

Job Satisfaction as a Mediator in the Relationship Between Leadership, Organizational Support and Work Motivation

Job Satisfaction as a Mediator

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ABSTRACT

Gender has become an important issue in the workplace, especially related to its influence on job satisfaction and motivation. This study aims to analyze the influence of leadership, organizational support, compensation, and gender on job motivation, with job satisfaction as a mediating variable. This study was conducted on employees of the Muara Tirta Gorontalo Regional Water Company with a quantitative approach and explanatory design. Data were obtained from 145 respondents who were purposively selected from 609 employees, using a closed questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. The analysis was carried out using the path analysis method with the help of Lisrel 8.7 software. The results of the study showed that leadership, organizational support, compensation, and gender had a significant effect on job satisfaction, which then partially mediated the effect on work motivation. Fair gender treatment has been shown to reduce inequality and increase motivation. Compensation and leadership are dominant factors in shaping job satisfaction and motivation. These findings support the Social Exchange Theory which emphasizes the importance of reciprocal relationships between organizations and employees. Practically, the results of this study encourage public sector organizations to implement justice-based policies, effective leadership, and transparent compensation systems to increase work motivation.

Keywords: *Compensation, Gender, Job satisfaction, Leadership, Organizational, Support Work Motivation.*

ABSTRAK

Gender telah menjadi isu penting dalam lingkungan kerja, terutama terkait pengaruhnya terhadap kepuasan dan motivasi kerja. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh kepemimpinan, dukungan organisasi, kompensasi, dan gender terhadap motivasi kerja, dengan kepuasan kerja sebagai variabel mediasi. Studi ini dilakukan pada pegawai Perusahaan Daerah Air Minum Muara Tirta Gorontalo dengan pendekatan kuantitatif dan desain eksplanatif. Data diperoleh dari 145 responden yang dipilih secara purposive dari 609 pegawai, menggunakan kuesioner tertutup berbasis skala Likert lima poin. Analisis dilakukan menggunakan metode

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analisis jalur dengan bantuan perangkat lunak Lisrel 8.7. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan, dukungan organisasi, kompensasi, dan gender berpengaruh signifikan terhadap kepuasan kerja, yang selanjutnya memediasi secara parsial pengaruh terhadap motivasi kerja. Perlakuan gender yang adil terbukti mengurangi kesenjangan dan meningkatkan motivasi. Kompensasi dan kepemimpinan menjadi faktor dominan dalam membentuk kepuasan dan motivasi kerja. Temuan ini mendukung Teori Pertukaran Sosial yang menekankan pentingnya hubungan timbal balik antara organisasi dan karyawan. Secara praktis, hasil studi ini mendorong organisasi sektor publik untuk menerapkan kebijakan berbasis keadilan, kepemimpinan efektif, dan sistem kompensasi yang transparan guna meningkatkan motivasi kerja.

Kata kunci: Kompensasi, Gender, Kepuasan Kerja, Kepemimpinan, Organisasi, Dukungan Motivasi Kerja.

INTRODUCTION

Providing human resources with adequate facilities is crucial for attaining organizational success, as they make the most significant contribution to all organizational activities. The execution and management of the organization's objectives will depend on the caliber of its human resources. In order to thrive in dynamic environments, organizations must continuously evolve and improve themselves in order to attain greater effectiveness. Muara Tirta Gorontalo Regional Drinking Water Company is a public service organization whose human resource management process is characterized by professionalism, accountability, and procedure in order to deliver superior community service. However, there is no doubt that employees' motivation to deliver optimal results for the organization significantly depends on their work completion. Work motivation, a psychological force propelling individual actions, is critical for effective task execution (Amin & Raudhoh, 2021). It arises from intrinsic or extrinsic sources and is influenced by the work environment, shaping behavior, effort, and persistence. Observations at Muara Tirta Gorontalo pinpoint leadership, organizational support, compensation, and gender as key contributors to diminished motivation. These factors interact closely with job satisfaction, which plays a pivotal role in enhancing motivation.

Job satisfaction, an emotional response to work, significantly boosts work motivation and employee performance. Research indicates that higher job satisfaction fosters greater motivation (Fitri et al., 2024). Effective leadership, marked by supportive guidance, enhances motivation and productivity by creating a positive work environment (Nendi et al., 2024). Leaders who cultivate satisfying workplaces inspire subordinates to pursue organizational goals diligently. Additionally, job satisfaction and motivation collectively influence performance, though motivation's direct impact may vary by context (Juhaeni et al., 2023). Compensation, the remuneration employees receive for their efforts, is a key driver of motivation. Fair compensation, aligned with workload, supports employee welfare and strengthens motivation (Koljaan & Rahadi, 2021). Similarly, organizational support, shown through recognizing contributions and prioritizing welfare, enhances motivation (Purwaningtyas & Septyarini, 2021). Employees who perceive strong organizational support exhibit higher motivation, leading to improved organizational outcomes (Ashary, 2022; Rachman, 2022; Zebua et al., 2022).

Gender, an emerging workplace concern, influences job satisfaction and motivation due to role and workload disparities. These disparities often create discomfort, reducing satisfaction and motivation among employees. Studies confirm that gender significantly affects both satisfaction and motivation (Helmida et al., 2021; Husain et al., 2023). High motivation drives enthusiasm and satisfaction, benefiting organizations, whereas low motivation fosters dissatisfaction, negatively impacting performance. Providing high-quality human resources is vital for organizational success, particularly in public service contexts like Muara Tirta Gorontalo Regional Drinking Water Company, where professional human resource management ensures effective community service.

However, low employee work motivation, observed in this organization, hinders optimal performance. Drawing on Social Exchange Theory, this study posits that leadership, organizational support, compensation, and gender influence work motivation through job satisfaction. Prior studies, Smith and Jones (2020) confirm that effective leadership and fair compensation enhance job satisfaction, which boosts motivation, yet few explore this mediation in developing regions like Gorontalo. Brown et al. (2019) also stated that Gender disparities, such as unequal workloads, may also reduce satisfaction, particularly in male-dominated sectors. In Gorontalo's resource-constrained public sector, these challenges are pronounced, necessitating targeted research. This study aims to examine how leadership, organizational support, compensation, and gender affect work motivation via job satisfaction among employees, addressing a gap in context-specific motivation research.

LITERATURE REVIEW & HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Leadership, Employee Job Satisfaction and Work Motivation

Nendi et al. (2024) defined leadership as influencing others to achieve organizational goals through guidance and motivation. Fitri et al. (2024) stated that effective leaders set clear objectives, inspire subordinates, and foster cohesion, enhancing morale. Muaroma and Indriati (2022) found that supportive leadership, providing direction and feedback, boosts job satisfaction. Juhaeni et al. (2023) and Perkasa et al. (2023) noted that transformational and participative styles increase emotional attachment to roles, raising satisfaction. Amin and Raudhoh (2021) and Akbar et al. (2024) emphasized that communication, decision-making, and emotional intelligence skills enhance satisfaction. Surya and Firmansyah (2024) stated that transactional leadership, emphasizing rewards, further improves satisfaction.

Rahmi and Desiana (2023) and Sary and Aprilia (2025) stated that leadership drives work motivation by articulating a vision and encouraging effort, increasing commitment. Emur et al. (2023) and Nendi et al. (2024) confirmed that high-quality leadership fosters motivation and loyalty in public sectors. Hak et al. (2023) and Azijah et al. (2024) highlighted that culturally sensitive leadership mitigates resource constraints, boosting motivation. Harahap et al. (2024) noted that leadership enhances engagement, sustaining motivation. Brown and Smith (2022) identified indicators, including objectivity, assertiveness, and subordinate management. In public sector organizations, leadership is critical for motivating employees under resource limitations, with diverse styles addressing cultural and operational challenges.

H1: Leadership has a positive and significant influence on employee job satisfaction.

H2: Leadership has a positive and significant influence on employee work motivation.

Organizational Support, Employee Job Satisfaction and Work Motivation

Sary and Aprilia (2025) defined organizational support as employees' belief that their organization values their contributions and cares for their well-being, including fair procedures, supervisory support, and rewards. Purwaningtyas and Septyarini (2021) stated that supportive organizations enhance job satisfaction by recognizing efforts and providing growth resources. Fitri et al. (2024) found that perceived support fosters emotional attachment, increasing satisfaction. Juhaeni et al. (2023) noted that feedback and career development opportunities boost morale. Nuswantoro (2021) and Pratami and Muryatini (2022) emphasized that emotional support strengthens satisfaction. Aprilina and Martdianty (2023) highlighted training's role in enhancing satisfaction.

Koljaan and Rahadi (2021) stated that organizational support drives work motivation through fair rewards and safe conditions, increasing goal achievement. Marbun and Jufrizen (2022) confirmed that support enhances motivation in public sectors. Febriarukmini et al. (2023) and Septiani and Frianto (2023) noted that instrumental support, like resources, boosts motivation. Umihastanti and Frianto (2022) and Lusiana et al. (2024) stated that addressing complaints sustains motivation. Lestari and Santoso

(2020) highlighted that support mitigates bureaucratic constraints. Indicators include valuing contributions, addressing complaints, and assisting with challenges (Sary & Aprilia, 2025). In public sector organizations, emotional and instrumental support fosters motivation, addressing resource and operational challenges.

H3: Organizational Support has a positive and significant influence on employee job satisfaction.

H4: Organizational Support has a positive and significant influence on employee work motivation.

Compensation, Employee Job Satisfaction and Work Motivation

Koljaan and Rahadi (2021) defined compensation as financial and non-financial rewards for work. Fitri et al. (2024) stated that fair compensation, aligned with workload, enhances job satisfaction by meeting expectations. Juhaeni et al. (2023) found that equitable rewards increase satisfaction, as employees feel valued. Purwaningtyas & Septyarini (2021) noted that non-financial rewards, like praise, foster positive attitudes. Nurhayat and Wahyuni (2021) and Rika and Suci (2022) emphasized that intrinsic rewards, such as recognition, boost satisfaction. Munparidah et al. (2023) and Febriarukmi et al. (2023) stated that fair pay structures enhance satisfaction. Samal et al. (2021) highlighted that equitable compensation reduces turnover by ensuring fairness.

Purwaningtyas and Septyarini (2021) stated that fair compensation boosts work motivation by signaling appreciation, encouraging performance. Samal et al. (2021) and Sary and Aprilia (2025) confirmed that performance-aligned compensation sustains effort. Sari and Wijaya (2022) and Nurrahma (2025) emphasized that performance-based pay enhances motivation in public sectors. Ardini and Pradana (2021), Nining et al. (2023), and Putri and Iryanti (2024) noted that equitable bonuses drive motivation. Equity theory supports this, suggesting that perceived fairness in rewards increases motivation and satisfaction (Hidayat, 2021). Koljaan and Rahadi (2021) identified indicators, including salary adequacy, allowance fairness, and bonus allocation. In public sector organizations, fair compensation is critical, as budget constraints often limit financial rewards, necessitating balanced pay structures to maintain motivation and reduce turnover intentions while addressing economic pressures and performance demands.

H5: Compensation has a positive and significant influence on employee job satisfaction.

H6: Compensation has a positive and significant influence on employee work motivation.

Gender, Employee Job Satisfaction and Work Motivation

Redmond and McGuinness (2025) defined gender as socially constructed roles distinguishing men and women, shaping workplace dynamics. Husain et al. (2023) stated that disparities, like unequal workloads or stereotypes, reduce job satisfaction by causing discomfort. Helmida et al. (2021) found that women in male-dominated sectors face heavier tasks, lowering satisfaction. Siregar and Wardi (2023) and Yuniarti et al. (2023) noted that equitable treatment enhances satisfaction for both genders. Mahmudah et al. (2022) and Malonda et al. (2025) emphasized that fairness in role assignments boosts satisfaction. Aprillia and Setiawan (2022) highlighted that gender equity in career progression opportunities fosters satisfaction.

Helmida et al. (2021) stated that gender influences work motivation, with equitable treatment fostering motivation. Husain et al. (2023) found that fairness perceptions drive motivation, with motivated employees showing commitment. Lestari and Santoso (2020) and Aprillia and Setiawan (2022) highlighted that gender equity interventions, like balanced roles, boost motivation in public sectors. Malonda et al. (2025) noted that addressing stereotypes improves motivation. Yuniarti et al. (2023) emphasized that gender-inclusive cultures enhance motivation by ensuring fairness. Redmond and McGuinness (2025) identified indicators, including roles, mentality, and behavior. In public sector organizations, tackling gender stereotypes through equity policies and

inclusive cultures enhances motivation, ensuring fairness across genders and supporting career progression for all employees.

H7: Gender has a positive and significant influence on employee job satisfaction.

H8: Gender has a positive influence on employee work motivation.

The Effect of Job Satisfaction

Fitri et al. (2024) defined job satisfaction as an emotional response to work, reflecting alignment between expectations and rewards. Nendi et al. (2024) stated that satisfied employees show greater enthusiasm, driving work motivation. Juhaeni et al. (2023) found that higher satisfaction correlates with increased motivation, enhancing performance. Sary and Aprilia (2025) identified indicators, including salary satisfaction, work meaningfulness, promotion opportunities, supervisor support, and colleague relationships. Ramadhina and Frianto (2023) and Hidayat et al. (2024) noted that satisfaction boosts retention in public sectors. Afuan et al. (2023) emphasized that satisfaction improves organizational commitment, fostering long-term employee engagement.

Amin and Raudhoh (2021) stated that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between leadership and work motivation, as supportive leadership increases satisfaction. Purwaningtyas and Septyarini (2021) found that organizational support, through recognition, enhances satisfaction, strengthening motivation. Koljaan and Rahadi (2021) noted that fair compensation fosters satisfaction, driving motivation. Husain et al. (2023) confirmed that gender equity raises satisfaction, affecting motivation. Ratmawati et al. (2023), Aura and Desiana (2023), and Perkasa et al. (2023) validated satisfaction’s mediating role across contexts. Blau (2022) applied Social Exchange Theory, suggesting reciprocal benefits enhance satisfaction, mediating motivation. Sari and Wijaya (2022) confirmed this in public sectors, emphasizing satisfaction’s role in linking antecedents to motivation. In public sector organizations, satisfaction mediates key relationships, addressing operational challenges and supporting employee performance through balanced rewards, support, and equity, ensuring sustainable motivation and organizational success.

H9: Job Satisfaction has a positive and significant influence on work motivation.

H10: Job satisfaction mediates the effect between leadership and work motivation.

H11: Job satisfaction mediates the effect between organizational support and work motivation.

H12: Job satisfaction mediates the effect between compensation and work motivation.

H13: Job satisfaction mediates the effect between gender and work motivation.

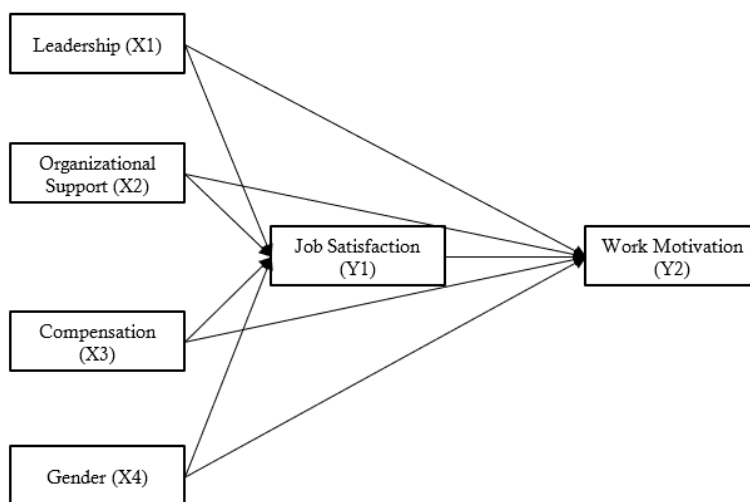


Figure 1. Research Framework

The research framework in Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between several independent variables, namely leadership (X1), organizational support (X2), compensation (X3), and gender (X4), with two main dependent variables, namely job satisfaction (Y1) and work motivation (Y2). This model emphasizes the role of job satisfaction as a mediating variable in bridging the influence of independent variables on work motivation. This study formulates hypotheses that reflect direct and indirect relationships between variables. The hypothesis tests the direct influence of leadership, organizational support, compensation, and gender on job satisfaction and work motivation. Specifically, leadership and organizational support are assumed to have a significant influence on both aspects because they play an important role in creating a conducive work environment. Compensation is seen as an external factor that drives job satisfaction and morale, while gender is analyzed as a demographic factor that may influence employee perceptions and work motivation. The direct relationship between job satisfaction and work motivation, which is considered the main relationship in this framework. Job satisfaction is a bridge in strengthening the influence of leadership, organizational support, compensation, and gender on work motivation. This framework not only tests the direct influence between variables, but also pays attention to employee psychological dynamics through mediation, thus providing a more comprehensive picture of the factors that drive work motivation in an organization.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory method, which aims to explain the causal effect between the variables studied. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires to 145 respondents who were selected purposively from a total population of 609 employees in a particular organization or institution. The selection of respondents took into account their active involvement in organizational activities and relevant work experience, so that the data collected can represent actual conditions in the field. This study examines several independent variables, namely leadership, organizational support, and compensation, which are assumed to have a direct or indirect influence on work motivation. In addition, there are two mediating variables, namely job satisfaction and work motivation, which are analyzed for their role in bridging the influence of independent variables on increasing employee motivation as the expected end result. The research instrument was compiled in the form of a closed questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale. Each indicator is compiled based on valid empirical theories and references to ensure that the measurement of the variables takes place reliably and accurately. The collected data were analyzed using the path analysis method with the help of LISREL software version 8.7. This method was chosen because it is able to evaluate complex causal relationships between variables, both directly and indirectly through mediating variables. In addition, LISREL also allows for a comprehensive evaluation of model suitability through the goodness-of-fit test.

Operational research variables include Leadership, Organizational Support, Compensation, Gender, Job Satisfaction, and Work Motivation, complete with indicators, number of items, and reference sources. Leadership is measured through six indicators, such as decision-making ability and emotional control, based on Perkasa et al. (2023). Organizational Support is assessed from five indicators, including attention to member welfare, with references to Marbun and Jufrizen (2022) and Umihastanti & Frianto (2022). Compensation includes five indicators, such as bonuses and non-financial compensation, referring to Munparidah et al. (2023) and Nurrahma (2025). Gender is measured through five aspects, such as roles and behaviors, based on Morisna et al. (2025). Job Satisfaction is assessed from four indicators, such as co-worker support, with sources Ramadhina and Frianto (2023) and Hidayat et al. (2024). Work Motivation is measured through six indicators, including initiative and sense of responsibility, according to Zebua et al. (2022) (Table 1). This definition provides a solid foundation for measuring variables in the research context, ensuring consistency and relevance.

Table 1. Indicators of Construct

Construct	Indicators	Number of Items	Reference Sources
Leadership (X1)	Decision-making ability, emotional control, ability to motivate, responsibility, ability to delegate, and communication skills	6	Perkasa et al. (2023)
Organizational Support (X2)	Attention to member welfare, appreciation of contributions, concern for job satisfaction, assistance in personal development, and availability of resources	5	Marbun & Jufrizen (2022), Umihastanti & Frianto (2022)
Compensation (X3)	Bonuses, salary fairness, non-financial compensation, recognition, and timely payment	5	Munparidah et al. (2023), Nurrahma (2025)
Gender (X4)	Gender roles, gender-based behaviors, gender norms, gender equality awareness, and gender-based expectations	5	Morisna et al. (2025)
Job Satisfaction (Y1)	Co-worker support, work environment, clarity of job roles, and feeling of achievement	4	Ramadhina & Frianto (2023), Hidayat et al. (2024)
Work Motivation (Y2)	Initiative, sense of responsibility, enthusiasm for tasks, goal orientation, persistence in completing work, and desire for self-development	6	Zebua et al. (2022)

RESULTS

Table 2 presents the validity and reliability of the research constructs using Cronbach’s Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). All constructs demonstrate high internal consistency, with Cronbach’s Alpha values ranging from 0.80 to 0.88, exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.70. Composite Reliability values are also robust (0.83–0.89), indicating strong construct reliability. The AVE values, ranging from 0.50 to 0.55, meet the minimum requirement of 0.50, supporting convergent validity. These results confirm that the measurement instruments used in the study are both reliable and valid for assessing leadership, organizational support, compensation, gender, job satisfaction, and work motivation.

Table 2. Validity and Reliability of Research Constructs

Construct	Cronbach’s Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Leadership (X1)	0.85	0.87	0.52
Organizational Support (X2)	0.82	0.84	0.51
Compensation (X3)	0.88	0.89	0.54
Gender (X4)	0.80	0.83	0.50
Job Satisfaction (Y1)	0.83	0.85	0.53
Work Motivation (Y2)	0.86	0.88	0.55

The results of the LISREL analysis are presented in the form of a structural diagram that shows the causal relationship between variables in the model being tested. This output provides an overview of how strong the influence of each independent variable is on job satisfaction and motivation, both directly and through mediating variables, thus strengthening the validity of the findings and supporting scientific interpretation.

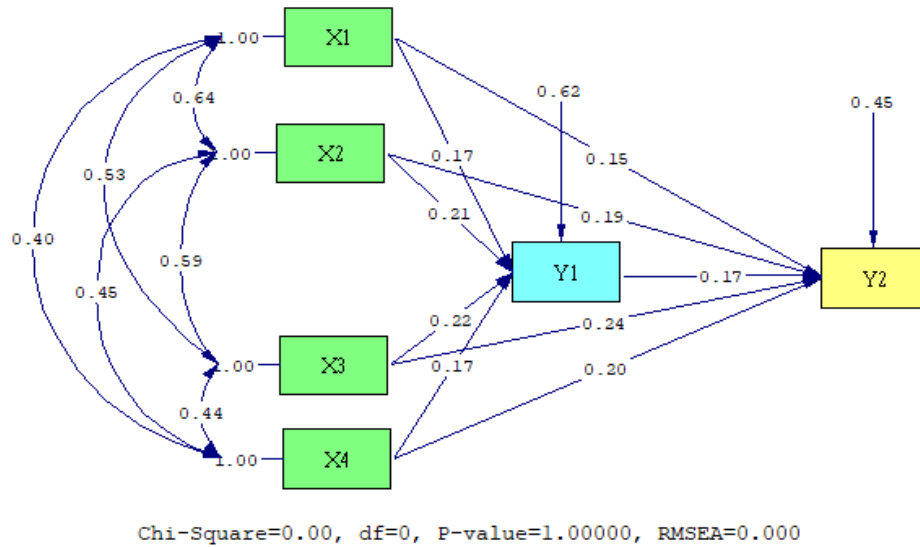
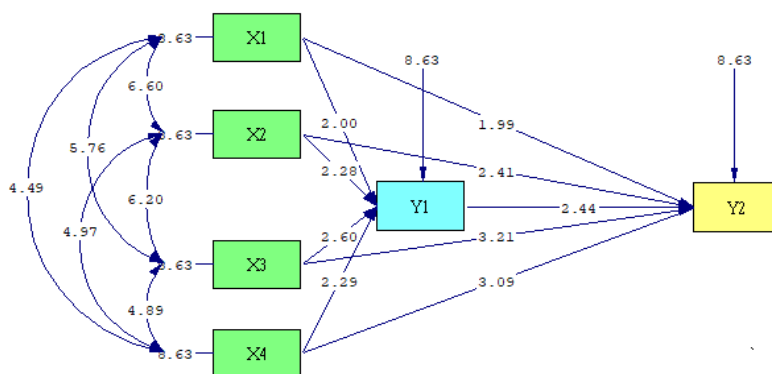


Figure 2. Empirical Model Score Path Coefficient

The results of the study in Figure 2 show an empirical analysis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) revealing a significant relationship between leadership variables, organizational support, compensation, and gender on job satisfaction. As shown in Figure 2, leadership (X1) shows a path coefficient of 0.17 on job satisfaction (Y1), indicating a fairly strong positive influence. Organizational support (X2) has a coefficient of 0.21, indicating that the perception of support from the organization also strengthens employee job satisfaction. Meanwhile, compensation (X3) provides the highest contribution with a coefficient of 0.22, confirming that providing adequate rewards plays an important role in increasing job satisfaction (Salsabilah & Syafutri, 2025). Furthermore, gender (X4) also shows a positive influence with a coefficient of 0.17, showing differences in perception or work experience based on gender which also influences job satisfaction. These four findings statistically support hypotheses H1, H3, H5, and H7, which state that each independent variable has a positive and significant influence on job satisfaction. Overall, these results reinforce the importance of internal and individual factors in creating a work environment that supports employee satisfaction (Saluy & Raharjo, 2021; López-Cabarcos et al., 2022).

Organizational support, compensation, and gender not only have a positive effect on job satisfaction but also directly affect work motivation (Ghasempour et al., 2021; Amaradipta et al., 2022). Path analysis shows that the direct effect of leadership (X1 → Y2) on work motivation has a coefficient of 0.15, indicating a significant positive contribution. Organizational support (X2 → Y2) has a coefficient of 0.19, indicating that perceptions of support from the organization can encourage employee work enthusiasm. Compensation (X3 → Y2) has the greatest impact on work motivation with a coefficient of 0.24, indicating that adequate rewards play a major role in increasing motivation. Meanwhile, gender (X4 → Y2) shows a positive effect with a coefficient of 0.20, supporting that gender-based work experience also determines the level of motivation. Job satisfaction (Y1) to work motivation (Y2) produces a coefficient of 0.17, supporting hypothesis H9 and indicating that the higher the job satisfaction, the higher the motivation felt by employees (Fauzan, 2022). This finding confirms that job satisfaction has an important mediating role in shaping work motivation, as well as strengthening the importance of managerial intervention in creating a supportive work environment.



Chi-Square=0.00, df=0, P-value=1.00000, RMSEA=0.000

Figure 3. T-Calculated Empirical Model Score

Figure 3 further strengthens the relationship between variables in the research model through statistical significance testing. The resulting T-statistic value shows that all paths of influence towards job satisfaction (Y1) are statistically significant. The leadership path (X1 → Y1) obtained a T value of 2.20, organizational support (X2 → Y1) of 2.28, compensation (X3 → Y1) of 2.60, and gender (X4 → Y1) of 2.29. All of these values exceed the minimum threshold of 1.96 at a significance level of $p < 0.05$, which means that the four relationships are statistically significant and do not occur by chance. Thus, these results empirically support hypotheses H1, H3, H5, and H7, which state that leadership, organizational support, compensation, and gender have a positive and significant influence on job satisfaction. This finding confirms that various internal organizational factors and individual characteristics can significantly influence employee perceptions of job satisfaction (Jaya et al., 2023). This statistical validation strengthens the reliability of the research model and provides a strong foundation for managerial implications in improving job satisfaction through effective leadership strategies, fair compensation systems, and inclusive work environments (Anggarini et al., 2021).

The T-statistic value for the leadership path (X1 → Y2) is 1.99, which although close to the minimum threshold of 1.96, still shows a significant effect. Organizational support (X2 → Y2) has a T-value of 2.41, compensation (X3 → Y2) of 3.21, and gender (X4 → Y2) of 3.09, all above the significance threshold ($p < 0.05$). These results support hypotheses H2, H4, H6, and H8, which state that the four variables have a positive and significant effect on work motivation. In addition, the path from job satisfaction (Y1) to work motivation (Y2) also shows a significant effect, with a T-value of 2.44, which confirms hypothesis H9 (Table 3). This indicates that job satisfaction plays an important role in encouraging employee enthusiasm and motivation in carrying out their duties. Overall, these findings underscore the importance of a strategic approach to improving work motivation through effective leadership, strong organizational support, appropriate compensation, and inclusive gender diversity management.

The results of the study indicate that the direct path from leadership (X1), organizational support (X2), compensation (X3), and gender (X4) to work motivation (Y2) is statistically significant. In addition, the path from job satisfaction (Y1) to work motivation is also significant. These findings indicate the presence of partial mediation, where job satisfaction acts as a mediating variable that partially bridges the influence of independent variables on work motivation. Thus, hypotheses H10 to H13 are supported by empirical data. Partial mediation means that although leadership, organizational support, compensation, and gender directly affect work motivation, these influences also occur indirectly through increased job satisfaction. This shows that the work motivation of public sector employees is not only determined by external and structural factors, but also by their level of satisfaction with their jobs. This finding is important because it provides a strategic understanding that in order to optimally increase work motivation,

organizations need to not only strengthen external factors such as leadership and compensation systems, but also pay attention to how these factors shape employee job satisfaction, which ultimately has an impact on increasing overall work enthusiasm.

Table 3. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Path Coefficients

Path	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Path Coefficient	T-Statistic	Hypothesis	P-Value
X1 → Y1	Leadership	Job Satisfaction	0.17	2.20	H1	0.0278
X2 → Y1	Organizational Support	Job Satisfaction	0.21	2.28	H3	0.0226
X3 → Y1	Compensation	Job Satisfaction	0.22	2.60	H5	0.0093
X4 → Y1	Gender	Job Satisfaction	0.17	2.29	H7	0.0220
X1 → Y2	Leadership	Work Motivation	0.15	1.99	H2	0.0466
X2 → Y2	Organizational Support	Work Motivation	0.19	2.41	H4	0.0159
X3 → Y2	Compensation	Work Motivation	0.24	3.21	H6	0.0013
X4 → Y2	Gender	Work Motivation	0.20	3.09	H8	0.0020
Y1 → Y2	Job Satisfaction	Work Motivation	0.17	2.44	H9	0.0146

DISCUSSION

The results of the study on job satisfaction show that providing compensation that is in accordance with expectations will increase employee job satisfaction (Fitri et al. (2024). This finding is in line with Koljaan and Rahadi (2021) who define it as a fair imbalance of employee contributions, thus encouraging satisfaction. Non-financial rewards, praise, fostering positive attitudes, which show that competitive ones produce quite high job satisfaction (Purwaningtyas & Septyarini, 2021). Findings regarding gender on job satisfaction show no gender spike in increasing employee job satisfaction. Gender, as a social and cultural difference between men and women, is manifested in emotional and psychological dimensions, which shape the dynamics of the workplace (Husain et al., 2023). Yuniarti et al. (2023) noted that satisfaction in increasing satisfaction, supporting a positive and statistically significant relationship between gender and job satisfaction, ability requires tailored management to achieve organizational goals without gender differences (Ghayas & Siddiqui, 2012; Umar et al., 2016).

Leadership towards work motivation shows that effective leadership fosters employee willingness, commitment, and loyalty to achieve organizational goals. These results are consistent with Rahmi and Desiana (2023), who argue that a leader's capacity to inspire and enable employees to exert effort determines organizational success. Nendi et al. (2024) found that high-quality leadership increases motivation and loyalty in the public sector (Sary & Aprilia, 2025). Organizational support for work motivation shows that strong organizational support increases employee work motivation. The organization's readiness to recognize contributions and foster self-confidence is support, which emphasizes employee well-being (Koljaan & Rahadi, 2021; Febriarukmini et al., 2023). Compensation for work motivation shows that compensation that is in line with expectations will increase employee work motivation. Organizations anticipate compensation to produce superior performance (Purwaningtyas & Septyarini, 2021; Samal et al. 2021).

Gender on work motivation shows that fair gender treatment has a positive impact on employee motivation. Gender includes emotional and psychological aspects, which vary over time and space (Yuniarti et al., 2023; Malonda et al., 2025). These results are in line with Helmida et al. (2021), which states that fair treatment fosters motivation, increases commitment. Job satisfaction on work motivation shows that high job satisfaction will increase employee work motivation (Juhaeni et al., 2023). These results are in line with Fitri et al. (2024) who define job satisfaction as an emotional response that reflects the

alignment between expectations and rewards, thus encouraging motivation. Leadership on work motivation through job satisfaction shows a direct role of leadership on job satisfaction and job satisfaction on work motivation (Amin & Raudhoh, 2021). This proves that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between leadership and work motivation effectively (Fahdy, et al., 2020; Perkasa et al., 2023; Renggi et al., 2024).

Compensation for work motivation through job satisfaction shows a positive and significant indirect effect of compensation on work motivation through job satisfaction (Samal et al., 2021). This confirms the important role of compensation in enhancing motivation. This result is consistent with Koljaan and Rahadi (2021), who noted that fair compensation drives satisfaction, driving motivation. This result contrasts with Helmida et al. (2021), who found that gender influences motivation, but is in line with Husain et al. (2023) and Malonda et al. (2025) who noted no significant gender difference in motivation when fair treatment is ensured. This insight encourages organizations to foster supportive environments and fair practices to maintain employee motivation and organizational success (Oamen & Omorenuwa, 2021).

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine how leadership, organizational support, compensation, and gender influence work motivation through job satisfaction among employees at Muara Tirta Gorontalo Regional Drinking Water Company. The findings confirm that leadership, organizational support, compensation, and gender have significant positive effects on job satisfaction, which in turn directly enhances work motivation. Additionally, these factors directly influence work motivation, with job satisfaction partially mediating their effects. Notably, equitable gender treatment eliminates disparities in satisfaction and motivation, while effective leadership and fair compensation foster a supportive work environment. These results align with Social Exchange Theory, highlighting job satisfaction's pivotal role in transforming workplace factors into motivational outcomes, thereby addressing the issue of low motivation in a public sector context. The findings offer practical implications for public sector organizations to enhance motivation through improved leadership training, equitable compensation systems, and supportive policies, ensuring gender fairness. However, limitations include the study's focus on a single organization, potentially limiting generalizability, and reliance on self-reported questionnaires, which may introduce bias. Future research should explore longitudinal designs to assess causality, include diverse organizations to enhance generalizability, and investigate additional mediators, such as work engagement, to further elucidate motivation dynamics in public sector settings.

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