

ENHANCING JOB SATISFACTION AMONG PUBLIC HEALTH CIVIL SERVANTS: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Bachsyuan Zami Hasan¹, Rahmat Sabuhari², Nurlaela³, Abdul Wahab Hasyim⁴

^{1, 2, 3, 4}Universitas Khairun, Jl. Yusuf Abdulrahman, Ternate, Maluku Utara, Indonesia

Email: zamihasan1988@gmail.com

Article History

Received: 13-06-2026

Revision: 09-07-2026

Accepted: 12-07-2026

Published: 15-07-2026

Abstract. This study examines the effect of work motivation on job satisfaction among State Civil Apparatus (ASN) employees in public health service units of Central Halmahera Regency and investigates the mediating role of transformational leadership. A quantitative survey approach was employed, involving 418 ASN working in public health service units. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). The findings indicate that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction and transformational leadership. Transformational leadership also positively and significantly influences job satisfaction. Furthermore, transformational leadership partially mediates the relationship between work motivation and job satisfaction. These results suggest that employee job satisfaction is shaped not only by individual motivation but also by leadership practices that inspire, support, and engage employees. The study highlights the importance of strengthening work motivation and promoting transformational leadership to improve employee satisfaction and support the effectiveness of public health service delivery.

Keywords: Work Motivation, Transformational Leadership, Job Satisfaction, Public Health Services, State Civil Apparatus.

Abstrak. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis pengaruh motivasi kerja terhadap kepuasan kerja Aparatur Sipil Negara (ASN) pada unit pelayanan kesehatan di Kabupaten Halmahera Tengah serta menguji peran mediasi kepemimpinan transformasional. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode survei yang melibatkan 418 ASN pada unit pelayanan kesehatan. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner dan dianalisis menggunakan *Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares* (SEM-PLS). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa motivasi kerja berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kepuasan kerja serta kepemimpinan transformasional. Kepemimpinan transformasional juga berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kepuasan kerja. Selain itu, kepemimpinan transformasional terbukti memediasi secara parsial hubungan antara motivasi kerja dan kepuasan kerja. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa peningkatan kepuasan kerja ASN tidak hanya ditentukan oleh motivasi individu, tetapi juga oleh praktik kepemimpinan yang mampu menginspirasi, mendukung, dan melibatkan pegawai. Oleh karena itu, penguatan motivasi kerja dan penerapan kepemimpinan transformasional menjadi strategi penting untuk meningkatkan kepuasan ASN serta mendukung efektivitas pelayanan kesehatan publik.

Kata Kunci: Motivasi Kerja, Kepemimpinan Transformasional, Kepuasan Kerja, Pelayanan Kesehatan Publik, Aparatur Sipil Negara.

How to Cite: Hasan, B. Z., Sabuhari, R., Nurlaela., & Hasyim, A. W. (2026). Enhancing Job Satisfaction Among Public Health Civil Servants: The Mediating Role of Transformational Leadership. *HORIZON: Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary*, 4 (4), 3933-3952. <http://doi.org/10.54373/hijm.v4i4.6673>

INTRODUCTION

The enactment of Law Number 5 of 2014 concerning the State Civil Apparatus (*Aparatur Sipil Negara* [ASN]) marked a significant shift in Indonesia's public sector management from a rule-based bureaucracy toward performance-oriented governance. This transformation requires public employees not only to possess technical competence but also to demonstrate high levels of motivation, commitment, and job satisfaction in delivering quality public services. Among these factors, job satisfaction is considered a key indicator of organizational effectiveness because it influences employee commitment, performance, service quality, and retention. In the public healthcare sector, maintaining job satisfaction is particularly challenging due to demanding workloads, limited resources, and increasing expectations for service quality. In Central Halmahera Regency, healthcare services are delivered through the Regional General Hospital (RSUD Weda), the District Health Office, and Public Health Centers (*Puskesmas*), where ASN serve as frontline providers responsible for ensuring accessible and effective healthcare. Understanding the determinants of job satisfaction in this context is therefore essential for strengthening organizational performance and improving public service delivery.

One important determinant of job satisfaction is work motivation. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) explains that employees are more likely to develop autonomous motivation when three fundamental psychological needs, namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness, are fulfilled (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Autonomous motivation encourages employees to perceive their work as meaningful and personally valuable, resulting in greater engagement, persistence, and job satisfaction. Conversely, when these psychological needs are not adequately supported by the work environment, motivation tends to become controlled or extrinsic, limiting its positive influence on employee attitudes and well-being. Thus, SDT suggests that organizational conditions play a crucial role in determining whether work motivation translates into positive workplace outcomes.

Within this framework, transformational leadership represents an organizational context capable of facilitating the fulfillment of employees' psychological needs. Transformational leaders encourage participation in decision-making, strengthen employees' confidence in their abilities, and build supportive interpersonal relationships through individualized consideration and inspirational motivation. These leadership behaviors directly correspond to the three psychological needs proposed by SDT, thereby reinforcing autonomous motivation and enhancing employees' job satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2020). This theoretical perspective indicates that transformational leadership may not merely influence job satisfaction directly

but also explain how work motivation develops into positive employee outcomes. Previous studies consistently report positive relationships among work motivation, transformational leadership, and job satisfaction. Nevertheless, three important limitations remain. First, empirical studies have predominantly focused on private organizations, educational institutions, or general government agencies, whereas evidence from public healthcare organizations remains limited. Second, studies conducted in peripheral regions of Indonesia are still scarce despite their distinct organizational and resource challenges. Third, most previous research has examined only direct relationships among these variables, while the mediating role of transformational leadership in the relationship between work motivation and job satisfaction has received relatively little empirical attention.

A preliminary survey involving 30 ASN employed in healthcare institutions across Central Halmahera Regency supports the relevance of this study. The findings revealed moderate levels of work motivation and perceptions of transformational leadership, whereas overall job satisfaction remained relatively low. These results suggest that employees' motivation alone may not be sufficient to enhance job satisfaction, highlighting the importance of leadership as a contextual factor that shapes employees' workplace experiences.

Based on these theoretical and empirical gaps, this study proposes transformational leadership as a mediating mechanism linking work motivation and job satisfaction. Drawing on Self-Determination Theory, the study argues that motivated employees are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction when transformational leaders create a work environment that supports autonomy, develops competence, and fosters positive interpersonal relationships. By integrating psychological motivation with organizational leadership, this study extends the application of SDT within public healthcare institutions, particularly in the underexplored context of a peripheral Indonesian region. Accordingly, this study aims to: (1) examine the effect of work motivation on job satisfaction among ASN in healthcare service units of Central Halmahera Regency; (2) analyze the effect of work motivation on transformational leadership perceptions; (3) investigate the effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction; and (4) evaluate the mediating role of transformational leadership in the relationship between work motivation and job satisfaction. The findings are expected to enrich the literature on public sector human resource management while providing practical recommendations for strengthening leadership practices, improving employee satisfaction, and enhancing healthcare service performance.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative explanatory research design to examine the relationships among work motivation, transformational leadership, and job satisfaction among State Civil Apparatus (ASN) employees working in public healthcare institutions in Central Halmahera Regency, Indonesia. The proposed research model positions work motivation as the independent variable, transformational leadership as the mediating variable, and job satisfaction as the dependent variable. A quantitative approach was selected because it enables objective measurement of latent constructs and empirical testing of causal relationships using statistical procedures (Sugiyono, 2023). The study was conducted in five public healthcare institutions under the Central Halmahera Regency Government, namely the Regional General Hospital (RSUD Weda), the District Health Office, Puskesmas Weda, Puskesmas Pulau Gebe, and Puskesmas Patani. Data collection was carried out between April and June 2026.

The target population consisted of all active ASN employed in these institutions, including both permanent civil servants (PNS) and government employees with work agreements (PPPK). Based on official personnel records, the total population comprised 418 employees. Given the manageable population size, this study adopted a census (total sampling) approach in which all eligible employees were invited to participate. Respondents were required to meet the following inclusion criteria: (1) active ASN status as either PNS or PPPK, (2) minimum educational attainment of senior high school or equivalent, and (3) minimum work tenure of one year. A total of 418 valid responses were obtained and included in the analysis.

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered through Google Forms. All measurement items employed a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). The questionnaire was developed based on established theoretical and empirical studies to ensure content validity. Work motivation was operationalized as employees’ internal and external psychological drives that influence persistence, responsibility, achievement orientation, and initiative in performing work-related tasks (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Gkorezis, 2021; Han & Kwon, 2022). Transformational leadership was defined as leadership behaviors that inspire, intellectually stimulate, and provide individualized support to subordinates, measured through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Gupta & Sharma, 2021; Huang et al., 2022). Job satisfaction was conceptualized as employees’ positive evaluation of their work experiences and organizational environment, encompassing satisfaction with work itself, supervision, compensation and career opportunities, and the work environment (Judge et al., 2017; Kim & Park, 2020; Han & Kwon, 2022).

Data analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with a two-stage evaluation procedure following Hair et al. (2022). The first stage assessed the measurement model (outer model) to establish construct validity and reliability. Convergent validity was evaluated using indicator loadings (>0.70) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE >0.50). Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and cross-loadings. Internal consistency reliability was examined through Cronbach’s alpha (>0.70) and Composite Reliability (>0.70). The second stage evaluated the structural model (inner model). Collinearity was assessed using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values below 5.0. The explanatory power of the model was examined using the coefficient of determination (R^2), while hypothesis testing was conducted through bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples to estimate path coefficients, t-values, and p-values. Direct, indirect, and mediating effects were considered statistically significant when p-values were below 0.05. The mediating role of transformational leadership was evaluated based on the significance of indirect effects and the comparison between direct and indirect relationships within the proposed model.

RESULTS

Respondent Characteristics

In this study, respondent characteristics were classified based on work unit, age, gender, last formal education, ASN status, and length of service.

Table 1. Respondent characteristics based on work unit

Unit Kerja	Frekuensi	Persentase
RSUD Kabupaten Halmahera Tengah	85	20,3%
Dinas Kesehatan Kabupaten Halmahera Tengah	122	29,2%
Puskesmas Weda	78	18,7%
Puskesmas Pulau Gebe	49	11,7%
Puskesmas Patani	84	20,1%
Total	418	100%

Based on Table 1, It was found that the majority of respondents came from the Central Halmahera Regency Health Office, with 122 people (29.2%). Furthermore, 85 respondents (20.3%) came from the Central Halmahera Regency Regional General Hospital, 84 (20.1%), the Patani Community Health Center (84), the Weda Community Health Center (78), and the Pulau Gebe Community Health Center (11.7%). This composition indicates that the study respondents were spread across several health service units with different functions, including hospitals, health offices, and community health centers.

Frequency Distribution of Work Motivation Variable (X)

This variable describes the drive, enthusiasm, responsibility, perseverance, and desire of ASN health service units in carrying out public service duties. In this study, the work motivation variable was measured using seven statement items, namely X.1 to X.7.

Table 3. Frequency distribution of work motivation variable (X)

Item	STS	TS	N	S	SS	Mean
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	
X.1	29 (6,9)	91 (21,8)	115 (27,5)	114 (27,3)	69 (16,5)	3,25
X.2	25 (6,0)	72 (17,2)	136 (32,5)	117 (28,0)	68 (16,3)	3,31
X.3	27 (6,5)	74 (17,7)	152 (36,4)	109 (26,1)	56 (13,4)	3,22
X.4	21 (5,0)	78 (18,7)	141 (33,7)	112 (26,8)	66 (15,8)	3,30
X.5	27 (6,5)	71 (17,0)	146 (34,9)	107 (25,6)	67 (16,0)	3,28
X.6	27 (6,5)	85 (20,3)	137 (32,8)	112 (26,8)	57 (13,6)	3,21
X.7	32 (7,7)	78 (18,7)	137 (32,8)	102 (24,4)	69 (16,5)	3,23
Rata-rata						3,26

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2026

Based on Table 3, the average work motivation variable is 3.26. This value indicates that the work motivation of ASN in healthcare units is in the sufficient or moderate category. This means that ASN generally have a fairly good work drive in carrying out their duties, although there is still room for improvement, particularly in aspects of work enthusiasm, perseverance, and initiative in implementing healthcare services. The item with the highest mean score was X.2, with a score of 3.31. This indicates that the aspect measured in item X.2 received the highest rating compared to other work motivation items. Meanwhile, the item with the lowest mean score was X.6, with a score of 3.21. Although still in the sufficient range, this value indicates that the aspect measured by item X.6 requires more attention. In the context of ASN in healthcare units, work motivation that is still in the sufficient category needs to be strengthened through leadership support, employee development, appreciation, and the creation of a more conducive work environment.

Frequency Distribution of Transformational Leadership Variable (Z)

Transformational leadership is the mediating variable in this study. This variable reflects civil servants' perceptions of leadership behavior in terms of providing role models, inspiration, motivation, individual attention, encouragement of innovation, and support in carrying out tasks. In this study, transformational leadership was measured using six items, Z.1 to Z.6.

Table 4. Frequency distribution of transformational leadership variables (Z)

Item	STS	TS	N	S	SS	Mean
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	
Z.1	32 (7,7)	77 (18,4)	138 (33,0)	101 (24,2)	70 (16,7)	3,24
Z.2	39 (9,3)	83 (19,9)	127 (30,4)	112 (26,8)	57 (13,6)	3,16
Z.3	29 (6,9)	77 (18,4)	139 (33,3)	109 (26,1)	64 (15,3)	3,24
Z.4	26 (6,2)	66 (15,8)	148 (35,4)	114 (27,3)	64 (15,3)	3,30
Z.5	31 (7,4)	68 (16,3)	148 (35,4)	103 (24,6)	68 (16,3)	3,26
Z.6	30 (7,2)	78 (18,7)	132 (31,6)	103 (24,6)	75 (17,9)	3,28
Rata-rata						3,25

Based on Table 4, the mean score for the transformational leadership variable is 3.25. This score indicates that civil servants' perceptions of transformational leadership are in the adequate or moderate category. Therefore, leaders in healthcare units are considered to demonstrate some characteristics of transformational leadership, but their implementation is not yet fully optimal. The item with the highest mean score was Z.4 with a score of 3.30, while the item with the lowest mean was Z.2 with a score of 3.16. This difference indicates that certain aspects of leadership were perceived as adequate by respondents, but others still need to be strengthened. In the healthcare context, transformational leadership is crucial because civil servants require direction, emotional support, good communication, and attention from leaders to cope with the workload and demands of public service. The research in this proposal also confirms that transformational leadership plays a crucial role in increasing job satisfaction through psychological support, good communication, and a supportive work environment.

Frequency Distribution of Job Satisfaction Variable (Y)

Job satisfaction variables describe the emotional state of civil servants (ASN) regarding their work, work environment, relationships with leaders and colleagues, rewards, and work experiences experienced while carrying out health service duties. Job satisfaction is a crucial aspect in this study because it is directly related to how civil servants assess their work, including comfort, responsibility, organizational support, and opportunities for development. Civil servants with a high level of job satisfaction tend to demonstrate a positive attitude towards work, have a higher level of commitment, and are able to provide more optimal services to the public. Conversely, low job satisfaction can result in decreased work enthusiasm, low employee engagement, and less than optimal quality of health services provided.

Table 5. Frequency distribution of job satisfaction variable (Y)

Item	STS	TS	N	S	SS	Mean
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	
Y.1	37 (8,9)	84 (20,1)	131 (31,3)	90 (21,5)	76 (18,2)	3,20
Y.2	37 (8,9)	79 (18,9)	117 (28,0)	127 (30,4)	58 (13,9)	3,22
Y.3	39 (9,3)	78 (18,7)	121 (28,9)	115 (27,5)	65 (15,6)	3,21
Y.4	35 (8,4)	72 (17,2)	131 (31,3)	112 (26,8)	68 (16,3)	3,25
Y.5	30 (7,2)	75 (17,9)	139 (33,3)	100 (23,9)	74 (17,7)	3,27
Y.6	35 (8,4)	76 (18,2)	125 (29,9)	108 (25,8)	74 (17,7)	3,26
Y.7	39 (9,3)	74 (17,7)	128 (30,6)	125 (29,9)	52 (12,4)	3,18
Rata-rata						3,23

Based on Table 5, the average value of the job satisfaction variable is 3.23. This value indicates that job satisfaction of civil servants in healthcare units is in the sufficient or moderate category. This means that respondents generally have a sufficient level of job satisfaction, but not yet high. This condition indicates that there are still aspects of the job, work environment, work relationships, rewards, or organizational support that need improvement. The item with the highest mean was Y.5 with a value of 3.27, while the item with the lowest mean was Y.7 with a value of 3.18. This indicates that civil servant job satisfaction is not completely evenly distributed across all aspects measured. Some aspects were assessed as quite good, but there are still aspects that require more attention from the organization and work unit leaders. In the context of healthcare, job satisfaction is important because civil servants who are satisfied with their jobs tend to demonstrate a more positive attitude, commitment, and better quality of service to the public. The research proposal also explains that work motivation and transformational leadership play a significant role in shaping job satisfaction of public sector employees, particularly in healthcare organizations.

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity digunakan untuk menilai sejauh mana indikator-indikator dalam satu konstruk memiliki hubungan yang kuat dengan konstruk yang diukurnya. Dalam penelitian ini, convergent validity dievaluasi melalui nilai outer loading dan nilai Average Variance Extracted.

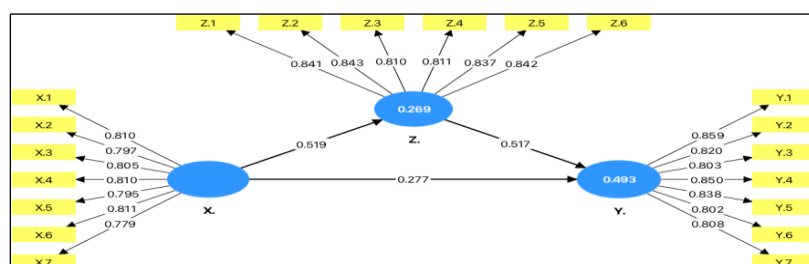


Figure 1. SEM-PLS Research Model

Based on Figure 1 above, it is clear that all indicators have outer loading values above 0.60, thus concluding that all indicators meet the outer loading requirements according to the previously established standards.

Table 6. Outer loading values

Variabel	Indikator	Outer Loading	Keterangan
Motivasi Kerja (X)	X.1	0,810	Valid
	X.2	0,797	Valid
	X.3	0,805	Valid
	X.4	0,810	Valid
	X.5	0,795	Valid
	X.6	0,811	Valid
	X.7	0,779	Valid
Kepuasan Kerja (Y)	Y.1	0,859	Valid
	Y.2	0,820	Valid
	Y.3	0,803	Valid
	Y.4	0,850	Valid
	Y.5	0,838	Valid
	Y.6	0,802	Valid
	Y.7	0,808	Valid
Kepemimpinan Transformasional (Z)	Z.1	0,841	Valid
	Z.2	0,843	Valid
	Z.3	0,810	Valid
	Z.4	0,811	Valid
	Z.5	0,837	Valid
	Z.6	0,842	Valid

Based on Table 6, all indicators for the work motivation, transformational leadership, and job satisfaction variables have outer loading values greater than 0.60. The highest outer loading value for the work motivation variable is found in indicator X.6 at 0.811, while the lowest value is found in indicator X.7 at 0.779. For the job satisfaction variable, the highest value is found in indicator Y.1 at 0.859, while the lowest value is found in indicator Y.6 at 0.802. Meanwhile, for the transformational leadership variable, the highest value is found in indicator Z.2 at 0.843, while the lowest value is found in indicator Z.3 at 0.810. These results indicate that all indicators contribute well to measuring their respective variables. Therefore, no indicators need to be eliminated from the model because all outer loading values meet the required criteria. In addition to outer loading values, convergent validity testing was also conducted by examining the AVE values. The AVE results are presented in the following table.

Table 7. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Value

Variabel	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Keterangan
Motivasi Kerja (X)	0,642	Valid
Kepuasan Kerja (Y)	0,682	Valid
Kepemimpinan Transformasional (Z)	0,690	Valid

Source: Primary data processed with SmartPLS, 2026

Based on Table 7, it is known that all variables have an AVE value greater than 0.50. The work motivation variable has an AVE value of 0.642, job satisfaction of 0.682, and transformational leadership of 0.690. These results indicate that each construct is able to explain more than 50% of the variance in its indicators. Thus, the measurement model in this study has met the requirements for convergent validity.

Composite Reliability dan Cronbach's Alpha

Reliability testing was conducted to determine the consistency of indicators in measuring the research constructs. In this study, construct reliability was assessed based on Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability rho_a, and composite reliability rho_c values.

Table 8. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values

Variabel	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>Composite Reliability rho_a</i>	<i>Composite Reliability rho_c</i>	Keterangan
Motivasi Kerja (X)	0,907	0,907	0,926	Reliabel
Kepuasan Kerja (Y)	0,922	0,924	0,938	Reliabel
Kepemimpinan Transformasional (Z)	0,910	0,911	0,930	Reliabel

Based on Table 8, all variables had a Cronbach's alpha value greater than 0.60 and a composite reliability value greater than 0.70. The work motivation variable had a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.907 and a composite reliability rho_c of 0.926. The job satisfaction variable had a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.922 and a composite reliability rho_c of 0.938. Meanwhile, the transformational leadership variable had a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.910 and a composite reliability rho_c of 0.930. These results indicate that all variables in this study have a good level of internal consistency. Therefore, the research instrument used to measure work motivation, transformational leadership, and job satisfaction can be declared reliable and suitable for use in testing the structural model.

Koefisien Determinasi (R-square)

The R-square value is used to determine how much the independent variables are able to explain the dependent variable in the model. In this study, there are two variables that have R-square values: transformational leadership as the mediating variable and job satisfaction as the dependent variable.

Table 9. Coefficient of determination (R-Square) value

Variabel Endogen	<i>R-square</i>	<i>R-square Adjusted</i>
Kepuasan Kerja (Y)	0,493	0,491
Kepemimpinan Transformasional (Z)	0,269	0,268

Based on Table 9, the R-square value for the job satisfaction variable is 0.493. This means that work motivation and transformational leadership explain 49.3% of the variation in job satisfaction, while the remaining 50.7% is explained by other variables not included in this research model. Therefore, job satisfaction among civil servants in healthcare units is not only influenced by work motivation and transformational leadership, but can also be influenced by other factors such as compensation, work environment, workload, organizational culture, organizational justice, and career development opportunities. Meanwhile, the R-square value for the transformational leadership variable is 0.269. This means that work motivation explains 26.9% of the variation in transformational leadership, while the remaining 73.1% is explained by other variables outside the research model. This value indicates that work motivation contributes to shaping civil servants' perceptions of transformational leadership, although other factors may influence these perceptions.

Results of Direct and Indirect Influence

The influence between variables in this study was tested using path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values. A relationship between variables is considered significant if the t-statistic is greater than 1.96 and the p-value is less than 0.05. The results of the direct, total, and indirect effects are presented in the following table.

Table 10. Results of direct, total, and indirect effects

Pengaruh	Koefisien Jalur	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T - statistic	P – value	Keterangan
Pengaruh Langsung						
Motivasi Kerja (X) → Kepuasan Kerja (Y)	0,277	0,277	0,042	6,652	0,000	Signifikan
Motivasi Kerja (X) → Kepemimpinan Transformasional (Z)	0,519	0,521	0,035	14,888	0,000	Signifikan
Kepemimpinan Transformasional (Z) → Kepuasan Kerja (Y)	0,517	0,518	0,036	14,255	0,000	Signifikan
Pengaruh Total						
Motivasi Kerja (X) → Kepuasan Kerja (Y)	0,546	0,547	0,036	15,026	0,000	Signifikan
Pengaruh Tidak Langsung						
Motivasi Kerja (X) → Kepemimpinan Transformasional (Z) → Kepuasan Kerja (Y)	0,268	0,270	0,026	10,467	0,000	Signifikan

Based on Table 10, all relationships between variables in this study have a t-statistic greater than 1.96 and a p-value less than 0.05. These results indicate that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. Work motivation also has a positive and significant effect on transformational leadership. Furthermore, transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. The indirect effect results indicate that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction through transformational leadership. The indirect effect coefficient of 0.268 indicates that transformational leadership plays a significant role in strengthening the relationship between work motivation and job satisfaction. This is because the direct effect of work motivation on job satisfaction remains significant, while the indirect effect is also significant.

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Work Motivation on Job Satisfaction

The findings demonstrate that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction among State Civil Apparatus (ASN) employees working in healthcare service units within the Central Halmahera Regency Government. This result indicates that employees with higher levels of work motivation tend to experience greater satisfaction with their work, organizational environment, and professional roles. Conversely, lower motivation is associated with less favorable evaluations of workplace experiences. These findings confirm that work motivation constitutes an important psychological resource in shaping employees' job satisfaction within public healthcare organizations.

In the context of healthcare services, motivation extends beyond the willingness to accomplish assigned tasks. Healthcare professionals routinely face demanding workloads, time pressure, and continuous interaction with patients and the wider community. Under these conditions, motivated employees are more likely to perceive their work as meaningful public service rather than merely fulfilling administrative obligations. This sense of purpose strengthens professional commitment, enhances resilience in coping with work demands, and ultimately contributes to more positive evaluations of their jobs. Accordingly, the findings suggest that employees' perception of meaningful work plays a central role in sustaining job satisfaction despite challenging organizational conditions.

These findings are well explained by Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which proposes that employees develop autonomous motivation when their basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fulfilled (Ryan & Deci, 2020). In public healthcare institutions, employees who are trusted to make appropriate decisions, feel competent in

delivering healthcare services, and experience supportive relationships with colleagues and supervisors are more likely to internalize organizational goals as personal values. Such autonomous motivation generates positive emotional experiences at work, thereby increasing job satisfaction. This mechanism is particularly relevant in healthcare organizations where teamwork, professional responsibility, and patient-centered service require sustained intrinsic motivation rather than dependence solely on external rewards.

The findings are consistent with previous studies by Han and Kwon (2022), Gkorezis (2021), and Kim and Park (2020), which reported that work motivation and public service motivation positively influence employee satisfaction. Similar to those studies, the present research demonstrates that internally motivated employees derive greater psychological fulfillment from their work. However, this study extends the existing literature by providing evidence from public healthcare institutions in a peripheral region of Indonesia, where organizational resources and working conditions differ considerably from those examined in previous studies. The consistency of these findings suggests that the positive relationship between work motivation and job satisfaction remains robust across different institutional and geographical contexts.

Despite the significant direct effect, the results also indicate that work motivation alone does not fully explain employees' job satisfaction. The relatively moderate magnitude of the relationship suggests that organizational factors, particularly leadership practices and the quality of the work environment, also influence how employees evaluate their jobs. In healthcare settings, motivated employees may still experience lower satisfaction when organizational support, communication, or managerial guidance is inadequate. This finding reinforces the notion that employee motivation should be complemented by organizational conditions that enable employees to perform effectively and experience positive workplace interactions.

From a practical perspective, these findings imply that improving job satisfaction among healthcare ASN requires more than financial incentives or administrative policies. Healthcare organizations should foster autonomous motivation by providing meaningful work assignments, opportunities for professional development, constructive feedback, recognition of employee contributions, and a supportive organizational climate. Such initiatives are likely to strengthen employees' psychological engagement with their work, enhance job satisfaction, and ultimately contribute to higher-quality public healthcare services.

The Influence of Work Motivation on Transformational Leadership

The results further reveal that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on transformational leadership perceptions among healthcare ASN. This finding indicates that employees with stronger work motivation tend to evaluate leadership behaviors more positively and are more receptive to transformational leadership practices. At first glance, this relationship may appear conceptually unusual because leadership is commonly viewed as an antecedent of employee motivation rather than an outcome. However, in this study transformational leadership is measured based on employees' perceptions of leadership behavior. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted as indicating that motivated employees are more likely to recognize, appreciate, and respond positively to transformational leadership practices within their organizations.

Employees with higher work motivation generally demonstrate stronger involvement in organizational activities, greater openness to change, and increased commitment to achieving organizational objectives. These characteristics make them more responsive to leadership initiatives and more likely to perceive leaders as inspirational, supportive, and empowering. In contrast, employees with lower levels of motivation may be less engaged with organizational processes and therefore less likely to interpret leadership behaviors positively. The findings are consistent with the arguments of Ryan and Deci (2020), who emphasize that intrinsically motivated individuals are more responsive to supportive social environments. Motivated employees actively seek opportunities for growth and are generally more receptive to guidance and feedback. As a result, they are more likely to perceive leadership behaviors that promote learning, participation, and development as transformational in nature.

The findings also support Gupta and Sharma (2021), who argue that positive interactions between leaders and subordinates contribute to stronger perceptions of transformational leadership. Within healthcare organizations, where coordination, teamwork, and communication are essential, employee motivation may strengthen engagement with leadership processes and enhance perceptions of leadership effectiveness. From a practical perspective, these findings indicate that leadership effectiveness should not be viewed solely as a characteristic of leaders. Employees also play an active role in shaping leadership dynamics through their levels of motivation, engagement, and organizational participation. Therefore, organizations seeking to strengthen transformational leadership outcomes should simultaneously promote employee motivation and leadership development.

The Influence of Transformational Leadership on Job Satisfaction

The findings indicate that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction among healthcare ASN. This result suggests that employees who perceive higher levels of transformational leadership from their supervisors tend to experience greater job satisfaction. Among the direct relationships examined in this study, transformational leadership exhibited one of the strongest effects on job satisfaction. This finding highlights the central role of leadership in shaping employees' workplace experiences and emotional responses to organizational environments. In healthcare organizations characterized by complex responsibilities, public accountability, and demanding service expectations, leadership becomes a critical organizational resource that influences employee well-being.

Transformational leaders provide more than administrative supervision. They articulate clear visions, inspire employees to pursue shared goals, encourage innovation, and demonstrate individualized concern for employee development. Such behaviors contribute to the creation of supportive and psychologically safe work environments. Employees who feel valued, respected, and supported by their leaders are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward their work and experience higher levels of satisfaction. These findings support Huang et al. (2022), who emphasize that transformational leaders create positive organizational climates through inspiration, vision, and employee empowerment. Similarly, Gupta and Sharma (2021) found that transformational leadership enhances employee engagement, strengthens interpersonal relationships, and improves workplace satisfaction. The current findings extend these conclusions to the context of public healthcare institutions in Indonesia, demonstrating the importance of leadership in promoting employee well-being.

The significance of transformational leadership is particularly evident within healthcare settings because employees frequently encounter emotional pressures, operational constraints, and high service expectations. Under such circumstances, leadership support becomes essential for maintaining employee morale and organizational commitment. Leaders who communicate effectively, recognize employee contributions, and encourage professional growth can reduce workplace stress and strengthen job satisfaction. These findings suggest that investments in leadership development should be considered strategic priorities for healthcare organizations. Enhancing transformational leadership competencies may contribute not only to employee satisfaction but also to improved organizational performance and service quality.

The Mediating Role of Transformational Leadership

One of the most important findings of this study is the identification of transformational leadership as a significant mediator in the relationship between work motivation and job satisfaction. The results indicate that transformational leadership partially mediates this relationship, suggesting that work motivation influences job satisfaction both directly and indirectly through leadership practices. This finding demonstrates that employee motivation alone is insufficient to maximize job satisfaction unless it is supported by leadership behaviors that facilitate positive workplace experiences. The mediating effect provides a more comprehensive explanation of how employees' internal motivation is translated into favorable organizational outcomes. Although motivated employees generally exhibit more positive attitudes toward their work, transformational leadership strengthens this relationship by creating an environment in which employees feel valued, supported, and empowered. In other words, leadership serves as a contextual mechanism that enables employees to transform psychological motivation into sustained job satisfaction.

This finding is consistent with Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2020), which argues that the fulfillment of employees' psychological needs depends not only on individual motivation but also on supportive organizational contexts. Transformational leaders encourage autonomy by involving employees in decision-making, enhance competence through coaching and constructive feedback, and foster relatedness by promoting trust and collaboration. The fulfillment of these three psychological needs facilitates the internalization of organizational goals, thereby strengthening autonomous motivation and generating higher levels of job satisfaction. The present findings therefore provide empirical evidence that transformational leadership functions as an important contextual resource through which the motivational processes proposed by Self-Determination Theory operate in public healthcare organizations.

The findings also corroborate previous studies by Huang et al. (2022), Han and Kwon (2022), and Gkorezis (2021), which reported that transformational leadership strengthens positive employee attitudes and organizational outcomes. However, this study extends the existing literature by demonstrating the mediating role of transformational leadership within public healthcare institutions in a peripheral region of Indonesia. While earlier studies primarily examined direct relationships or were conducted in private-sector or metropolitan settings, the present research shows that transformational leadership also serves as a critical mechanism linking employee motivation and job satisfaction in geographically remote public organizations with distinct institutional challenges. This contextual evidence contributes to the broader understanding of leadership effectiveness in the public sector.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings suggest that job satisfaction should be understood as the result of interactions between individual psychological resources and organizational conditions rather than as a consequence of motivation alone. By integrating Self-Determination Theory with transformational leadership, this study demonstrates that employees' intrinsic motivation becomes more effective when reinforced by supportive leadership behaviors. This integration enriches the literature on public sector human resource management by illustrating how psychological and organizational factors jointly shape employee well-being.

The practical implications are equally important. For public healthcare organizations, efforts to improve job satisfaction should combine initiatives aimed at strengthening employees' intrinsic motivation with leadership development programs that cultivate transformational leadership competencies. Recognition, professional development opportunities, participative decision-making, mentoring, and individualized support can simultaneously reinforce employee motivation and enhance leadership effectiveness. Such an integrated approach is likely to improve employee satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ultimately the quality of healthcare services delivered to the community.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that transformational leadership represents a crucial mechanism linking work motivation and job satisfaction among healthcare ASN. The stronger employees' work motivation and the more effectively transformational leadership is practiced, the greater the likelihood of achieving higher job satisfaction. More importantly, these findings reinforce the argument that effective public sector human resource management requires the integration of individual motivational processes with leadership practices that create supportive and empowering organizational environments.

CONCLUSION

This study contributes to the understanding of employee behavior in public healthcare organizations by demonstrating the interconnected roles of work motivation, transformational leadership, and job satisfaction among State Civil Apparatus (ASN) employees in Central Halmahera Regency. The findings highlight that job satisfaction in public healthcare institutions cannot be explained solely by individual psychological factors but must also be understood through organizational and leadership perspectives. In this regard, transformational leadership emerges as an important contextual mechanism that facilitates the translation of employee motivation into positive workplace experiences.

From a theoretical perspective, the study extends the application of Self-Determination Theory within the context of public sector healthcare organizations by emphasizing the interaction between internal motivational resources and external leadership support. The findings suggest that motivated employees are more likely to experience positive work outcomes when organizational leaders create an environment characterized by inspiration, support, trust, and employee development. This indicates that leadership is not merely an administrative function but also a strategic factor influencing employee attitudes and well-being.

Furthermore, this study enriches the limited empirical literature on public healthcare organizations in peripheral regions of Indonesia. By focusing on healthcare ASN within Central Halmahera Regency, the research provides contextual evidence regarding the importance of leadership and motivation in supporting employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness. The study therefore reinforces the need for integrated human resource management strategies that simultaneously address employee motivation and leadership quality as foundations for sustainable public service improvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, healthcare institutions within the Central Halmahera Regency Government should strengthen both employee motivation and transformational leadership through supportive human resource management practices, including leadership development, career advancement opportunities, performance recognition, and competency-based training. These initiatives are expected to enhance job satisfaction and improve the quality of public healthcare services. Future research is encouraged to examine this model in different public sector settings by incorporating additional variables, such as organizational commitment, employee engagement, or perceived organizational support, and by employing longitudinal or mixed-method approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of employee job satisfaction.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to express sincere gratitude to all individuals and institutions that contributed to the completion of this research. Appreciation is extended to the civil servants (ASN) working in health service units within the Central Halmahera Regency Government who willingly participated as respondents and provided valuable data essential for this study. The authors also acknowledge the support and permission granted by relevant institutional

leaders and administrative staff, which facilitated the research process from data collection to completion. Special thanks are given to colleagues and academic peers who offered constructive feedback, critical suggestions, and scholarly insights that significantly improved the quality of this work. Their contributions helped strengthen the analysis, interpretation, and overall presentation of the findings. Furthermore, the authors are deeply grateful to their families for their continuous encouragement, understanding, and moral support throughout the research journey. Their unwavering support played an important role in sustaining motivation and ensuring the successful completion of this study.

REFERENCES

- Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. Free Press.
- Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1994). *Improving organizational effectiveness through transformational leadership*. Sage Publications.
- Chen, C., Ding, X., & Li, J. (2022). Transformational leadership and employee job satisfaction: The mediating role of employee relations climate and the moderating role of subordinate gender. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(3), 1–18.
- Choi, S. L., Goh, C. F., Adam, M. B. H., & Tan, O. K. (2016). Transformational leadership, empowerment, and job satisfaction: The mediating role of employee empowerment. *Human Resources for Health*, 14, 73.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2020). *Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness*. Guilford Press.
- Gkorezis, P. (2021). Public service motivation and job satisfaction in the public sector: The mediating role of work engagement. *Journal of Public Administration Research*, 33(2), 115–127.
- Gupta, V., & Sharma, V. (2021). The relationship between leadership, work engagement and employee well-being: A systematic review. *Management Review Quarterly*, 71(4), 873–910.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2022). *Multivariate data analysis* (8th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Han, S. H., & Kwon, B. (2022). Public service motivation and job satisfaction: Evidence from public employees. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 45(10), 813–825.
- Hasibuan, M. S. P. (2016). *Manajemen sumber daya manusia*. Bumi Aksara.
- Herzberg, F. (1968). One more time: How do you motivate employees? *Harvard Business Review*, 46(1), 53–62.
- Herzberg, F., Mausner, B., & Snyderman, B. B. (1959). *The motivation to work*. Wiley.
- Huang, L., Ahlstrom, D., Lee, A. Y.-P., Chen, S., & Hsieh, M.-J. (2022). Transformational leadership and employee well-being in the public sector: The mediating role of job satisfaction. *Public Personnel Management*, 51(1), 45–67.
- Judge, T. A., Weiss, H. M., Kammeyer-Mueller, J. D., & Hulin, C. L. (2017). Job attitudes, job satisfaction, and job affect: A century of continuity and change. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 102(3), 356–374.
- Kim, S. (2020). Transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behavior in the public sector in South Korea. *Public Management Review*, 16(2), 289–311.

- Kim, S., & Park, S. (2020). Public service motivation and job satisfaction: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Public Management Review*, 22(7), 1–23.
- Locke, E. A. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction. In M. D. Dunnette (Ed.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (pp. 1297–1349). Rand McNally.
- Mangkunegara, A. A. A. P. (2017). *Manajemen sumber daya manusia perusahaan*. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Maslow, A. H. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. Harper & Row.
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Moorman, R. H., & Fetter, R. (1990). Transformational leader behaviors and their effects on followers' trust in leader, satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviors. *Leadership Quarterly*, 1(2), 107–142.
- Priyastiwi, P., & Sofiati, S. (2022). Public service motivation: Can remuneration increase job satisfaction and performance in organization sector public? *Media Trend*, 17(1), 45–57.
- Rahman, M., Abdullah, N., & Karim, R. (2024). Transformational leadership, work motivation, and job satisfaction among public health employees. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 37(2), 155–172.
- Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2019). *Organizational behavior* (18th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Sugiyono. (2023). *Metode penelitian kombinasi (mixed methods)*. Alfabeta.
- Tnay, E., Othman, A. E. A., Siong, H. C., & Lim, S. L. O. (2023). The influences of job satisfaction and organizational commitment on turnover intention. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 97, 201–208.
- Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 5 Tahun 2014 tentang Aparatur Sipil Negara.
- Widarjono, A. (2022). *Analisis multivariat terapan dengan program SPSS, AMOS, dan SmartPLS*. UPP STIM YKPN.