

The Effect of Compensation and Work Environment on Employee Performance With Job Satisfaction As an Intervening Variable

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to examine the impact of compensation and work environment on employee performance at PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa, while assessing job satisfaction as a mediating variable, a study prompted by the company's fluctuating sales and downward performance trends. Using a quantitative approach and a census sampling strategy involving all 60 employees, data were analyzed through the PLS-SEM method using SmartPLS software. The findings reveal that while compensation and work environment have a positive and significant direct effect on both employee performance and job satisfaction, job satisfaction itself does not have a statistically significant impact on employee performance (P-Value 0.174 > 0.05). Consequently, the mediation analysis demonstrates that job satisfaction does not act as an intermediary between the independent variables and performance. It is concluded that the influence of compensation and work environment on productivity is primarily direct; therefore, management is advised to prioritize optimizing the work environment and fair compensation systems to ensure sales stability and operational efficiency, rather than relying on job satisfaction as a primary driver of performance.

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Introduction

The success of a company, especially in the sales sector, is determined by an optimal HRM strategy. The prosperity of any company is built upon its organizational efficacy, which is measured by how well it implements plans aimed at reaching its goals [1]. This means that most of the organization's operations and focus revolve around the implementation of individual projects [2]. HRM is pivotal in shaping a company's success and advancement. HRM is a strategic process of effectively managing employees, with the aim of developing their potential and improving organizational performance to achieve common goals [3]. Theoretically, the integration of Social Exchange Theory (SET) suggests that performance is a reciprocal output of organizational support. However, while many studies emphasize this linear relationship, there is still a lack of clarity on whether this exchange is always mediated by psychological states like job satisfaction, or if it can function as a direct structural mandate.

The rapid pace of development and technological innovation has led to increased complexity in the operational implementation and social obligations of companies [4]. The main objectives are to achieve financial success, expand market share, and become industry leaders. The rapid growth of MSMEs in the modern business world requires entrepreneurs to adapt by improving their managerial actions [5]. PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa is a beverage distributor, specializing in SINDE products, established to meet the market demand for quality beverages in the Jambi region and its surroundings. PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa is committed to continuing to grow and contribute to improving the quality of beverage distribution in Indonesia, especially for SINDE brand products, so that it can provide optimal benefits for consumers, business partners, and the community at large.

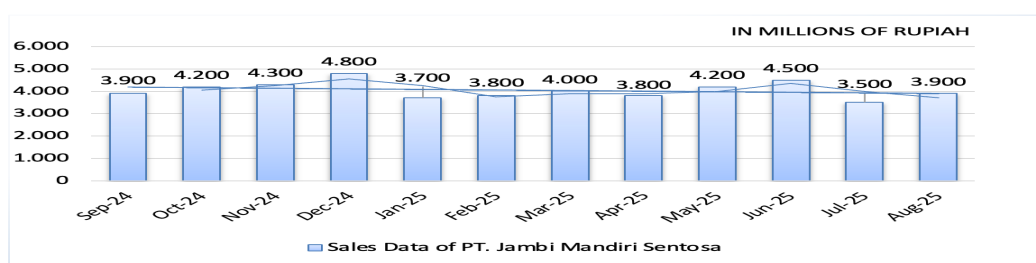


Figure 1. Sales Data From September 2024 to August 2025

Based on PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa's sales data from March to August 2025, there was significant fluctuation, even a downward trend during certain periods. The significant fluctuation and decline in sales data provide empirical evidence and urgency that there are operational problems that are not only market-driven but are symptoms of a managerial root cause, namely HR effectiveness. Using this data as an initial phenomenon, HR research can be validated and have strong practical implications: if performance issues are proven to stem from low motivation or job satisfaction, the resulting recommendations will directly aim to restore and stabilize sales figures. Employees strive to change the way they work or the results of their work in order to reap significant benefits, both for personal advancement and for the organization [6].

Compensation is a reward that serves to appreciate and reflect past income performance successfully achieved by management [7]. More than just a regular salary or allowance, it represents recognition of the privileges and significant influence attached to the roles they carry out [8]. Compensation includes financial benefits that have a direct or indirect impact, as well as non-financial rewards. [9]. Employee compensation is categorized into two forms: Financial compensation, which includes monetary or liquid benefits such as salaries, bonuses, and allowances; and Non-Financial compensation, which consists of rewards that are not monetary or cash-based [10].

Defined as the setting in which staff members perform their tasks, the work environment covers both tangible factors, such as layout and spatial design, and intangible social factors, including inter-colleague communication [11]. The work environment is a broad concept with many models, of which the Demand Control Support Model is one of the most influential in understanding its impact on employee well-being [12]. A supportive work environment is crucial for improving employee job satisfaction, particularly in the healthcare sector, which frequently faces strikes resulting from inadequate working conditions [13]. The work environment is measured through two dimensions: Physical (involving tangible aspects such as layout, lighting, noise, and facilities) and Non-Physical (focusing on the quality of relationships with leaders and fellow employees) [14].

Employee performance refers to behavioral attributes encompassing both measurable outcomes and the processes used to attain them, all of which must align with the organization's ethical standards [15]. Beyond just the end product, performance also involves the entire work process, including the specific attitudes and behaviors employees utilize when attempting to achieve the institution's objectives [16]. The overall performance of an employee can be broadly described as a combination of behaviors—such as interactions, work processes, and actions—that aid in reaching institutional objectives, focusing on more than just measurable outcomes [17]. Employee performance is assessed comprehensively through three main dimensions: Work Results (covering efficiency, quality, and quantity), Work Behavior (consisting of accuracy, initiative, and discipline), and Personal Characteristics (covering leadership, creativity, and honesty) [18].

Job satisfaction represents an employee's emotional reaction associated with feelings of enjoyment and fulfillment derived from performing their duties, and it is strongly connected to internal marketing initiatives such as training activities and incentive schemes [19]. Job satisfaction is assessed based on individuals' rational and subjective assessments of various aspects of work, and can be understood as an emotional reaction, attitude, expectation, or belief towards work [20]. Employees' emotional attitudes that reflect their evaluation of aspects of work (conditions, remuneration, interactions, and psychology) are defined as job satisfaction [21]. As an important variable for understanding employee attitudes, job satisfaction is a comprehensive evaluative assessment (affective and cognitive) of work, which includes their experiences and beliefs, and is often analyzed as a general (global) reaction to work [22].

Despite the extensive research on these variables, a critical analytical gap remains: we still do not know if internal job satisfaction is an indispensable conduit for performance in sectors facing high operational volatility. This study addresses this gap by examining the potential 'decoupling' between how employees feel and how they actually perform under organizational pressure, providing a deeper conceptual insight into human resource governance. Essentially, PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa requires superior employee performance to ensure the achievement of marketing goals and targets. This superior

performance does not come about on its own, but rather stems from complex psychological processes and motivational drives within each individual. Efficient and effective workforce management has an impact on the growth of an organization or company [23]. Critical factors like equitable compensation and an appropriate, supportive work environment are vital in building employee job satisfaction, which subsequently drives improved performance [24]. The study undertaken at PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa sought to analyze the effects of remuneration and workplace conditions on staff outcomes. Additionally, this investigation looked into how job satisfaction serves as a mediating factor to clarify the linkages between remuneration, the work setting, and employee outcomes.

Building on these theoretical inconsistencies, this study seeks to examine whether job satisfaction serves as an effective psychological mechanism mediating the relationship between compensation, work environment, and employee performance [25]. Unlike prior studies that are largely descriptive in nature, this research adopts a conceptual and explanatory approach to assess whether structural incentives, such as compensation and workplace conditions, can directly influence behavioral outcomes or whether their effects operate primarily through psychological mediation. Conducted at PT Jambi Mandiri Sentosa, the study analyzes the impact of compensation and work environment on employee performance, with job satisfaction positioned as the key intervening variable. This research is expected to highlight the importance of fair compensation and a supportive work environment in enhancing employee satisfaction and performance within a distribution company. Furthermore, the findings are intended to provide empirical insights for the formulation of effective human resource management policies aimed at improving sales performance and overall operational efficiency. Conducted at PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa, this study aims to assess the influence of workplace conditions and compensation on employee results, specifically investigating job satisfaction as the key intermediary variable. It is hoped that this study will emphasize the necessity of just pay and a conducive work setting for boosting staff contentment and output within a distribution firm. Furthermore, the

outcomes of this research are meant to provide a basis for developing effective human resource management policies aimed at boosting sales and operational efficiency.

Compensation is an important form of reward given in recognition of the strategic role and significant authority attached to a position [8]. Fair remuneration is vital to spur enhanced employee performance, which is measured by the accomplishments or output of staff members. This includes work efficiency, quantity, quality, and adherence to ethical behavior while fulfilling organizational objectives [16]. Therefore, companies must design compensation schemes that are in line with employee needs and organizational goals to achieve optimal performance. This is in line with ([26]; [27]; [28]; [29]; [30]; [31]; [32]; [33]).

H1: Compensation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance

Working conditions (work environment) include physical and non-physical factors in the workplace that contribute to staff motivation, effectiveness, and satisfaction. Given that sensitive sectors such as healthcare are often vulnerable to strike actions, a positive environment is paramount for boosting employee contentment [13]. Staff performance is evaluated not just by the quantitative outcomes, but also by the methods used to achieve them, ensuring these methods strictly adhere to the company's ethical values [34]. Positive work environment motivates employees to achieve higher quality, higher quantity, and ethical results. This finding is consistent with previous literature ([35]; [36]; [26]; [37]; [38]; [39]; [40]; [29]; [41]; [42]; [43]).

H2: The work environment has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

Compensation is a form of reward, often given to executives, in return for the financial success they have achieved for the company [7]. The quantum of pay received by managerial staff serves as an indicator of the firm's financial health. Employee satisfaction is defined as their level of comfort and emotional response to their work, which is assessed through individual perspectives, both factual and emotional [20]. Fair compensation that is commensurate with contributions fosters a sense of appreciation, financial stability, and

work enthusiasm, which directly increases satisfaction. This is in line with ([44]; [45]; [46]; [47]; [48]; [49]; [50]; [51]).

H3: Compensation has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction

Working conditions are a broad concept with many analytical frameworks, such as the Demand-Control-Support Model [12]. The emotional expression of workers, encompassing feelings of success and everyday contentment, defines employee satisfaction. This contentment has a close relationship with internal marketing methods, such as utilizing reward mechanisms and training programs [19]. Supportive work environment elements, such as support from superiors/colleagues and task autonomy, make employees feel valued, supported, and motivated, thereby increasing their overall job satisfaction. Findings from previous studies by ([52]; [53]; [46]; [54]; [55]; [56]; [57]; [58]; [51]).

H4: The work environment has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction

Employee satisfaction is defined as the emotional reaction felt by workers when carrying out their responsibilities, related to feelings of accomplishment and enjoyment [19]. Employee performance is a behavioral characteristic that emphasizes not only measurable results but also the manner in which those results are achieved, which should follow the company's code of ethics [34]. A sense of contentment among staff members often results in increased motivation, which encourages more ethical conduct and better overall performance. Thus, job satisfaction becomes the main driver for creating employee performance that is not only productive but also moral. These findings are in line with research by ([35]; [59]; [60]; [61]; [62]; [63]; [64]; [65]).

H5: Job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

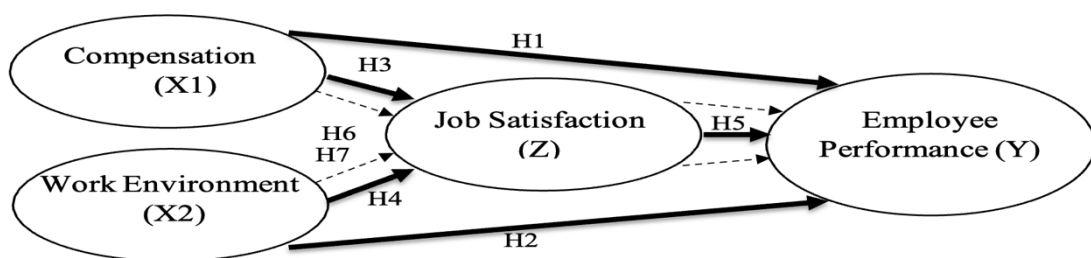




Figure 2. Conceptual Framework

Method

Employing a quantitative approach, this investigation relies on information collected from PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa. The analysis of numerical information relied on a quantitative methodology, with the twin goals of examining the hypotheses and clarifying the connections among the variables. This analysis was assisted using the SmartPLS application. The PLS-SEM approach is built upon two vital parts: the inner model, which shows the structural relationships, and the outer model, which assesses the measurement quality.

The samples in this study were selected using saturated sampling (or census) techniques, which are classified as non-probability approaches. Saturated sampling is generally used to ensure that each subgroup in a diverse (heterogeneous) population is fully and proportionally represented in the study [66]. Accordingly, every individual within the defined population -comprising 60 employees of PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa was incorporated as the sample in this study.

This study originated from declining sales, as indicated by the suboptimal performance of PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa employees. Given the crucial importance of this performance for operational efficiency—from installation to construction—, an in- depth study of the driving factors was necessary. Specifically, this research scrutinizes the effect that remuneration (intended as an incentive) and workplace conditions (influencing safety and productivity) have on employee outcomes. Moreover, this investigation delves into job satisfaction's capacity to serve as an intervening variable. This study employed a numerical survey method to evaluate customer satisfaction with new products through statistical analysis of numerical data [66]. The main objective of quantitative research is to verify theory through quantitative data analysis, statistical description, and predictive modeling [66].

Types and Sources of Data

The investigation relied on primary data, which involved the direct acquisition of information by the researcher via designated instruments [66]. The research data was obtained from the responses of PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa employees through a questionnaire that was distributed.

Research Location

PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa, located at Jl Letkol M Insya Rt 07, Kel Rajawali, Kec Jambi Timur, Jambi, was chosen as the research location to obtain reliable information and data for the purposes of this study. The chief justification for choosing PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa as the location was the strong compatibility found between the theoretical model under investigation and the specific problems (phenomena) observed there. The researcher observed fluctuations in performance (as indicated by sales data) that required an analysis of the root causes from an HR perspective. PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa provides a practical example in which the effects of the Compensation and Work Environment variables are highly suspected to be mediated by Job Satisfaction. The opportunity was thus created for the researcher to evaluate the validity and real-world implications of the variable connection model inside the setting of a distributor company.

Data Collection Techniques

In order to acquire information, questionnaires are employed as a data collection tool that involves giving respondents a compilation of written statements or questions [66]. Data gathering is accomplished via questionnaires, which provide respondents with a series of written statements or questions in order to secure pertinent information.

Informant Selection Techniques

This study applies the saturated sample technique (census), which is part of non - probability sampling, where the entire population at PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa is taken as respondents. The small number of personnel at the company makes this possible. Since every individual in the population is included in the sample, the acquired data possesses maximum

representativeness, leading to enhanced validity of the findings regarding the effects of the investigated variables.

Data Analysis

The numerical information was examined in stages through SmartPLS software via the PLS - SEM method. By confirming that the indicators correctly capture their assigned latent variables, the Measurement Model Test using SmartPLS assesses the model's overall validity and reliability. [67]. As a preliminary step, descriptive statistics are applied to present the respondents' profiles and the distribution of data for each variable, assessed through measures such as mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values. The next process entails evaluating the outer model through the execution of validity and reliability assessments. These checks confirm that the data quality is high and that the questionnaire instrument is consistently dependable and accurate. For the purpose of examining the proposed hypotheses, the structural model, also known as the inner model, is assessed during the main stage of analysis. Bootstrapping is utilized in this phase to check the Path Coefficients. The aim is to assess the degree and statistical significance of the direct effects that the independent factors (Work Environment and Compensation) have on both the dependent factor (Employee Performance) and the mediator (Job Satisfaction). Furthermore, the Coefficient of Determination R^2 is utilized to ascertain the percentage of the dependent variable's total variance accounted for by the independent and intervening variables. In this Mediation Test, the function of Job Satisfaction in the role of a mediating variable is examined by evaluating indirect effect values obtained from the bootstrapping procedure, thus determining the extent to which job satisfaction mediates relationships among the variables.

Results and Discussion

Development of the SEM Model

The theoretical model will be visualized in the second stage through an SEM diagram, which shows the interrelationships between cause and effect. Straight arrows are used to indicate direct influences between elements.

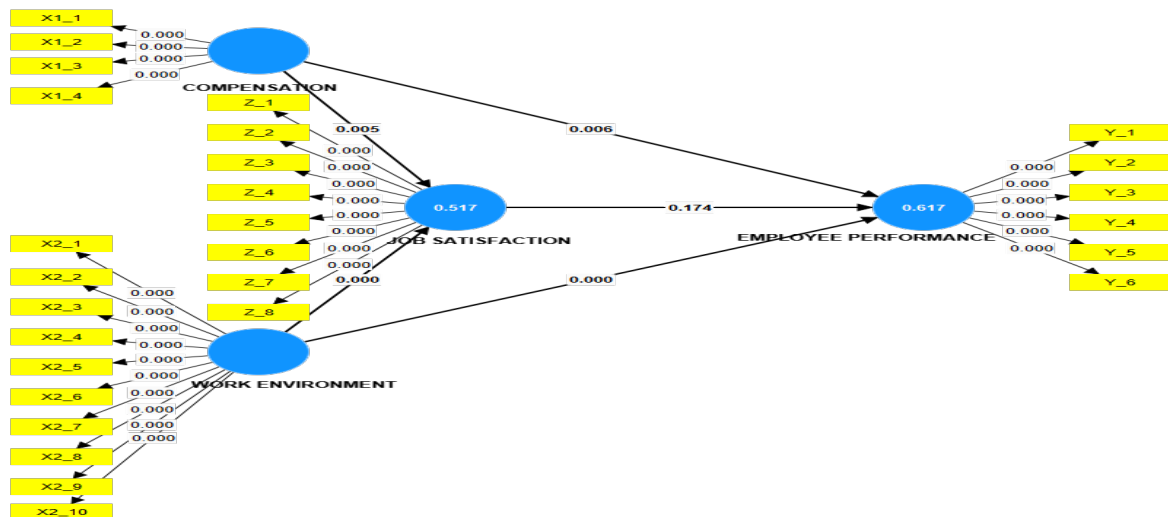


Figure 3. Structural Model (PLS Algorithm Results)

Outer Model Test

The assessment of the outer model, according to [67] in A PLS-SEM, encompasses checking for Convergent Validity, Composite Reliability, and Discriminant Validity. It is crucial to successfully execute this phase to guarantee the validity and robustness of the measurement model prior to starting the structural (inner) model assessment.

Convergent Validity Test

According to PLS guidelines, convergent validity is evaluated by confirming that the loading factor reaches a minimum of 0.7 as well as that the AVE score is no less than 0.5 [68]. When both criteria are met, the indicator is considered to have good convergent validity. The following presents the outcomes of the data examination for assessing Convergent Validity, based on two criteria: the loading factor values as well as the AVE scores.

Table 1. Convergent Validity Test

Instrument	Job Satisfaction	Employee Performance	Compensation	Work Environment	Description
X1_1			0.841		Valid
X1_2			0.855		Valid
X1_3			0.886		Valid
X1_4			0.915		Valid
X2_1				0.790	Valid
X2_10				0.821	Valid
X2_2				0.885	Valid
X2_3				0.859	Valid
X2_4				0.800	Valid
X2_5				0.857	Valid
X2_6				0.852	Valid
X2_7				0.785	Valid
X2_8				0.844	Valid
X2_9				0.847	Valid
Y_1		0.824			Valid
Y_2		0.903			Valid
Y_3		0.879			Valid
Y_4		0.879			Valid
Y_5		0.890			Valid
Y_6		0.823			Valid
Z_1	0.835				Valid

Z_2	0.815	Valid
Z_3	0.727	Valid
Z_4	0.860	Valid
Z_5	0.724	Valid
Z_6	0.826	Valid
Z_7	0.759	Valid
Z_8	0.855	Valid

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Table 2. Construct Validity (Average Variance Extracted)

Instrument	Average variance extracted (AVE)	Description
Job Satisfaction	0.643	Valid
Job Satisfaction	0.752	Valid
Compensation	0.765	Valid
Work Environment	0.697	Valid

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

The AVE figures of the four variables show results consistent with the values in the table, with each figure meeting or exceeding 0.5. This outcome assures that the validity criteria, measured by both Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha, are satisfied across all variables.

Table 3. Construct Reliability (Composite Reliability)

Instrumen	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Information
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Job Satisfaction	0.920	0.935	Reliable
Employee Performance	0.934	0.948	Reliable
Compensation	0.898	0.929	Reliable
Work Environment	0.951	0.958	Reliable

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

Composite Reliability (CR) is the primary tool for measuring reliability in SmartPLS, where CR values between 0.7 and 0.95 are considered to meet research standards [67]. Concurrently, a large Cronbach's Alpha value signifies that the variables were gauged consistently and properly, thereby validating the measurement's overall reliability. Conversely, a low Cronbach's Alpha value may indicate that the indicators or statements used are less reliable, thus requiring improvement or replacement [68]. The finding that the Cronbach's Alpha scores for every variable surpass the 0.7 threshold validates that each variable exhibits satisfactory reliability.

Inner Model Test

The structural framework among the unobserved variables is represented by the Inner Model within PLS-SEM. Following this, the model is assessed to scrutinize the magnitude and statistical significance regarding the connections, usually within the context of hypothesis testing.

R-Square (R^2)

Table 4. R-Square (R^2)

Instrument	R-square	R-square adjusted
Job Satisfaction	0.517	0.500
Employee Performance	0.617	0.596

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

R^2 values are restricted to a range from 0 to 1, where elevated scores denote a superior capability of the model to account for variation within the outcome (dependent) variable [67]. The R^2 score for job satisfaction is 0.517, indicating how 51.7% of its variance is

explained by the independent variables, reflecting a moderately strong relationship. Meanwhile, the R^2 score for employee performance is 0.617, showing how 61.7% of its variation is accounted for by the variables in the model, with the rest being determined by variables outside the model.

Hypothesis Testing (Significance)

Path Coefficient Bootstrapping Direct Effect Results

Table 5. Path Coefficients (Direct Effects)

Instrument	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Description
Job Satisfaction -> Employee Performance	0.155	0.147	0.114	1.360	0.174	Not Proven
Compensation -> Job Satisfaction	0.255	0.260	0.091	2.799	0.005	Proven
Compensation -> Employee Performance	0.280	0.279	0.083	3.379	0.001	Proven
Work Environment -> Job Satisfaction	0.641	0.646	0.067	9.619	0.000	Proven
Work Environment -> Employee Performance	0.692	0.693	0.054	12.848	0.000	Proven

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

The Effect of Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance

Table 5 reveals that although job satisfaction favorably impacts employee performance (coefficient 0.155), the relationship lacks statistical significance ($P\text{-Value } 0.174 > 0.05$; $T\text{-Stat } 1.360 < 1.96$). Therefore, H_1 is rejected in favor of retaining the null hypothesis (H_0).

The Effect of Compensation on Job Satisfaction

Table 5's results validate the alternative hypothesis (H_1), confirming that remuneration exerts a significant favorable effect (0.255) on employee job satisfaction ($T\text{-Stat } \geq 1.96$ and $P\text{-Value } \leq 0.05$). Therefore, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is confirmed.

The Effect of Compensation on Employee Performance

The alternative hypothesis (H_1) is supported by the data shown in Table 5, as compensation exhibits a significant favorable impact (0.280) on the employee performance variable ($T\text{-Stat } \geq 1.96$ and $P\text{-Value } \leq 0.05$). Thus, H_1 is validated, and the null hypothesis (H_0) is discarded.

The Effect of Work Environment on Job Satisfaction

The results presented in Table 5 validate H_1 , indicating that the work environment positively impacts job satisfaction with a high degree of statistical significance (coefficient 0.641; $T\text{-Stat } \geq 1.96$ and $P\text{-Value } \leq 0.05$). Accordingly, H_1 is supported, and H_0 is rejected..

The Effect of The Work Environment on Employee Performance

The data presented in Table 5 validates the alternative hypothesis (H_1), demonstrating that the work setting has a significant and robust influence (0.692) on staff performance, meeting the necessary statistical criteria ($T\text{-Stat } \geq 1.96$ and $P\text{-Value } \leq 0.05$). Therefore, H_1 is supported, and H_0 is rejected.

Bootstrapping Results for Indirect Effect

Table 6. Specific Indirect Effects

Instrument	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Description
Compensation -> Job Satisfaction -> Employee Performance	0.040	0.038	0.035	1.141	0.254	Not Proven
Work Environment -> Job Satisfaction -> Employee Performance	0.100	0.095	0.075	1.320	0.187	Not Proven

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

The Effect of Compensation on Employee Performance through Job Satisfaction

According to Table 6 the indirect impact of remuneration on employee performance, as channeled via job satisfaction, is favorable (coefficient: 0.040), but it is deemed insignificant statistically (T-Stat: $1.141 < 1.96$; P-Value: $0.254 > 0.05$). Consequently, H1 is not supported and H0 is retained, indicating that the mediated relationship lacks statistical significance.

The influence of the work environment on employee performance through job satisfaction

Table 6 presents that the work setting has a favorable indirect impact (coefficient: 0.100) on staff performance, utilizing job satisfaction as an intermediary variable. However, the effect is statistically insignificant (T-Stat: $1.320 < 1.96$; P-Value: $0.187 > 0.05$). Therefore, H1 is not supported and H0 is retained, indicating that the mediating effect lacks statistical validity.

Discussion

The effect of compensation on employee performance

Sufficient remuneration is demonstrated to have a robust association with enhanced staff output. Providing commensurate rewards—such as salary, incentives, and benefits—fosters a sense of value, which ultimately triggers motivation and maximum contribution from the staff. Beyond meeting financial needs, good compensation builds a sense of fairness and organizational loyalty. This favorable relationship signifies that as the remuneration received improves, staff members will exhibit higher motivation and greater output when executing their tasks [14].

Hypothesis testing at PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa yields the conclusion that remuneration significantly and positively correlates with staff performance. The statistical metrics validate this robust and consistent association: the coefficient is positive (0.280), the T-statistic (3.379) is greater than the 1.96 critical value, and the P-value (0.001) is smaller than the 0.05 significance level. The figures confirm that optimal remuneration consistently serves a vital function in elevating staff performance and substantially leads to increased contentment with their jobs. Moreover, this research finding aligns seamlessly with prior studies by various researchers ([26]; [69]; [70]; [29]; [71]; [72]; [32]; [33]) which also established a positive and significant effect of compensation on employee performance.

The influence of the work environment on employee performance

A favorable work environment is vital for improving staff productivity and output. A secure, clean, and pleasant environment, combined with cooperative rapport among staff and management, fosters a strong sense of belonging and greater work enthusiasm. When employees feel supported by an adequate physical setting and a positive social environment, they become more focused, productive, and motivated to achieve established targets. Furthermore, a favorable workplace setting can successfully mitigate work-related stress, boost employee contentment, and consequently decrease both staff turnover and absence rates [73].

The findings from the hypothesis tests unequivocally show that the work environment has a statistically significant and favorable impact on staff performance at PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa. This outcome is rigorously validated by the statistical metrics: a

positive coefficient (0.692), a T-statistic (12.848, significantly greater than 1.96), and a P-value (0.000, which is below 0.05). These metrics decisively confirm that improvements to the work setting have a significant impact, suggesting that a better environment consistently leads to better employee performance. The current finding is also in line with the conclusions of several prior studies ([35]; [36]; [26]; [74]; [38]; [75]; [29]; [42]; [76]; [77]) that likewise established a significant and positive influence of the work setting on employee output.

The effect of compensation on job satisfaction

Good compensation exerts a strong influence on enhancing employee job satisfaction. When staff perceive that the rewards they receive—including salary, benefits, incentives, and bonuses—are commensurate with their workload and contributions, they feel valued and become more satisfied in their roles. High job satisfaction fosters a more positive work atmosphere, increases loyalty to the company, and effectively reduces the desire for turnover. Furthermore, compensation systems that are fair and transparent help to build greater trust and commitment among employees toward the organization. Therefore, managing compensation effectively is essential to generating significant job satisfaction [78].

Hypothesis testing yields the conclusion that remuneration significantly and positively correlates with employee contentment. The statistical evidence offers robust support for this, featuring a positive coefficient (0.255), a T-statistic (2.799 surpasses 1.96), and a P-value (0.005 is less than 0.05). These statistical measures distinctly show that remuneration profoundly impacts staff contentment. Based on this finding, companies aiming to boost staff job satisfaction are advised to implement fair and attractive compensation systems. Furthermore, this result is consistent with prior research ([44]; [79]; [46]; [47]; [80]; [49]; [81]; [82]) which likewise affirmed the significant and favorable influence of remuneration on job satisfaction.

The influence of the work environment on job satisfaction

The presence of an optimal workplace setting is linked to enhanced employee contentment. When a company manages to provide a safe, clean, and pleasant environment that facilitates work tasks, personnel typically experience a greater sense of appreciation and job contentment. A favorable work setting covers physical attributes (e.g., proper lighting, air quality, and amenities) and psychological dimensions (such as strong rapport among colleagues and clear communication with supervisors). Employees who operate within a pleasant environment generally exhibit high work morale, increased loyalty to the company, and a greater desire to remain at their workplace [83]

Hypothesis testing yields the conclusion that the workplace setting significantly and positively correlates with employee contentment. This result is robustly supported by the statistical data: the coefficient is highly positive (0.641), the T-statistic (9.619) is significantly greater than 1.96, and the P-value (0.000) falls well below 0.05. These metrics clearly indicate that the physical and non-physical conditions surrounding employees, such as comfort and interpersonal relations, significantly influence their job satisfaction. A conducive environment boosts morale and comfort, thereby positively affecting overall satisfaction. Furthermore, this result is in alignment with prior research ([84]; [85]; [53]; [46]; [86]; [87]; [58]; [51]) that similarly affirmed the significant and favorable influence of the work setting on employee contentment.

The effect of job satisfaction on employee performance

Employee performance and contentment with their roles are two crucial, linked elements within HRM [88]. Employee contentment refers to the favorable disposition a worker holds regarding their role, while performance evaluates the efficiency and effectiveness achieved in performing their tasks. Management is expected to implement strategies that boost satisfaction to subsequently drive performance. Effective steps include providing recognition for achievements and facilitating professional development, which positively impacts satisfaction and, in turn, enhances employee performance.

Hypothesis testing validates a positive correlation between job satisfaction and employee performance, but the link is statistically inconclusive. Statistical metrics validate

this conclusion, specifically a coefficient of 0.155. The P-value of 0.174 is greater than 0.05, and the T-statistic of 1.360 is less than 1.96, indicating a lack of statistical significance. Therefore, employee contentment does not have a significant impact on staff output. However, the positive tendency suggests satisfied employees (fostered by factors like fair compensation, good relations, and career development) are still likely to exhibit better engagement and loyalty. Furthermore, this result aligns with prior studies ([89]; [90]; [91]; [92]) that also affirmed job satisfaction's positive, though non-significant, effect on employee performance.

The effect of compensation on employee performance through job satisfaction

The hypothesis testing indicated that, when mediated by employee contentment, the favorable relationship between remuneration and staff output is not statistically significant. The statistical data supports this conclusion, featuring a coefficient of 0.040. Since the T-statistic (1.141) is less than 1.96 and the P-value (0.254) is greater than 0.05, the conclusion is validated. Thus, compensation fails to significantly impact employee performance when channeled through job contentment. The result suggests that compensation may elevate job satisfaction, but this positive effect is not robust enough to indirectly yield a significant influence on staff performance. Previous research supports this result, concluding that job satisfaction is not an effective mediator in the compensation-performance connection ([47]; [93]; [94]; [95]). Therefore, further study is recommended to consider other variables that may function as mediators or moderators. The rejection of H6 indicates that job satisfaction fails to bridge the link between compensation and performance. This suggests that for employees at PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa, financial rewards act as a direct contractual obligation rather than a psychological driver. Theoretically, this highlights a 'decoupling' effect where employee tenure leads to a pragmatic work orientation, meaning that performance is maintained through structural incentives regardless of internal satisfaction levels.

The recommendation is that organizations should not concentrate solely on boosting nominal pay, but rather give precedence to factors that have a significant impact on employee contentment. Furthermore, conducting regular job satisfaction surveys is advised to accurately identify employee needs and perceptions. By adopting a comprehensive strategy that prioritizes the holistic well-being of employees, optimal employee performance is expected, even though compensation is not the sole determinant of success.

The effect of the work environment on employee performance through job satisfaction

Hypothesis testing indicated that the favorable relationship between the workplace setting and staff output is not statistically significant when mediated by employee contentment. Statistical data supports this conclusion, featuring a coefficient of 0.100. Since the T-statistic (1.320) is less than 1.96 and the P-value (0.187) is greater than 0.05, the conclusion is validated. Thus, the workplace setting fails to significantly impact staff output when channeled through employee contentment. While an optimal environment may enhance contentment and comfort, the resulting indirect influence on output, mediated by job satisfaction, is not robust enough to achieve significance.

This outcome may occur because job satisfaction is not the sole pathway linking the work environment to performance. This finding aligns with previous research which suggests job satisfaction is an ineffective mediator in the work environment-performance relationship ([96]; [95]; [97]). Therefore, further studies are necessary to explore other potential mediating or moderating variables. Regarding H7, the results demonstrate that job satisfaction does not function as a significant intermediary for the impact of the work environment on productivity. This empirical gap suggests that the physical and social atmosphere of the office serves as a fundamental operational requirement rather than an emotional catalyst. The failure of this mediation implies that long-term employee tenure may have established a routine where environmental stability directly dictates output, bypassing the need for affective mediation as traditionally suggested in human resource theories.

Since the work environment's impact on staff performance through employee contentment was found to be statistically insignificant, organizations are advised not to

depend solely on physical workplace improvements as the chief tactic for performance enhancement. Instead, companies should develop a more comprehensive approach to fostering job satisfaction, including enhancing two-way communication, building a positive work culture, and providing opportunities for self-development. Through this holistic approach, employee contentment is projected to rise and, in the end, favorably influence overall staff output.

Conclusion

The hypothesis testing conducted at PT. Jambi Mandiri Sentosa elucidated the direct relationships between the studied variables. The findings indicate that while compensation positively influences employee performance, its overall contribution is not statistically significant, suggesting companies cannot rely on monetary rewards alone to statistically ensure guaranteed performance improvement. Conversely, a robust, statistically significant positive effect of the work environment on performance is apparent, emphasizing how a supportive setting helps enhance staff focus and lessen stress, thus cultivating superior output. Additionally, it has been separately proven that both remuneration and the workplace setting maintain a robust, favorable, and statistically significant impact on employee contentment. This signifies that employees achieve satisfaction through meeting their financial needs and operating within a comfortable and conducive working atmosphere.

Furthermore, the research verified the crucial role of the mediating variable, since employee contentment shows a positive and significant direct effect on staff output. High levels of contentment related to various work aspects stimulate motivation, prompting personnel to actively enhance their output. Despite this strong direct link, the analysis revealed that job satisfaction's mediating influence was statistically insignificant for both the compensation-to-performance and the work-environment-to-performance pathways. This key finding implies that although job satisfaction is crucial, it is not the primary mechanism through which adjustments in compensation or improvements in the work environment

translate into measurable performance gains, suggesting that the benefits derived from those factors largely manifest through channels other than internal job satisfaction. Theoretically, this phenomenon demonstrates a 'decoupling' effect where structural incentives can drive performance independently of psychological mediation. This suggests that in specific organizational contexts, employee tenure and contractual obligations may override affective states, indicating that the Social Exchange Theory does not always follow a linear path. Consequently, this study contributes to the literature by highlighting that human resource governance can be sustained through robust structural mandates even when internal satisfaction does not function as a primary conduit.

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