether the WE positively and significantly influences WM. The findings showed an original sample value of 0.256, a t-statistic of 2.190 (greater than 1.96), and a p-value of 0.000 (less than 0.05). These results accept H3, demonstrating that the WE has a positive and significant effect on WM.

The Influence of JS on WM

The fourth hypothesis assessed whether JS positively and significantly impacts WM. The results indicated an original sample value of 0.627, a t-statistic of 5.756 (greater than 1.96), and a p-value of 0.000 (less than 0.05). This confirms H4, proving that JS positively and significantly affects WM.

The Influence of WM on EP

Finally, the fifth hypothesis tested whether WM positively and significantly influences EP. The analysis produced an original sample value of 0.584, a t-statistic of 9.319 (greater than 1.96), and a p-value of 0.000 (less than 0.05). These findings accept H5, establishing that WM has a positive and significant effect on EP.

WM mediates the influence of WE on EP

The sixth hypothesis examined whether WM mediates the relationship between the WE and EP positively and significantly. The results show an original sample value of 0.149, a t-statistic of 2.285 (greater than 1.96), and a p-value of 0.000 (less than 0.05). These findings support H6, confirming that WM positively and significantly mediates the effect of the WE on EP. Thus, the WE significantly influences EP through WM.

WM mediates the influence of JS on EP

The seventh hypothesis tested whether WM mediates the relationship between JS and EP positively and significantly. The analysis revealed an original sample value of 0.366, a t-statistic of 4.115 (greater than 1.96), and a p-value of 0.000 (less than 0.05). These results accept H7, demonstrating that WM positively and significantly mediates the impact of JS on EP. Consequently, JS significantly affects EP through WM

DISCUSSION

The results reveal the complex dynamics between work environment (WE), job satisfaction (JS), work motivation (WM), and employee performance (EP) in Central Java's industrial context, with the model explaining 88.9% of performance variance and 72.4% of motivation variance.

The non-significant direct effect of WE on EP ($\beta = -0.111$, $p = 0.138$) supports Wahyuni and Budiono (2022), indicating that environmental resources must be activated through motivational processes before manifesting in performance

outcomes. The Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) explains this by suggesting that contextual resources require conversion into personal motivational resources to drive performance. However, WE significantly influences WM ($\beta = 0.256$, $p = 0.000$), consistent with Kamil Hafidzi et al. (2023), demonstrating that comfortable physical and supportive non-physical environments enhance employee morale and motivation.

JS emerged as a critical determinant, significantly affecting both EP ($\beta = 0.494$, $p = 0.000$) and WM ($\beta = 0.627$, $p = 0.000$). These findings support Alfain et al. (2024), Fitriani and Lerebulan (2023), and Gondokusumo and Sutanto (2015), who found that satisfied employees demonstrate superior performance through improved morale, discipline, and organizational commitment. Omolo (2015) emphasized that job satisfaction reflects emotional responses encompassing compensation, recognition, and growth opportunities, which directly translate into performance outcomes.

WM demonstrated the strongest direct effect on EP ($\beta = 0.584$, $p = 0.000$), confirming Paais and Pattiruhu (2020) and Kurniawan (2020) that motivated employees exhibit increased effort, autonomy, and goal-directed behavior. Syahreza et al. (2017) noted that performance is influenced by internal drivers like motivation, validating motivation as the primary proximal driver of performance outcomes.

The mediation analyses confirmed that WM significantly mediates both WE→EP ($\beta = 0.149$, $p = 0.000$) and JS→EP ($\beta = 0.366$, $p = 0.000$) relationships. This supports Asfar and Anggraeni (2020), Sukaisih et al. (2022), and Alfain et al. (2024), who demonstrated that motivation serves as a critical linking mechanism transforming environmental and satisfaction-related resources into performance. The JS→WM→EP pathway showed the strongest indirect effect, indicating that job satisfaction enhancement should be prioritized in organizational interventions.

These findings have important practical implications. Organizations in Central Java's industrial sector should prioritize job satisfaction initiatives (competitive compensation, recognition, career development) given its strong direct and indirect effects. Work environment improvements should strategically boost motivation rather than expecting direct performance gains. Motivation-building programs (goal-setting, feedback mechanisms, incentives) should be central to HR strategies, as Singgih et al. (2020) emphasize that motivated employees contribute to operational efficiency, innovation, and sustainable growth. Integrated approaches addressing satisfaction, environment, and motivation simultaneously are more effective than isolated interventions (Dethan et al., 2023).

This study contributes theoretically by demonstrating motivation's critical mediating role and providing empirical support for COR theory in Indonesia's industrial context. However, the cross-sectional design limits causal inferences, and the focus on Central Java limits generalizability. Future research should employ longitudinal designs, examine these relationships in other regions/industries, investigate additional mediators/moderators (organizational culture, leadership styles), and explore intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation mechanisms.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes several important findings regarding the relationships between the WE, JS, WM, and EP among active employees in Central Java. First, the WE does not significantly influence EP, indicating that employees perceive their WE as not directly impacting their productivity. However, the WE positively and significantly affects WM, demonstrating its role in fostering employees' drive to perform better. JS, on the other hand, significantly and positively impacts both EP and WM, highlighting its critical role in enhancing employees' commitment and overall performance

outcomes. Moreover, WM itself positively and significantly influences EP, serving as a key driver for achieving better results. Lastly, both the WE and JS indirectly affect EP through WM, underscoring the mediating role of motivation in these relationships.

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