

Work Motivation and Its Impact on Employee Satisfaction and Performance in Islamic Boarding Schools

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ABSTRACT:

This study aims to examine the impact of work motivation on employee satisfaction and performance at Al-Qur'an Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School located in East Java. In addition, the study explores the role of employee satisfaction as a mediating variable in the relationship between work motivation and employee performance. The research employs a quantitative approach, utilizing data analysis techniques through Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). Data were collected through a survey using questionnaires distributed to employees within the boarding school environment. To evaluate the research model, tests were conducted to assess validity and reliability using convergent validity, discriminant validity, composite reliability, as well as path coefficient analysis to determine the relationships between variables. The results indicate that work motivation has a significant and positive influence on employee satisfaction, with a T-statistic value of 4.636 ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, employee satisfaction significantly and positively affects performance, with a T-statistic value of 3.473 ($p < 0.05$). However, work motivation does not have a significant direct effect on employee performance, as shown by the significance value of 0.166 (> 0.05). Nonetheless, work motivation has an indirect influence on performance through employee satisfaction as a mediating variable, as evidenced by the path coefficient value, which indicates a full mediation effect. These findings provide recommendations for the management of Al-Qur'an Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School to formulate policies that enhance work motivation and employee satisfaction in order to improve performance. Moreover, this study contributes theoretically to the development of human resource management studies, particularly within the context of Islamic-based educational institutions.

Keywords: *Work motivation, Employee satisfaction, Employee performance, Al-Qur'an Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School*

Article History

Received: 24-03-2025

Revised: 11-10-2025

Accepted: 12-10-2025

Published: 13-10-2025

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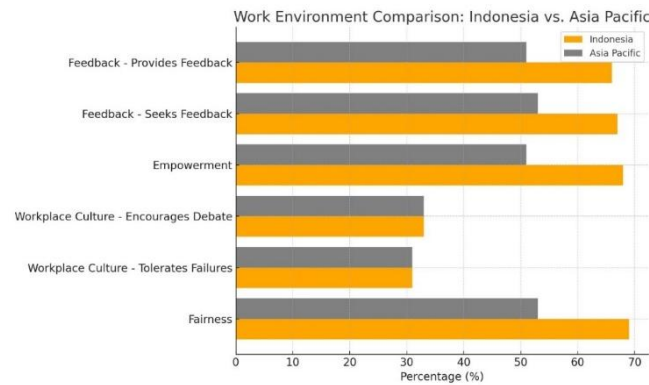
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I. INTRODUCTION

In general, there are three approaches related to the factors that influence employee work motivation. The first approach is a psychological approach that emphasizes internal individual factors, such as needs, emotions, and personal aspirations. The second approach is a managerial approach that focuses on the relationship between external incentives, such as financial rewards or recognition, and employee productivity. The third approach is a sociocultural approach that considers the influence of organizational culture, collective values, and interpersonal relationships in the workplace. These three approaches help explain how work motivation can be influenced by interrelated factors.

Among the influencing factors, there are other relevant and recent factors related to this study, such as employee satisfaction and performance. This is supported by data obtained through reports from leading consulting firms; among others, Deloitte (2023) which show that in 2020-2023, digitalization has significantly changed the work motivation landscape. These changes include increased expectations for work-life balance, work flexibility, and concern for mental well-being. In addition, surveys from PwC (2023) show that employees in Indonesia are generally more positive about the work environment, culture, and relationships with managers, which contribute to higher levels of employee satisfaction.



Source : PwC (2023)

Figure 1. Comparison of Indonesia and Asia Pacific Work Environment

The data in Figure 1 comparison between the work environment in Indonesia and Asia Pacific shows several advantages and differences. In Indonesia, aspects such as fairness and tolerance for failures have a higher percentage rate than the average in Asia Pacific. This is in line with a survey that stated that employees in Indonesia tend to be more positive about their work environment. In addition, providing feedback and empowerment in the Hadith Qudsi are stated as follows:

"Later on the Day of Resurrection, several books will be brought which have been sealed and will be presented to Allah SWT. (At that time) Allah will say: "Throw these all away." The angel said: "By Your power, we will not see in them anything but what is good." Furthermore, Allah said: "Indeed, this content was not done because of Me, and I will not accept anything except what is done because it seeks My pleasure".

It is reported to us in the Hadith Qudsi that among the diary books that the person concerned had predicted would be good (would place him in a high place later), it turned out that after being placed before Allah SWT, its contents were rejected because it was not done sincerely for the sake of Allah. Allah said to His Angels: "Take the book down because it has no right to be lifted or accepted. Therefore throw it away."

The Angels make notes as they are, according to their level of knowledge, but Allah informs the Angels of the nature of the book, that the deeds done by the person concerned are outwardly good and good, but in essence are not good, bad, and rotten. According to Allah's assessment, these deeds are not done because of expecting Allah's pleasure. Allah is All-Knowing of what is implied behind the deeds done by a person. Allah SWT knows that the person concerned does good deeds not because of Allah but because of showing off, because he wants to be praised or flattered, because he wants to get a star of honor and so on. Allah will not accept deeds that are not done because of Allah, does not accept anything that is done without sincerity for His sake.

In another Hadith Qudsi the Prophet saw. Once mentioned the following:

"Allah Almighty says: "Whoever does charity for Me but in his charity associates himself with other than Me, then the charity is entirely for himself (it is his own responsibility). I am detached from it, and I am the least in need of fellowship." Caliph Umar bin Hattab ra said about this sincerity as follows: "The most important practice is to fulfill what Allah SWT has made fardhukan to do and do wara' (protect oneself from what Allah SWT has forbidden and straighten out one's intentions in worshipping Allah SWT).

When Umar bin Abdul Aziz was appointed caliph in 99 Hijriah, several of his friends, including Salim and Abdullah, a tabi'i who was famous for his wara' and piety, sent letters to him to warn him: "Know that Allah's help and Allah's assistance to His servants is in proportion to their intentions. Whoever's intention is perfect, Allah's assistance to him will also be perfect. On the other hand, if his intention is less than perfect, Allah's assistance will be reduced in proportion to his intention."

In relation to employee performance, the hadith qudsi above explains that in carrying out work activities, it must be based on good intentions because of Allah SWT. Certainly, the work that is done will be protected from things that are forbidden, and recorded as a deed that is accepted by Allah SWT. and can be reaped the fruit on the last day. Also, when working, always try to achieve His pleasure, do not expect praise and flattery from humans, let alone just for a promotion.

Thus, a Muslim will always be awake in his series of performance, protected from the wrath of humans, especially the wrath of Allah. Because of the caution he makes, and places his hopes only on the Creator. By laying such a high foundation, it makes other people unable to harm him, feel safe, and not too anxious and worried about the future excessively. Focus on the work being done now, so that the performance he does is optimal. And also recorded quite significant figures in Indonesia, indicating a management pattern that supports open communication and employee involvement in decision-making. However, there is room for improvement in aspects such as encouraging debate, where Indonesia's percentage is still slightly below the Asia Pacific average. The correlation between these factors and recent trends caused by the pandemic, such as increased work flexibility and work-life balance, suggests that companies that invest in fairness, empowerment, and tolerance for failure can create a more productive work environment and support employee well-being. Implementing strategies that align with these trends can further improve employee satisfaction and performance levels in Indonesia.

The phenomenon of employee performance in the Al-Qur'an Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School environment is greatly influenced by organizational culture and job satisfaction. A strong organizational culture can increase employee adaptation, motivation, and productivity. Job satisfaction is a key factor in supporting performance, where the higher the satisfaction felt, the better the performance produced. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, a positive organizational culture can encourage optimal performance achievement and support the sustainability of the institution in a sustainable manner.

Employee work motivation, satisfaction, and performance have long been topics of interest in management and organizational literature. Verses in the Qur'an and academic literature mention the importance of hard work, fairness, and recognition in building optimal performance. As in the Qur'an, Surah At-Taubah verse 105 below:

وَقُلْ اَعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَى اللّٰهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَسَتُرَدُّونَ اِلٰى عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ
wa qulī'malū fa sayarallāhu 'amalakum wa rasūluhū wal-mu'minūn, wa saturaddūna ilā 'ālimil-ghaibi wasy-syahādati fa yunabbi'ukum bimā kuntum ta'malūn.

Meaning: Say (Prophet Muhammad), "Work! Then Allah, His Messenger, and the believers will see your work. You will be returned to the Knower of the unseen and the seen. Then He will inform you of what you used to do."

In the context of Islam, the commentators interpret Surah At-Taubah verse 105 as an encouragement for Allah's servants to work hard, because good deeds are the focus of His assessment. Humans are required to pay attention to the benefits of their work in order to achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter. All good deeds will be supervised by Allah and His Messenger, so that each individual is responsible in the hereafter. This interpretation is in line with Stephen P. Robbins' motivation theory, which emphasizes the importance of intensity and perseverance in achieving goals. In conventional, work motivation is seen as the main drive to achieve productive results, while employee satisfaction is an important element that affects the quality of life of individuals and the efficiency of the organization. As for employee performance, in the end, it is a reflection of the synergy between motivation and satisfaction. In addition, it also reflects the extent to which employee planning, monitoring, and development in an organization are effective or not.

Researchers are interested in analyzing this with the object of research in the form of Islamic boarding schools. Islamic boarding schools are unique educational institutions because they integrate spiritual values into their work culture. This provides novelty to the research, as well as being a reference for further research and providing strategic insights for stakeholders in managing employee motivation, satisfaction, and performance in the religious-based education sector.

Based on the explanation of the background that has been described previously and the explanation of the problem, this study further explains whether there is an influence of work motivation on employee satisfaction and employee performance at the Al-Quran Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School, Surabaya. In addition, this study also explores the role of employee satisfaction as a mediating variable in influencing the relationship between work motivation and employee performance. The title that will be carried out in this study is "The Influence of Work Motivation on Employee Satisfaction and Performance at the Al-Quran Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School in East Java". This study uses a quantitative approach by involving employees at the Al-Quran Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School,

Surabaya as research objects. This research is important to be carried out as an effort to increase work motivation and employee satisfaction so that it is expected to encourage increased employee performance in supporting the operation of the Islamic boarding school.

The results of this study are expected to contribute to the management of Pesantren Al-Quran Nurul Falah Surabaya in understanding the importance of work motivation as a factor that creates employee satisfaction and has a positive impact on employee performance. In addition, this study is also expected to provide theoretical and practical insights for academics and practitioners in the field of human resource management, especially in the context of religious organizations. By understanding these dynamics, this study is expected to support the development of policies that create a more productive and harmonious work environment.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Work Motivation

Work motivation is a fundamental factor in human resource management that plays a crucial role in enhancing individual and organizational productivity. Motivation not only drives individuals to work harder but also fosters a positive and sustainable work culture. In an organizational context, understanding work motivation helps leaders devise effective strategies to improve employee well-being and satisfaction. With high motivation, individuals tend to exhibit stronger dedication, engagement, and commitment to their tasks and responsibilities.

Sunarya (2022) explains that motivation theories have been developed through various studies to understand the factors influencing individual work behavior. One of the most renowned theories is Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which categorizes motivation factors into two groups: motivational (intrinsic) factors and hygiene (extrinsic) factors. Motivational factors, such as achievement and recognition, directly contribute to job satisfaction, while hygiene factors, such as salary and working conditions, only prevent dissatisfaction but do not necessarily increase satisfaction. Implementing this theory in organizations enables more effective employee motivation management, creating a more productive work environment.

Work motivation is closely linked to job satisfaction, which ultimately impacts employee retention in an organization (Hutajulu et al., 2021; Rantau & Agustriyana, 2023; Siregar, 2023). Research shows that employees with high motivation levels are more satisfied with their jobs and tend to stay longer in a company (Fahmi et al., 2021; Wahyuni, 2015). This indicates that organizations that successfully build strong work motivation can reduce employee turnover rates and retain competent talent. Factors such as performance appreciation, opportunities for growth, and recognition of employee contributions are crucial elements in fostering sustainable job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction not only improves retention but also helps build employee loyalty toward the company. When individuals feel valued and have opportunities for development, they are more motivated to contribute their best efforts to the organization. Therefore, companies need to design programs that enhance both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to ensure employees remain motivated to work optimally. These strategies not only impact individual performance but also improve the organization's reputation as a workplace that supports employee well-being (Fahmi et al., 2021; Wahyuni, 2015).

Amalia et al. (2024) reveal that in an increasingly competitive work environment, work motivation plays a key role in improving employee effectiveness and productivity. Motivation stems from internal factors that drive individuals to achieve goals and meet work expectations. Research has proven that employees with high motivation levels tend to be more disciplined, creative, and achievement-oriented. Thus, work motivation can serve as a primary driver for enhancing both individual and organizational productivity.

Good employee performance is not solely determined by technical skills but also by the extent to which individuals feel motivated to achieve better results (Ardhani & Ratnasari, 2019; Hanafi & Zulkifli, 2018; Handoko et al., 2022). Various studies indicate that strong motivation can increase employee engagement levels, ultimately leading to higher-quality work output. Therefore, organizations need to continuously evaluate the factors that can drive work motivation, whether through

reward systems, training, or career development aligned with individual needs (Ida, 2023; Marjaya & Pasaribu, 2019).

Leadership significantly influences employee motivation within an organization. The leadership style adopted by a leader determines the extent to which employees feel motivated to perform at their best. One widely studied approach is transformational leadership, where leaders act as inspirers who encourage employees to grow and reach their full potential. Effective leadership helps create a supportive work environment that motivates employees to work with enthusiasm.

In practice, leaders who provide constructive feedback, appreciate employee efforts, and support professional development are more capable of enhancing team motivation. Leaders who care about employee well-being can build harmonious working relationships, ultimately contributing to increased productivity and employee loyalty. Therefore, organizations must ensure that their leaders possess the skills to motivate teams so that company performance can continue to improve positively.

Work motivation also serves as a mediator linking various organizational factors with employee performance. Factors such as compensation, work environment, and peer relationships will be more effective in enhancing performance if accompanied by high motivation levels. When employees feel motivated, they are better equipped to overcome challenges, stay focused on goals, and actively contribute to organizational achievements.

Numerous studies affirm that without adequate motivation, various organizational policies aimed at improving performance will struggle to yield optimal results (Amalia et al., 2024; Marhadi et al., 2024). Therefore, companies must adopt an approach that emphasizes work motivation in human resource management strategies. By implementing policies that promote both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, organizations can ensure that their workforce remains enthusiastic and productive in the long run.

In addition to leadership and compensation, the work environment also significantly impacts employee motivation. A comfortable, supportive, and flexible work environment can boost employee morale and make them more motivated in their tasks. Factors such as harmonious workplace relationships, effective communication, and management support contribute to creating a conducive work environment for productivity.

Conversely, a high-pressure work environment with minimal support can diminish employee motivation, ultimately leading to poor performance. Therefore, organizations must regularly evaluate the factors that influence the work environment to ensure it remains positive and supportive of work motivation. With a healthy work environment, employees will be more motivated to work optimally and contribute more significantly to the organization's success.

Work motivation not only impacts individuals but also directly contributes to overall organizational effectiveness. Motivated employees tend to have a strong work ethic, are more productive, and are more proactive in completing tasks and addressing work challenges. When work motivation is effectively managed, organizations can achieve their business objectives more efficiently.

Organizational effectiveness is also influenced by how well a company can create systems that support work motivation. Implementing policies focused on employee well-being, development opportunities, and performance recognition will enhance employee morale and loyalty to the company. Therefore, work motivation strategies should be an integral part of human resource management to ensure sustainable organizational growth.

Work Motivation in Islam

Every human being strives to earn a living to meet their needs. However, not all means of seeking sustenance bring blessings. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how Islam teaches the proper way to seek sustenance with sincere intentions and honest efforts. As stated in the following hadith Qudsi:

"Allah SWT said to the angels in charge of providing sustenance for the children of Adam: Whoever among My servants desires only one goal (which is solely for the afterlife), ensure their sustenance in the heavens and the earth. And whoever seeks their sustenance honestly while striving for justice, grant them good sustenance and make it easy for them. However, if they exceed their limits beyond that, let them strive for whatever they desire. In the end, they will not achieve more than what I have decreed for them." (HQR Abu Naim from Abu Hurairah r.a.)

Allah SWT instructs the angels responsible for distributing sustenance to humankind: "Whoever among My servants, whether male or female, has a life purpose solely to worship and devote themselves to Me—so that all their deeds, including prayer, acts of worship, life, and death, are only for Me—ensure that their sustenance is guaranteed, both from the heavens and the earth. Open for them the easiest ways to obtain it."

This divine statement serves as a promise from Allah to His pious and pure-hearted servants who sincerely work and dedicate themselves to worshiping Him. Allah prepares and provides them with easy means to obtain their sustenance. Similarly, in Hadith Qudsi, Allah SWT reminds us that fearing Him, drawing closer to Him, and preparing for the afterlife are the most important duties of a believer. This ensures that work is done with sincerity, avoiding wrongdoing, and encouraging goodness among peers.

More explicitly, another Hadith Qudsi conveys: "Any of My servants who you find striving on this earth with sincerity and seeking sustenance honestly to feed and clothe themselves, care for their body, and support their dependents, provide them with good sustenance and ease their efforts." This divine statement is also a promise from the Most Merciful and Most Compassionate Allah to His devoted servants. Those who work with sincerity will be granted blessings, guidance, and ease in their efforts. Consequently, their sustenance will come effortlessly, free from difficulties, because they have answered the divine call to strive, work, and contribute positively. From an Islamic perspective, these verses and Hadith Qudsi offer guidance for employees to maintain sincerity, seek halal work, and carry out responsibilities with integrity. By doing so, Allah will provide ease, guidance, and protection from hardships and obstacles.

Employee Satisfaction

Employee satisfaction or job satisfaction is an important factor that influences performance and productivity in an organization. Job satisfaction reflects the positive feelings that individuals get after evaluating their work experience, where aspects such as the work environment, organizational culture, and leadership can play a role as major factors. With high job satisfaction, employees are more motivated to work better, and have a stronger emotional attachment to the company.

In the modern workplace, employee satisfaction is a key indicator in determining the effectiveness of human resource management. A study states that high levels of job satisfaction can reduce employee turnover rates, reduce absenteeism rates, and increase loyalty to the company (Hadian, 2022). This shows that organizations that focus on the well-being and satisfaction of their employees can create a more stable and productive work environment.

Many studies have shown that job satisfaction has a direct relationship with employee performance. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs tend to be more motivated to achieve their work targets. Conversely, job dissatisfaction can lead to decreased morale, which ultimately has a negative impact on organizational productivity. Therefore, ensuring that employees feel valued and comfortable in the workplace is one of the main strategies in improving organizational performance.

In other studies, employee engagement has also been cited as an important factor in driving improved performance. Employees who are emotionally and intellectually engaged with their work are more likely to make positive contributions to the organization (Hadian, 2022). Additionally, organizations that foster a culture of engagement can create a more dynamic and collaborative work environment, allowing for continued growth and innovation.

Organizational culture is one of the main elements that influence job satisfaction. Research has found that a work environment based on good organizational culture, especially in the use of information technology, can increase job satisfaction and employee performance (Hendrato et al., 2021). Organizations that implement a work culture that supports innovation and collaboration tend to have more satisfied and productive employees.

Other studies also show that leadership style in an organization plays a big role in shaping job satisfaction. Leadership that supports and strengthens teamwork can increase employee loyalty and improve the overall work atmosphere (Specchia et al., 2021). Therefore, leaders who are able to build good communication and support employee development can contribute significantly to increasing job satisfaction.

In addition to material aspects and the work environment, spirituality and work ethics factors have also been shown to influence employee satisfaction. Studies have found that work ethics and religiosity can increase work motivation and employee satisfaction in organizations (Kamis et al., 2024). This factor is becoming increasingly relevant in the modern workplace, where the balance between professional life and personal values is increasingly a major concern.

Other studies also support these findings, showing that implementing spirituality in the workplace can help improve employee productivity (Osman-Gani et al., 2013). When individuals feel that their work has meaning and is aligned with their personal values, they will be more motivated to work with greater dedication. Therefore, organizations that want to increase job satisfaction need to consider the aspect of spirituality as part of their human resource management strategy.

The type of compensation an employee receives is an important factor in determining their level of job satisfaction. Studies have shown that leadership, compensation, and organizational culture have a significant impact on employee job satisfaction (I. A. Rahman et al., 2017). By providing fair and competitive compensation, companies can increase employee loyalty and motivation to work more optimally.

However, other studies have shown that compensation alone is not enough to ensure high job satisfaction. Studies have found that while compensation is an important factor, job satisfaction is also greatly influenced by the work environment and overall workplace conditions (Idris et al., 2020). This confirms that companies need to adopt a holistic approach to improving employee satisfaction, by focusing not only on financial incentives but also other aspects of well-being.

In addition to compensation and organizational culture, workplace communication also plays an important role in increasing employee satisfaction. Research shows that effective communication, especially in the form of assertive communication, can increase clarity in work roles and reduce the potential for conflict in the workplace (M. S. Rahman et al., 2022). With good communication, employees will feel more appreciated and have a better understanding of the company's expectations and goals.

Openness in communication also allows companies to receive feedback from employees, thus creating a more inclusive and supportive work environment. In the long run, effective communication will have a positive impact on increasing employee job satisfaction and productivity. Therefore, organizations need to ensure that the communication structure in the workplace is running well to support employee engagement and well-being.

Improving employee satisfaction requires a comprehensive approach, covering aspects such as the work environment, compensation, and interpersonal relationships within the organization. An effective strategy is to provide opportunities for employees to develop, either through training or career advancement. With these opportunities, employees will feel more motivated and have a stronger connection to the company.

The implementation of flexible work policies is also a factor that can increase job satisfaction. Organizations that provide a balance between work and personal life tend to have higher levels of satisfaction among employees. Thus, company management needs to consider policies that can support employee welfare as a whole.

Employee Satisfaction According to Islam

An attitude of gratitude and patience is the main key in facing life. In the following hadith qudsi, Allah SWT describes the virtue of a people who continue to praise Him in all circumstances: Allah SWT says in Hadith Qudsi: "O 'Isa! I will definitely raise up after you a community. If they get what they like, they praise Allah and give thanks. If they get what they don't like, they remain diligent and patient. Even though they are not tolerant or knowledgeable 'Isa said: "YaRabbi! How could this happen to them when they are not tolerant or knowledgeable?" Allah Almighty said: "I give them space and knowledge of some of My attributes!" (HQR Ahmad, Thabarani in al-Kabir, al-Ausath and al-Hakim, Abu Na'im, Hakim, and Baihaqi sourced from Abid-Darda)

People who receive guidance from Allah SWT and are ready to carry out His commands have special characteristics. When they obtain something pleasant, they will praise Allah, and when faced with something undesirable, they do not complain or despair.

Allah describes this nation with two sides. On the positive side, they have the qualities of gratitude and patience. However, on the negative side, they may lack broad-mindedness and knowledge. An attitude of broad-mindedness and knowledge does not appear by itself, but must be trained and developed. Therefore, as the people of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, we should try to have these two qualities in order to live a life in accordance with our identity as Muslims.

Apart from that, Allah SWT once revealed to the Prophet David (AS): "On the Day of Resurrection, a servant will come before Me with good deeds, and I will definitely give him all the pleasures of heaven." Prophet David asked, "O Rabbi, who is that servant?" Allah answered, "He is a believer who tries to meet the needs of his fellow men, whether his efforts are successful or not." (HR. Al-Khathib and Ibn 'Asakir from Ali ra). In the Hadith Qudsi above, Allah swt. informs us that He has revealed to the Prophet David (AS) about His believer servants, who during their life on earth have done good deeds that have benefited them with full sincerity and confidence. When we face His Rabb on the Day of Resurrection, Allah will surely give us a reward in the form of the pleasures of heaven and glorify Him.

According to the judgment of ordinary people, it is considered strange, how can one deed put the doer in a very pleasant place and be entitled to such expensive glory? That is what prompted the Prophet David (peace be upon him) to ask His Lord: Who is the essence of Your servant who is like that?" Allah SWT explained to the Prophet David (AS) that His noble servants are those who have true faith, obey Him, follow His instructions, and try to do good to fellow Muslims. One form of charity that they do is to work with enthusiasm and motivation to help fulfill the needs of other people with sincerity and conviction, whether their efforts are successful or not.

There is no doubt that a person with such a nature has a high degree, namely sincere faith and a clean soul without any ulterior motives. Because of the nobility of his heart, he is free from mental illness, and does not harbor hatred or resentment towards anyone. The main characteristic emphasized in the Hadith Qudsi above is the tendency to help and assist others.

There are many hadiths of Rasulullah SAW that show how great the virtues and rewards of helping others are. One of them is his words: "A Muslim is a brother to another Muslim, he must not oppress him or hand him over to the enemy. Whoever fulfills the needs of his brother, Allah will fulfill his needs. Whoever removes one of his brother's difficulties in the world, Allah will remove his difficulties in the hereafter. And whoever covers the faults of his brother, Allah will cover his faults on the Day of Resurrection." (Narrated by Muslim from Ibn Umar).

In the context of employee satisfaction, a leader and employee will work selflessly, like to help and assist others and fulfill the needs of each other. Thus, a harmonious work environment will be created between superiors and subordinates, both of whom always feel satisfied because their needs are met, and do not mistreat each other. Because their foundation is faith and obedience to Allah SWT. Allah will also help fulfill the needs of both.

Employee Performance

Employee performance is one of the crucial aspects in achieving company goals. Optimal performance can help companies achieve efficiency, productivity, and competitive advantage. Factors that influence employee performance can be grouped into several main categories, including competence, training, motivation, and work environment. These four factors are closely related and contribute significantly to the success of the organization in managing human resources.

In this context, various studies have shown that motivation has a major influence on employee performance. For example, Motivation is very important because it can increase employee enthusiasm and enthusiasm in working, which has a positive impact on their performance (Yanti & Saroyo, 2024). High motivation will encourage employees to work harder, take initiative, and achieve better work results. Thus, companies need to implement the right strategies in increasing motivation, such as providing incentives, awards, or career development.

In addition, motivation cannot stand alone in improving employee performance. Motivation is also influenced by work discipline and job satisfaction, which in many cases, have a close relationship with each other. Motivation, discipline, and job satisfaction interact with each other and contribute to improving employee performance (Harahap & Tirtayasa, 2020). High work discipline will ensure that employees work according to the rules and targets that have been set, while job satisfaction can increase

employee loyalty and dedication to the company.

In addition to motivation, employee training is a fundamental factor that can improve their performance. Good training can prepare employees to face challenges and changes, including during times of crisis such as during the Covid-19 pandemic (O. S. Pratama & Riana, 2022). Training allows employees to improve their skills, adapt to technological changes, and increase efficiency in their work. Therefore, companies that want to increase their competitiveness must regularly hold training for employees.

Other studies also reveal that in addition to training, positive communication and organizational culture have a major impact on employee performance. Good communication can improve coordination between employees, streamline workflow, and encourage more effective collaboration (Fitriana & Melvina, 2021). A positive organizational culture also has a significant impact by creating a comfortable work environment and supporting employee development. Thus, companies must ensure that internal communication runs well and the organizational culture implemented can motivate employees.

The work environment is also a factor that is no less important in influencing employee performance. A conducive work environment affects employee productivity (Arini, 2023). A comfortable and supportive work environment can help employees stay focused on completing their tasks. In addition, a good environment can also improve the psychological well-being of employees, so that they feel more comfortable and motivated in working.

Research shows that factors such as discipline, workload, and compensation should be considered in an effort to improve employee performance (Parashakti, 2023). High work discipline will help create a more structured and productive environment. Meanwhile, proportional workload distribution will reduce stress and fatigue levels, so that employees can work more optimally. In addition, fair and competitive compensation will increase employee job satisfaction and loyalty to the company.

From here, employee performance cannot be viewed as a single result of one factor alone, but rather an accumulation of various elements that support each other. Each factor, be it motivation, training, or work environment, has a very important and interrelated role in realizing high employee performance. Therefore, companies must understand that improving performance is not only about providing motivation or training, but also creating a supportive work environment and providing proper compensation for employees.

Employee Performance According to Islam

In a Hadith Qudsi it is stated: "On the Day of Judgment, several charity notebooks will be brought which have been sealed, then placed before Allah SWT. At that time, Allah will say: 'Throw them all away.' The angels said: 'By Your majesty, we see nothing in this record except goodness.' Then Allah said: 'Indeed, these deeds are not done because of Me, and I will not accept anything unless it is done with the intention of seeking My pleasure.'" (HR. Bazzar and Thabarani, with two sanad whose narrators are also included in the book *al-Jami'ush Sahih*).

This Hadith Qudsi reminds us that there are records of deeds that seem good in the eyes of humans and are expected to bring a high position in the afterlife. However, when presented to Allah SWT, these deeds are rejected because they are not done with pure sincerity for Him. Allah said to His Angels: "Take the book down because it has no right to be lifted or accepted. Therefore throw it away."

The angels record the deeds of humans as they appear based on their knowledge. However, Allah SWT, with His vast knowledge, reveals the true nature of the record. Although outwardly the deeds appear good and beautiful, in reality, they are worthless in the sight of Allah because they are not done with the intention of seeking His pleasure.

Allah is All-Knowing of everything that is hidden behind a person's deeds. He knows whether a person does good because he is sincere or because of the urge to show off, to be praised, flattered, or to gain worldly rewards. Allah SWT does not accept deeds that are done not for His sake and does not accept worship that is not based on sincerity.

In another Hadith Qudsi, Rasulullah SAW conveyed the words of Allah: "Whoever does charity for Me but in his charity associates himself with Me with other than Me, then that charity is entirely his own responsibility. I am free from him, because I am the Substance that requires least association."

Caliph Umar bin Khattab ra once said about sincerity: "The most important practice is carrying out

what Allah SWT has required, protecting oneself from things that He has forbidden, and straightening out one's intentions in worshipping Him."

When Umar bin Abdul Aziz was appointed caliph in 99 Hijri, several of his companions, including Salim and Abdullah—two *tabi'in* known for their piety and piety—sent a letter to him with a warning: "Know that Allah's help and assistance to a servant is proportional to his intention. Whoever has a perfect intention, then Allah's help will be perfect for him. Conversely, if his intention is less than perfect, then Allah's help will be reduced according to the level of his intention."

In relation to employee performance, the *hadith qudsi* above explains that in carrying out work activities, it must be based on good intentions because of Allah SWT. Certainly, the work that is done will be protected from things that are forbidden, and recorded as a deed that is accepted by Allah SWT. and can be reaped the fruit on the last day. Also, when working, always try to achieve His pleasure, do not expect praise and flattery from humans, let alone just for a promotion.

Thus, a Muslim will always be awake in his series of performance, protected from the wrath of humans, especially the wrath of Allah. Because of the caution he makes, and places his hopes only on the Creator. By laying such a high foundation, it makes other people unable to harm him, feel safe, and not too anxious and worried about the future excessively. Focus on the work being done now, so that the performance he does is optimal.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

Research Approach

This study uses a quantitative method with a descriptive approach and analysis of the relationship between variables. The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of work motivation on employee satisfaction and performance in the Islamic boarding school environment. Research data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed to Islamic boarding school employees as respondents. After the data was collected, the analysis was carried out using SmartPLS 3 statistical software, which allows testing of structural relationships between variables more efficiently and accurately.

Analysis Model

The analysis model in this study was designed to provide a systematic approach in evaluating the relationship between research variables. The analysis process begins with the identification of the analysis objectives (Step 1), which aims to understand the direction and focus of the research. Furthermore, the identification of research variables (Step 2) is carried out to determine the main factors to be tested in the research model.

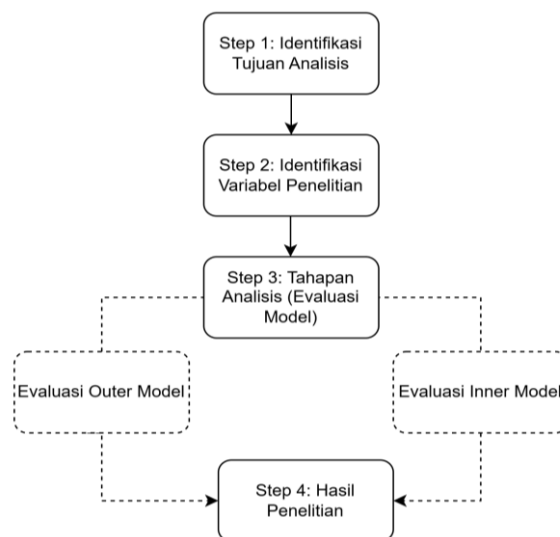
In the analysis stage (Step 3), the model is tested through two aspects of evaluation, namely Outer model evaluation and Inner model evaluation. Outer model evaluation aims to assess the validity and reliability of indicators that form latent variables, while Inner model evaluation is used to test the structural relationship between variables that have been determined. After going through this evaluation process, the last step in the analysis model is to present the research results (Step 4), which provide conclusions based on the empirical findings that have been analyzed.

Purpose of Analysis

The purpose of the analysis of this study is to identify the direct influence of work motivation on employee satisfaction. By understanding this relationship, we can find out how motivational factors such as physical needs, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization can affect the level of satisfaction felt by employees. The results of this analysis will provide insight to management regarding the importance of creating a supportive work environment, which in turn can increase job satisfaction and reduce turnover rates.

Then, this analysis also aims to determine the direct influence of work motivation on employee performance. High motivation can encourage employees to be more productive, improve work quality, and meet set targets. By identifying this relationship, organizations can implement more effective strategies in increasing employee motivation, which is essential to achieving company goals.

This study aims to analyze the role of employee satisfaction as a mediator in the relationship between work motivation and performance. By ensuring that satisfaction acts as a bridge in the relationship, organizations can formulate steps that not only increase motivation but also focus on meeting the needs that underlie job satisfaction. These findings will form the basis for strategic decision making that can improve overall performance through an employee-oriented approach.



Source: Author's own work (2025)

Figure 2. Analysis Model

Identification of Research Variables

The research variables consist of one independent variable, namely work motivation, which functions as the main driver in determining employee performance and satisfaction results. Work motivation is measured through several indicators, including physical needs, security, social, appreciation, and self-actualization (Kusuma & Mashariono, 2016). Physical needs include the fulfillment of basic needs such as salary and facilities that support welfare, while security is related to protection in work and a stable work environment. Social interaction in the workplace and appreciation from superiors also contribute to motivation, as well as opportunities to develop self-potential through education and training.

The intervening variable is employee satisfaction, which describes the level of satisfaction felt by employees with various aspects of the workplace. Indicators of employee satisfaction include satisfaction with the type of work performed, the quality of supervision from superiors, relationships with coworkers, rewards received, and opportunities for promotion (Robbins, 2011). By evaluating satisfaction across these dimensions, organizations can identify areas that need improvement to improve the overall employee experience.

The endogenous variable is employee performance, which is measured through indicators of work quantity, work quality, and punctuality (Dharma, 2003). Work quantity reflects the volume of output produced by employees, while work quality assesses the standard and accuracy of the work output. Punctuality indicates the ability of employees to meet set deadlines. The relationship between work motivation, employee satisfaction, and employee performance provides important insights into workplace dynamics and can help organizations formulate more effective strategies to drive employee productivity and well-being.

Analysis Stages

Outer model evaluation

The analysis stage in this study begins with the evaluation of the Outer model, which aims to test the validity and reliability of the indicators used in measuring the research variables. The first step in this evaluation is convergent validity. In this phase, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value is calculated to ensure that each indicator is able to explain the measured variables sufficiently. Sekaran, U. & Bougie (2013) said that if the AVE value is more than 0.5, then it can be stated that the indicator has a good ability to reflect the intended construct. By confirming this convergence, researchers can

ensure that the indicators used are relevant and contribute to the understanding of the measured variables.

After evaluating convergent validity, the next step is discriminant validity, which aims to test for differences between variables in the model. This is important to ensure that each variable can be measured uniquely without overlapping with other variables. To test discriminant validity, the square root value of the variable's AVE must be higher than the correlation between other variables. If this is met, it can be concluded that the variable has a clear identity and can be relied on to be interpreted separately.

Outer model evaluation stage, composite reliability becomes an important indicator to test the overall consistency of the indicators in measuring the relevant variables. Composite reliability provides information on how well the indicators collectively contribute to representing the variables. Sekaran, U. & Bougie (2013) said that a composite reliability value greater than 0.7 is generally considered to indicate that the indicators have good internal consistency, meaning that they are reliable for further use in the analysis.

Cronbach alpha is also measured to assess the internal reliability of each variable. Cronbach alpha provides a value that indicates the extent to which indicators in a variable are correlated with each other and contribute to the same measurement. A Cronbach alpha value above 0.7 indicates a good level of reliability, so researchers can be sure that the measurements taken are stable and accurate. This helps in ensuring that data obtained from surveys or other measurement instruments are reliable.

Inner model evaluation

After completing the Outer model evaluation, the next stage of analysis is the Inner model evaluation, which focuses on the relationship between variables in the structural model that has been built. The first step in this evaluation is the path coefficient analysis, which aims to test the strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The path coefficient provides a regression coefficient value that describes the extent to which changes in the independent variable (work motivation) affect the dependent variable (employee satisfaction and employee performance). A higher path coefficient value indicates a stronger relationship, so researchers can draw conclusions about the direct influence of work motivation on employee satisfaction and performance.

R-square (R^2) is also an important stage in the evaluation of the Inner model, where R^2 measures the ability of independent variables to explain variations in the dependent variable. R-square provides information about the proportion of the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables in the model. The R^2 value ranges between 0 and 1, where a higher value indicates that the model has good predictive ability. For example, an R^2 value of 0.7 indicates that 70% of the variation in employee satisfaction or performance can be explained by work motivation and satisfaction as mediators. This result base is very important to determine how effective the model is in interpreting data and relationships between variables.

In the context of this study, the evaluation of the Inner model is crucial because it helps researchers to understand the complex relationship between work motivation, employee satisfaction, and employee performance. By conducting this analysis, researchers can identify the direct influence as well as the interaction between these variables. This allows researchers to provide relevant and evidence-based recommendations to improve employee motivation and organizational performance.

Operational Definition of Variables

Table 1. Operational Definition of Variables

Variables	Symbol	Description
Work motivation	MK	Work motivation is an internal and external drive that influences employees to achieve work goals, which includes fulfilling physiological needs (such as adequate salary), security (job security and a conducive work environment), social (good relationships with coworkers), appreciation (recognition of achievements), and self-actualization (opportunity to develop and achieve maximum potential).
Employee satisfaction	KK	Employee satisfaction is an indicator that measures people's liking for the work they do. Usually, it refers to the subjective assessment by workers of their own work as a whole. Job satisfaction is related to the sociological and economic concepts of the benefit functions obtained from work.
Employee	KR	Employee performance is a managerial process in planning, monitoring,

Variables	Symbol	Description
performance		developing. In terms of planning, an effective organization sets performance expectations and goals of a group of employees to provide space for their efforts in achieving organizational goals. In terms of monitoring, an effective organization will conduct continuous assessments. With the aim of facilitating feedback from employees and work groups in relation to the process of achieving their goals. In terms of development, an effective organization requires evaluation and advice.

Source: Researcher (2025)

Table 2. Variable Indicator

Variables	Fill in the Questionnaire	Definition
Work Motivation (X)	Physical Needs (X1)	Basic needs required for survival, such as food, drink and shelter.
	Sense of Security (X2)	Feeling protected from physical and psychological harm in the work environment.
	Social (X3)	The need to be accepted in a group and to have good relationships with coworkers.
	Awards (X4)	Recognition of employee contributions and work achievements.
	Self-Manifestation (X5)	Actualization of self-potential through work and achieving personal goals.
Employee satisfaction (Y)	Job Satisfaction (Y1)	The level of employee happiness with the nature or content of their work.
	Reward (Y2)	Satisfaction with the financial and non-financial compensation or rewards received.
	Supervision (Y3)	Quality of support, direction, and supervision from superiors.
	Co-Workers (Y4)	Satisfaction with relationships and cooperation with coworkers.
	Promotion Opportunities (Y5)	Satisfaction with opportunities for promotion or career development.
Employee Performance (Z)	Quantity (Z1)	The amount of work completed by an employee in a given time period.
	Quality (Z2)	The degree of conformity of work results to established standards or expectations.
	Punctuality (Z3)	How quickly and accurately tasks or work are completed according to the specified deadline.

Source: Researcher (2025)

Types and Sources of Data

The data sources used in this study are primary and secondary sources. According to Abdullah (2015:246), primary sources are data sources that directly provide data to data collectors or researchers. The primary data used in this study were distributed directly to respondents using a questionnaire. According to Abdullah (2015:247) a questionnaire is a data collection technique by providing written statements that need to be answered by respondents. The previously defined variables were measured through statements from respondents in the questionnaire using a Likert scale of 1-5 as shown in the following table:

Table 3. Likert Scale

Scale	Code	Meaning
1	STS	Strongly Disagree
2	TS	Don't agree
3	N	Neutral
4	S	Agree
5	SS	Strongly agree

Source: Researcher (2025)

Likert scale according to Abdullah (2015:183) is a type of scale that measures respondents' attitudes by summing up their responses to statements related to indicators of a concept or variable being measured. According to Abdullah (2015:245) secondary data is primary data that has been further

processed and presented by the primary data collector or by another party, the primary data is presented. Secondary data in this study were obtained by means of literature study as a supporter of the theory related to this study which was obtained from journals, books, and websites.

Population and Sample

Population

Population is a group of individuals or units whose characteristics will be observed in a study. If the population is too large, researchers need to take a sample, which is a small part of the population, for further study (Abdullah, 2015:226). In this study, the population used is all employees working at Pesantren Al-Qur'an Nurul Falah. The employees in question include educators (teachers), education personnel (administrative staff), and employees who play a role in the operation of the pesantren.

Sample

A sample is a part of a population that reflects the characteristics of the entire population (Abdullah, 2015:227). In this study, the sampling technique used was non-probability sampling, which is a sample selection method in which each individual in the population does not have the same opportunity to be selected (Abdullah, 2015:226). The type of non-probability sampling applied is purposive sampling, which is a sampling technique based on certain criteria that have been determined by the researcher (Abdullah, 2015:241). The number of samples in this study is adjusted to the analysis method used, namely Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Square (PLS). Based on Hair et al. (2014), the SEM-PLS method requires a minimum sample size of four times the number of variable indicators used.

Sampling was carried out using the non-probability sampling method, and the distribution of questionnaires was carried out offline in the form of questionnaires given directly to employees of the Nurul Falah Al-Qur'an Islamic Boarding School. The respondent criteria in this study are:

1. Men or women who work at the Al-Qur'an Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School as educators, educational staff, or administrative staff.
2. Have a minimum work period of 6 months, because this work period is considered sufficient to understand working conditions and factors that influence motivation, satisfaction and performance.
3. Willing to fill out the questionnaire voluntarily and provide the information needed in this study.

Analysis Techniques

This study uses the Structural Equation Modeling – Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) method with SmartPLS 3 software. SEM-PLS is applied to evaluate the relationship between variables and analyze the direct and indirect effects on the intention to donate with trust as a mediating variable. The SEM-PLS technique allows theory testing and helps in determining whether there is a relationship and influence between independent (endogenous) variables. Hair et al. (2021) SEM-PLS operates similarly to multiple regression because it is able to analyze the relationship between latent variables and their relationship with supporting indicators. Therefore, this technique can be used in exploratory research to develop further theories.

The SEM-PLS approach was chosen in this study because it aims to test the relationship between latent variables and their indicators, as well as to test the mediation effect between exogenous and endogenous variables in the PLS path model. The analysis process in SEM-PLS consists of two main stages (Hair et al., 2014):

1. The first stage is testing the measurement model or Outer model which aims to evaluate the validity and reliability of latent variables through their indicators.
2. The second stage is testing the structural model or inner model which aims to determine the influence between variables based on the R-square value and path coefficient.

Descriptive Statistics

According to Gudivada (2017) Descriptive statistics is an analysis method used to describe or explain research data through various parameters, such as minimum, maximum, mean, standard deviation, total, range, and data distribution. The main purpose of descriptive statistics is to provide an overview of the sample data profile before further statistical analysis is carried out to test the hypothesis. In addition, descriptive statistics play a role in explaining the characteristics of variables in research and providing relevant numerical information about sample data.

Measurement (Outer model)

Validity Test

Validity testing is conducted to assess the extent to which the measuring instrument used can measure the survey results accurately. Validity evaluation of the questionnaire is also conducted through validity testing.

Table 4. Validity Test Measurement

Test	Parameter	Rule of Thumb
Convergent validity	Loading factor (Outer Loading)	>0.70
	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	>0.50
Discriminant validity	Fornell Larcker	>0.70
	Cross Loading	>0.70

Source: Hair et al., 2014

Reliability Test

Reliability test is used to assess the consistency of measuring instruments in measuring variable indicators. If the respondent's answers remain consistent, then the instrument can be categorized as reliable.

Table 5. Reliability Test Measurement

Test	Parameter	Rule of Thumb
Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	>0.70
	Composite reliability	>0.70

Source: Hair et al., 2014

Structural (Inner model)

Inner model evaluation aims to measure the relationship between variables, which can be analyzed through the R-square value and path coefficient. According to Hair et al. (2021) the Inner model testing is done by reviewing the R-square value and its level of significance. R-square, or coefficient of determination, is an indicator that shows the extent to which exogenous variables collectively affect endogenous variables in the prediction model. According to Huseein (2015), Inner model testing is carried out to ensure the reliability and accuracy of the structural model. The quality of the model can be assessed based on the following criteria:

1. An R-square of 0.75 indicates that the model has high or substantial predictive power.
2. An R-square of 0.50 indicates that the model is in the moderate category.
3. An R-square of 0.25 indicates that the model has low or weak predictive power.

Thus, the closer the value is to 1, the stronger the model used, while the further away from the value of 1, the weaker the model. In addition, the path coefficient is analyzed using the bootstrapping procedure, where the results are compared with the significance value. A path is considered significant if the T-Statistic > 1.96 or P-Value < 0.05.

Indirect effect

Indirect effect analysis is conducted to evaluate the indirect impact between exogenous and endogenous variables (Hair et al., 2014). This indirect effect arises due to the presence of mediating or intervening variables. Therefore, indirect effect testing aims to test the hypothesis regarding the indirect impact of exogenous variables on endogenous variables mediated by intervening variables. Indirect effect hypothesis testing using SmartPLS with the following criteria:

1. If the T-Statistic value is >1.96 and P-Value <0.05, then the hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that the mediating variable has a significant influence on the relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables.
2. If the T-Statistic value is <1.96 and P-Value >0.05, then the hypothesis is rejected. This means that the mediating variable does not have a significant effect on the relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables.

With the SEM-PLS method, this study is able to test the relationship between latent variables and evaluate the direct and indirect impacts in the model used. This allows the study to better understand how the factors tested contribute to the intention to donate with trust as a mediating variable.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Hypothesis Testing

Path coefficients are used to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between latent variables in a model. A larger coefficient value indicates a stronger relationship between the variables. To determine the significance of the relationship, the t-statistic and p-value are used. If the t-statistic value is ≥ 1.96 at a significance level of 5%, then the relationship is considered significant. Similarly, if the p-value is ≤ 0.05 , the relationship is also considered significant (Ghozali, 2016).

Table 6. Path coefficient – (Direct effect)

Relationship Between Variables	Path Coefficient (β)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T-statistics	P-value	Information
Work Motivation → Employee Satisfaction	0.760	0.759	0.059	9.401	0.000	Significant
Employee Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0.709	0.717	0.075	12,845	0.000	Significant
Work Motivation → Employee Performance	-0.003	-0.006	0.093	0.034	0.973	Not Significant

Source: Processed data (2025)

Based table 6, the relationship between Work Motivation → Employee Satisfaction has a path coefficient of 0.760 with a t-statistic value of $9.401 > 1.96$ and a p-value of $0.000 \leq 0.05$. This shows that the relationship is significant. The relationship between Employee Satisfaction → Employee Performance is also significant with a path coefficient of 0.709, t-statistic $12.845 > 1.96$, and p-value $0.000 \leq 0.05$. However, the relationship between Work Motivation → Employee Performance is not significant because it has a path coefficient of -0.003 with a t-statistic of $0.034 < 1.96$ and a p-value of $0.973 > 0.0$.

Table 7. Path coefficient – (Indirect effect)

Independent Variables	Mediating Variables	Dependent Variable	Indirect Influence Coefficient
Work motivation	Employee Satisfaction	Employee performance	0.539

Source: Processed data (2025)

Based on the indirect effect analysis, it was found that work motivation contributes positively and significantly to employee performance through employee satisfaction, with a coefficient of 0.539. This result shows that although work motivation does not directly have a significant impact on employee performance, its role is still important in improving performance indirectly through increasing job satisfaction. In other words, the higher the work motivation, the greater the level of employee satisfaction, which ultimately has a positive impact on their performance. This finding confirms that employee satisfaction is a strong mediating variable in the relationship between work motivation and employee performance. Therefore, organizations need to pay more attention to work motivation factors to improve employee satisfaction, which in turn will contribute significantly to improving overall organizational performance.

Description of Hypothesis Results

This study aims to examine the role of Work Motivation in influencing Employee Performance with Employee Satisfaction as a mediating variable, using the SEM-PLS (Structural Equation Model - Partial Least Square) approach. In the analysis stage, model evaluation is carried out through two main approaches, namely Outer model Evaluation and Inner model Evaluation. In the Outer model Evaluation, three testing techniques are applied, namely convergent validity test, discriminant validity test, and reliability test. All of these tests produce valid data, so that the analysis of the Inner model can be continued with confidence in the strength and reliability of the data. The results of the hypothesis

analysis provide a clear picture of the relationship between variables as follows:

1. The Effect of Work Motivation on Employee Satisfaction (H1)

The test shows a significant and positive relationship between Work Motivation and Employee Satisfaction. With an original sample value of 0.760, a T-Statistic of 9.401, and a P-Value of 0.000, these results confirm that increasing work motivation in employees directly contributes to increasing job satisfaction. This means that the higher the level of motivation possessed by employees, the higher the level of satisfaction they feel. This finding supports the strategy of increasing motivation as an effective effort to improve job satisfaction conditions in the organization.

2. The Effect of Employee Satisfaction on Employee Performance (H2)

The test results show that Employee Satisfaction has a significant and positive effect on Employee Performance, with an original sample value of 0.709, a T-Statistic of 12.845, and a P-Value of 0.000. This finding indicates that employees who are satisfied with the working environment and conditions tend to show better performance. Thus, efforts to improve employee satisfaction can be translated into increased productivity and work effectiveness, which in turn has a positive impact on achieving organizational goals.

3. Direct Effect of Work Motivation on Employee Performance (H3)

From the analysis results, it can be seen that the direct relationship between Work Motivation and Employee Performance is not significant. This is evidenced by the original sample value of -0.003, T-Statistic of 0.034, and P-Value of 0.973. These findings indicate that work motivation, if standing alone, is not enough to directly improve employee performance. In other words, work motivation needs to be integrated with other factors to produce a positive impact on performance.

4. The Mediating Role of Employee Satisfaction in the Relationship between Work Motivation and Employee Performance (H4)

5. Mediation analysis revealed that the influence of Work Motivation on Employee Performance becomes significant when mediated by Employee Satisfaction. With an original sample value of 0.539, a T-Statistic of 7.299, and a P-Value of 0.000, these results confirm that employee satisfaction plays an important role in channeling the effects of work motivation into optimal performance. This means that when employees are satisfied with their jobs and work environment, the existing motivation will be more effective in driving increased performance, so that the mediating role of satisfaction becomes crucial in this relationship.

Discussion

The Influence of Work Motivation on Employee Performance at the Al-Quran Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School

Work motivation is a drive that influences an employee to achieve certain goals in his work. In this study, the results of the analysis show that work motivation does not have a significant direct influence on employee performance. This can be seen from the path coefficient value of -0.003, which indicates that the relationship between work motivation and employee performance is very weak.

Although work motivation is often considered an important factor in improving performance, research results show that its influence is not always large enough to have a significant impact. This study highlights that the work environment and leadership style have a greater influence on employee performance than work motivation itself (Dewanti et al., 2022). This suggests that organizations need to consider other factors that may affect employee performance, such as work environment conditions that can create a more productive and supportive atmosphere (Dewanti et al., 2022).

This result is supported by research conducted by Pancasila et al. (2020) revealing that work motivation provides a significant direct contribution to improving employee performance. This study also shows that the effect of motivation is stronger in improving performance directly compared to its influence mediated by other variables, such as employee satisfaction. In addition, E. Siahaan (2017) it confirms that work motivation has an important role in the banking sector, where providing the right motivation helps employees achieve optimal work results, regardless of differences in leadership styles. Another study by Paais & Pattiruhu (2020b) also supports that work motivation supported by a good organizational culture has a significant impact on employee performance.

Kachalla (2014b) highlighted that work motivation not only drives individual performance but also helps organizations achieve larger goals through increased productivity. The study Sutikno (2019a) added that providing motivation-based incentives directly improves employee discipline, which is then reflected in better work results. Overall, the results of this study indicate that increasing work motivation, whether through incentives, supportive leadership, or a positive work culture, is an effective strategy to boost employee performance.

Meanwhile, several other studies show that the influence of work motivation on employee performance is not always significant or direct. Paais & Pattiruhu (2020b) revealed that although work motivation has a positive effect on performance, its effect on employee satisfaction is not significant. In fact, leadership has a greater influence on employee satisfaction than work motivation, indicating that there are other variables that are more dominant in influencing overall employee performance. Likewise, Idris & Hidayat (2024) found that work motivation does not have a significant impact on employee performance at Bank Mandiri Palembang, while employee satisfaction plays a more important role in improving this performance.

In addition, research by Ciobanu et al. (2019b) in the public sector states that intrinsic motivation and social values have a greater impact on performance than general work motivation. This shows that the impact of work motivation on employee performance is highly dependent on the context and type of motivation used. Meanwhile, E. Siahaan (2017) it highlights that employee work motivation is influenced by leadership style, but motivation itself is not the main factor that determines employee performance, especially when compared to organizational culture and managerial approaches. This finding confirms that the relationship between work motivation and employee performance is not a simple linear relationship, but involves many other interacting factors.

In the context of the influence of work motivation on employee performance, there are several verses in the Al-Qur'an that are relevant to providing a spiritual perspective in understanding the relationship between work and the results achieved. One verse that can be linked is QS. Az-Zumar (39:39):

قُلْ يَوْمَ اَعْمَلُوا عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِكُمْ اِنِّي عَمِلْتُ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ

qul yâ qaumi'malû 'alâ makânatikum innî 'âmil, fa saufa ta'lamûn. Meaning: "Say (Muhammad), 'O my people, act according to your situation! Indeed, I also did the same. Then later you will know (the result)."

This verse emphasizes that each individual has a responsibility to work according to their respective abilities and circumstances. High work motivation should encourage someone to work better, but the final result of the work is still influenced by various factors, such as the work environment, leadership, and organizational policies. In the context of this study, although work motivation is considered important, the results found indicate that its influence on employee performance is not always significant. Apart from that, QS. At-Taubah (9:105) also emphasizes the importance of hard work and sincerity in work:

وَقُلْ اَعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَىٰ اللّٰهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَالتَّوَّابُونَ وَسَيُرَدُّونَ اِلٰى عَالِمٍ وَالشَّٰهَدَةُ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

wa quli'malû fa sayarallâhu 'amalakum wa rasûluhû wal-mu'minûn, wa saturaddûna ilâ 'âlimil-ghaibi wasy-syahâdati fa yunabbi'ukum bimâ kuntum ta'malûn. Meaning: "And say (O Muhammad): 'Work, and Allah will see your work and (so will) His Messenger and the believers. And you will be returned to (Allah) the Knower of the unseen and the seen, then He will inform you of what you did."

This verse reminds us that every work done will receive attention from Allah, His Messenger, and the believers. This shows that good work motivation should be based on a straight intention and the awareness that every work done has an impact and accountability. In the context of this study, although work motivation does not directly affect employee performance, other aspects such as the work environment and good leadership are also important factors that can maximize a person's work results.

Thus, based on the perspective of the Qur'an, work motivation remains an important element in a person's performance, but the final results achieved depend on various factors that play a role in the work process, both internal such as intention and sincerity, and external such as organizational systems and a conducive work environment.

The Influence of Work Motivation on Employee Satisfaction at the Al-Quran Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School

Work motivation is a drive that influences individuals to achieve certain goals in their work. Based on the results of the study, work motivation has been proven to have a significant and positive influence on employee satisfaction, with a path coefficient value of 0.760. This shows that the higher an employee's work motivation, the higher the level of satisfaction he or she feels in the job.

Good work motivation, whether it comes from financial rewards, a supportive work environment, or recognition from superiors, can have a positive impact on employees' emotional conditions. This condition is important because it can encourage employees to feel satisfied with their work. This study provides empirical evidence that work motivation plays an important role in creating a work environment that supports employee satisfaction.

Work motivation also has a significant impact on employee satisfaction. Pancasila et al. (2020) found that work motivation, although having a smaller influence than leadership, still plays an important role in building employee satisfaction. Research Astuti et al. (2020b) shows that in the context of Islamic work culture, motivation is a connecting factor between organizational values and employee satisfaction. This confirms that motivated employees are more likely to feel satisfied because they get encouragement that is in line with their expectations and needs.

Usman & Yanuar (2022) strengthens this finding by stating that work motivation is the main independent variable that increases employee satisfaction in government institutions. Idris & Hidayat (2024) also supports that work motivation has a direct relationship with employee satisfaction, although its influence can be influenced by work environment factors. Meanwhile, (Al-Sada et al., 2017b) it highlights the importance of creating an organizational culture that supports work motivation, which then results in higher levels of satisfaction among employees. Thus, work motivation plays an important role in shaping employee satisfaction, both directly and through the mediation of organizational culture and work environment.

Meanwhile, some studies show that work motivation does not always significantly affect employee satisfaction, or its influence depends on other factors. Paais & Pattiruhu (2020b) revealed that although work motivation has a positive effect on performance, the influence of motivation on employee satisfaction is not significant. In this study, leadership and organizational culture have a greater role in determining employee satisfaction, compared to work motivation. These results indicate that employee satisfaction is more influenced by structural and managerial factors, not just individual motivation.

In addition, research by Idris & Hidayat (2024) Bank Mandiri Palembang found that work motivation only has an indirect effect on employee satisfaction through mediators such as the work environment. This study also noted that the work environment has a greater impact on employee satisfaction than work motivation itself. Likewise, it Ciobanu et al. (2019b) emphasizes that in the public sector, employee satisfaction is driven more by intrinsic motivation, social values, and a sense of responsibility towards the community, rather than general work motivation. These findings suggest that the relationship between work motivation and employee satisfaction is not always direct, and is often influenced by other elements in the workplace. In this case, the supporting verse is in the QS. Al-Insyirah (94:7-8) also strengthens the concept of motivation at work:

فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانصَبْ

fa idzâ faraghta fanshab. It means: "So when you have finished (from one business), keep working hard (on another business):

وَالِإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَارْغَبْ

wa ilâ rabbika farghab. Meaning: "And only in your Lord do you hope."

This verse emphasizes the importance of perseverance in working and always having the spirit to continue to contribute. In the context of this study, good work motivation not only has an impact on employee satisfaction, but also reflects the Islamic principle of carrying out tasks with full responsibility and sincerity. Thus, the results of the study that show the positive influence of work motivation on employee satisfaction can be strengthened by the principles contained in the Qur'an, which encourages humans to work with sincere intentions and maximum effort in order to obtain blessings in work.

The Influence of Employee Satisfaction on Employee Performance in Al-Quran Nurul Falah

Based on the indirect effect analysis, it was found that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through job satisfaction, with a coefficient of 0.539. This shows that although work motivation does not directly have a significant impact on employee performance, motivation still plays an important role in improving performance indirectly by increasing job satisfaction. In other words, the higher the work motivation, the greater the satisfaction felt by employees, which then has a positive impact on improving their performance. This finding confirms that job satisfaction functions as a strong mediating variable in the relationship between work motivation and employee performance. Therefore, organizations need to pay attention to work motivation factors in order to improve employee satisfaction, which ultimately contributes to improving overall organizational performance.

This study confirms that employees who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to give their best contribution to the organization. Therefore, creating a conducive work environment and providing fair rewards to employees are strategic steps to improve their performance. This study also aims to provide a deeper understanding of the importance of employee satisfaction in supporting organizational performance.

Employee satisfaction has been proven to be a very important factor in determining employee performance. Pancasila et al. (2020) showed that employees who are satisfied with their jobs are more motivated to give their best performance, making employee satisfaction the most dominant variable in improving performance compared to other factors. (Astuti et al., 2020b) also found that employee satisfaction is an important connecting element between work motivation and performance, especially in organizations with an Islamic work culture. This study confirms that employee satisfaction not only reflects employee well-being, but also becomes a catalyst for achieving better performance.

The study by Usman & Yanuar (2022) confirms that employee satisfaction has a significant positive relationship with performance, where satisfied employees tend to show higher levels of productivity. Idris & Hidayat (2024) although the effect of work motivation on performance is largely mediated by employee satisfaction. (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020b) added that increasing employee satisfaction through effective motivational management and leadership has a consistent positive impact on employee performance. Thus, employee satisfaction serves as a key driver that directly and significantly influences performance.

Meanwhile, several studies provide evidence that the influence of employee satisfaction on employee performance is not always significant or direct. Paais & Pattiruhu (2020b) found that although employee satisfaction has a contribution to employee performance, the role of other variables such as work motivation and organizational culture remains more dominant in influencing performance. In their study, employee satisfaction was not the main determining factor, but rather only one supporting element among the various variables that influence employee performance.

In addition, Idris & Hidayat (2024) it shows that employee satisfaction does not always contribute directly to employee performance. Their study at Bank Mandiri Palembang found that work motivation and work environment are often mediators in the relationship between employee satisfaction and performance. Research by Ciobanu et al. (2019b) also highlights that in the public sector, employee performance is more determined by intrinsic motivation and professional values than by employee satisfaction levels. This emphasizes that the relationship between employee satisfaction and employee performance is often influenced by other factors that are more significant in a particular context, so it cannot be generalized simply.

In connection with the verse that supports this hypothesis, it is found in QS. Al-Qasas (28): 77
وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِنْ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفُسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

wabtaghi fimâ âtâkallâhud-dâral-âkhirata wa lâ tansa nashîbaka minad-dun-yâ wa aḥsing kamâ aḥsanallâhu ilaika wa lâ tabghil-fasâda fil-ardl, innallâha lâ yuḥibbul-mufsidîn. Meaning: "And seek what Allah has bestowed upon you (happiness) in the land of the afterlife, and do not forget your share of (the pleasures of) the world, and do good (to others) as Allah has done good to you, and do not cause damage on (the face of) the earth. Indeed, Allah does not like those who do damage."

This verse teaches balance between worldly achievements and the happiness of the hereafter. In the context of job satisfaction, this means that an employee who is satisfied with his job will tend to work with enthusiasm and dedication, which ultimately results in better performance. In addition, this verse also emphasizes that a person should do good to others in his work, which can be translated as giving his best contribution to the organization and society.

Apart from that, Allah SWT says in QS. An-Nahl (16): 97

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أَنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

man ‘amila shâliham min dzakarín au untâ wa huwa mu'minun fa lanuhyiannahû hayâtan thayyibah, wa lanajziannahum ajrahum bi'ahsani mâ kânû ya'malûn. Meaning: "Whoever does good deeds, whether male or female, while he is a believer, then We will surely give him a good life and We will reward him with a reward in proportion to the best of what he did."

This verse emphasizes that anyone who works well and sincerely will get a good life and rewards from Allah. In the context of this study, employees who are satisfied with their work and do it well will feel a more prosperous life, both materially and spiritually. Satisfaction in work will create greater motivation to improve performance, which ultimately benefits both individuals and organizations.

Employee Satisfaction Mediates the Relationship Between Work Motivation and Employee Performance at Al-Quran Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School

Work motivation is one of the key factors that can affect employee performance, both directly and indirectly through other variables, such as employee satisfaction. Based on the results of the study, work motivation has a significant indirect effect on employee performance through employee satisfaction. This can be seen from the indirect effect value of 0.670, which indicates that employee satisfaction plays an important role in strengthening the relationship between work motivation and employee performance.

When employees feel motivated by fair rewards, supportive work environment, or self-development opportunities, they tend to feel satisfied with their jobs. This satisfaction then significantly improves their performance. Thus, this study concludes that employee satisfaction is a significant mediator in the relationship between work motivation and employee performance.

Job satisfaction plays an important role as a mediating variable in the relationship between work motivation and employee performance. Research conducted by (Sarianti et al., 2021) revealed that work motivation has a significant direct effect on employee performance. This shows that increasing work motivation, such as rewards for effort, clear career opportunities, or positive work relationships, directly improves employee performance. However, this impact is also strengthened when job satisfaction is considered as a mediating variable.

The results of the study indicate that job satisfaction not only improves the relationship between work motivation and performance, but also strengthens the impact of motivation on overall performance. This means that high work motivation creates a sense of satisfaction among employees, which then encourages them to provide more optimal work results at Pesantren Al-Qur'an Nurul Falah.

In the context of Pesantren Al-Qur'an Nurul Falah, the mediating role of job satisfaction becomes very relevant. The pesantren work environment which often emphasizes moral values and spiritual commitment needs to pay attention to intrinsic motivational elements such as appreciation for employee contributions and support from leaders. When employees are satisfied with their work, both in terms of the work environment and personal achievements, they are more motivated to work with enthusiasm and improve their performance.

This finding highlights the importance of human resource management in religious institutions such as Pesantren Al-Qur'an Nurul Falah. By increasing job satisfaction through providing appropriate motivation, pesantren can not only strengthen the relationship between work motivation and employee performance but also create a more productive and harmonious work environment. This supports the realization of the pesantren's mission and vision in providing quality educational and spiritual services.

Other factors that may play a role include organizational culture, reward systems, or interpersonal relationships in the workplace. An organizational culture that supports innovation and collaboration, for example, may provide additional motivation for employees to improve performance. Similarly, a transparent and fair reward system may have a greater impact on motivating employees than relying

solely on job satisfaction. Therefore, management needs to pay attention to these elements to create a more conducive work environment.

In addition, effective leadership can be a key element in bridging the relationship between work motivation and performance. Leaders who are able to provide clear direction, moral support, and recognition of employee achievements are often more effective in motivating work teams. At the Financial and Asset Management Agency of Deli Serdang Regency, the implementation of participatory leadership can help improve employee morale and productivity, especially when combined with an approach that considers individual needs in the workplace. Allah SWT. says in QS. Al-Baqarah (2:286) which states:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

lâ yukallifullâhu nafsan illâ wus'ahâ. Meaning: "Allah does not burden a person beyond his ability..." This verse is relevant in the context of human resource management, especially in providing the right work motivation and creating employee satisfaction. Employees who are given responsibility and rewards according to their abilities will be more motivated and satisfied in their work, which will ultimately improve their performance.

V. CONCLUSION

This study aims to examine the role of Work Motivation on Employee Performance mediated by Employee Satisfaction using the SEM-PLS method, with evaluations of the Outer Model (convergent validity test, discriminant validity test, and reliability test) as well as the Inner Model. The test results indicate that all data are valid, allowing for further analysis. The hypothesis testing results show that Work Motivation does not have a significant direct effect on Employee Performance, but it significantly affects Employee Satisfaction. Conversely, Employee Satisfaction has a significant effect on Employee Performance, confirming its role as a mediator in the relationship between Work Motivation and Employee Performance.

The findings of this study indicate that the higher the Work Motivation, the higher the Employee Satisfaction (original sample 0.760, T-Statistic 9.401, P-Value 0.000). Employee Satisfaction itself has a positive effect on Employee Performance (original sample 0.709, T-Statistic 12.845, P-Value 0.000), while Work Motivation does not directly affect Employee Performance (original sample -0.003, T-Statistic 0.034, P-Value 0.973). However, through the mediation of Employee Satisfaction, Work Motivation significantly influences Employee Performance (original sample 0.539, T-Statistic 7.299, P-Value 0.000). Therefore, strategies to improve work motivation should be directed at increasing employee satisfaction in order to have a positive impact on their performance within the organization.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization, N.F.G.W. and T.W.; methodology, N.F.G.W. and T.W.; software, N.F.G.W.; validation, N.F.G.W.; formal analysis, N.F.G.W.; investigation, N.F.G.W.; resources, N.F.G.W.; data curation, N.F.G.W.; writing – original draft preparation, N.F.G.W.; writing – review and editing, N.F.G.W.; visualization, N.F.G.W.; supervision, T.W.

FUNDING

This research received no external funding.

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

Not applicable.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author, [N.F.G.W].

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to extend appreciation to Pesantren Al-Qur'an Nurul Falah and Yayasan Nurul Falah as the subjects of this research. Deep thanks are due to Ustad Najib for his kind assistance in facilitating the distribution of questionnaires at Pesantren Al-Qur'an Nurul Falah. Appreciation is also extended to all respondents who participated in this research and provided valuable data. The guidance and feedback from Prof. Dr. Tika Widiastuti, S.E., M.Si. were instrumental in refining the research framework and analysis. Finally, heartfelt thanks to colleagues, friends, and family for their continuous encouragement and motivation during the research process.

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