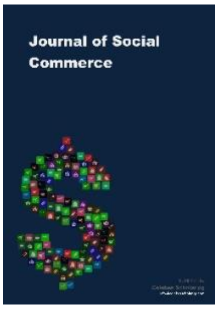

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The Influence of Salary and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance in Customer-Oriented Business Environments

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Abstract

The study looks at the link between salary, job satisfaction and employee performance in an SME in Demak Regency, Indonesia. Employing quantitative methods and multiple linear regression, information was collected using a census approach on 100 workers from CV Soerasi Mandiri. Results support that employee performance is strongly influenced by both their salary and job satisfaction. Salary motivates people from the outside by making them feel the job is fair and inspiring them to try harder, yet job satisfaction helps people work harder, feel happier and value their organization. Because the adjusted R^2 value is 0.779, these two variables, together, explain much of the differences in performance. These results underscore the practical importance of compensation and workplace satisfaction in sustaining individual productivity, especially in business environments that rely on high employee responsiveness, brand representation, and service quality. The study offers actionable insights for human resource management practices in dynamic sectors, including those increasingly shaped by digital interaction and consumer-facing roles.

Introduction

People in HR are recognized as essential to an organization's success, especially in times when the business climate changes fast. For enterprises to be innovative, provide high-quality service and compete well, they rely on their human capital (Bahri et al., 2023; Erpina et al., 2014). Because of this, performance is best seen as an overall indication of how employees are helped, appreciated and involved in the organization (Situmeang, 2016; Uka & Prendi, 2021; Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2021; Radu, 2023). The shift of businesses toward digitally

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supported models means that learning the essentials of employee performance is now especially important.

In the field of digitally enabled businesses, organizations impacted by social commerce are reshaping their workforce by mixing business activities with networking on platforms like Instagram, TikTok and Facebook (Babics & Jermolajeva, 2024; Muhammad et al., 2025; Thomas, 2025). Even though this research does not specifically address workers in social commerce firms, the knowledge it presents is valuable for traditional firms trying to adjust their HR policies to keep up with online changes. When working in these types of companies, satisfaction among staff, fair pay and excellent performance matter a lot—since employees are often asked to work in toughening conditions and at a greater distance from each other.

Consequently, employee behavior and performance in many fields are mainly determined by two variables: salary and job satisfaction (Sutrisno et al., 2022; Azhari et al., 2021; Adamopoulos & Syrou, 2022; Lee e al., 2022). A salary means more than money; it shows an employee is valued, encourages fair treatment and makes them more likely to contribute to the company (Rivai, 2014). Research has proven that being open and competitive about wages leads employees to remain with an organization, feel more involved and produce better results (Hidayat et al., 2020; Suparno et al., 2022). It becomes key now, since workers in skilled labor can easily switch between regular companies and those utilizing technology in social commerce.

Economic considerations for compensation are matched by the job satisfaction factor in terms of emotions. Individuals who feel a sense of purpose and are appreciated in their job often work harder, use more creativity and are more fully involved in their work (Karmila & Kadarusman, 2020; Widayanti & Widiastini, 2021; Shalley, 2024). In tough times, they still tend to stay loyal, start new tasks and help the company achieve its objectives. Meanwhile, employees who are unhappy at work are more likely to suffer from stress, become less engaged, take more time off and perform less effectively (Iryani et al., 2022). When we look at industries shaped by digital progress and customer feedback, human factors play an even bigger role. When employees feel connected and cared for, they are more likely to show the brand's strengths and provide good value (Carlini & Grace, 2021; Priadi & Thariq, 2023; Verčič, 2021).

Even though there is a relationship, it does not always work the same way for everyone. One study argues that a good work environment helped by satisfaction may not always lead to greater production (Fitri & Endratno, 2021). According to Herzberg in 1986, pay and benefits help by stopping staff from feeling dissatisfied, while things like appreciation and opportunities for advancement motivate them. Looking at salary and satisfaction at the same time helps us see how they shape employee outcomes (Prabowo et al., 2018; Humphrey, 2023; Dorta-Afonso et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2021).

Even though these factors matter greatly, only few studies investigate how they work together in smaller businesses in local economies—and this is especially true in Indonesia, since SMEs form the main structure of business. For this reason, the present study aims to examine the influence of salary and job satisfaction on employee performance at CV Soerasi Mandiri in Demak Regency. A conventional local firm makes it possible for the study to offer important lessons for regular organizations and those shifting towards digital or social commerce.

Literature Review

To many, salary is an important part of employment, indicating both payment for work done and appreciation for what the employee brings to the business. According to classic economic theory, financial incentives and increased effort at work are closely connected. According to Rivai (2014), compensation helps motivate and retain workers by acting on their minds, as well as their wallets. Just like Sutrisno et al. (2022) also found that higher pay leads to better performance across industries, showing that proper wages help employees stay loyal and work better.

Salary's link to employee performance matters a lot when turnover, competition and changing job expectations are common. For enterprises moving towards digital transformation or working within platform models, setting the right salary structure attracts and holds onto capable staff needed to succeed in rapidly changing situations (Prabowo et al., 2018; Suparno et al., 2022). In such SMEs that are still developing in digital areas, salary still strongly affects productivity when accompanied by methods for recognition, rewards and opportunities for employees' development (Aromega et al., 2019; Hidayat, 2021; Surya et al., 2021; Mohlala et al., 2024).

Also, neither Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory nor its updated version in 1986 consider salary to promote motivation alone, but a low salary may lead people to feel dissatisfied and unproductive. Knowing how much a person earns is important, but their salary should also be fair, be fixed and grow with what they do for the company. Those who feel their pay is fair usually feel recognized and desire to do their best at work. Hypothesis 1 (H1): How much an employee makes can have a strong impact on their performance.

How Employee Satisfaction at Work Influences Their Performance

The level of satisfaction a worker feels about their work and work environment has long attracted the interest of organizational behavior scholars. People who are satisfied with their work are more involved, demonstrate greater morale and are more likely to exceed their regular responsibilities (Karmila & Kadarusman, 2020; Silva et al., 2023). In addition, they tend to help their colleagues, support the company and keep seeking ways to improve (Widayanti & Widiastini, 2021).

Recently, researchers Azhari et al. (2021) found that being satisfied with work can help people and especially service professionals improve their job performance. When workers feel their needs are being taken care of at work, they often become more productive, less prone to missing days and more focused. According to Iryani et al. (2022), when you do not like your job, it may lead to stress, exhaustion and a loss in performance. Because roles in digital or hybrid workplaces change rapidly, it is important for people to have emotional strength and flexibility for lasting success.

Even so, the connection between happiness at work and performance does not always move in a straight line. Fitri & Endratno (2021) and Fauziek & Yanuar (2021) discovered that in strictly defined working conditions, job satisfaction may not translate to better performance alone. The study shows that job satisfaction is best understood when motivational theory, organizational culture and leadership are studied together. Based on his approach, Herzberg (1986) believes that motivations such as achievement, positive feedback and meaningful jobs are the main reasons people are satisfied with their work. That's why being satisfied at work involves more than the salary; it has to do with employees' experiences and interactions at work. This is especially important today, since the old, strict hierarchies are being replaced by more collaborative ways of working which are found in both startups and modern enterprises.

Even if the current study took place in a standard SME, its results can be applied to today's hybrid workplaces. In every situation, employers understand that keeping staff happy leads to better results, so they build systems that address workers' dreams for responsibility, respect and relevance. Hypothesis 2 (H2): Job satisfaction has a significant effect on employee performance.

Methods

Investigation into the relationship between salary, job satisfaction and employee performance was done by collecting and reviewing data. An associative research design works especially well when you want to establish the relationship between several variables. The study looked into whether variables within the company such as how much people are paid and their job happiness, could tell us something about how their work is affected. Even though the study is organized around a regular business organization, its methods apply to both old and new digital workplaces and industries using social commerce models. Because so much of the work takes place with customers and over the internet, employee performance and satisfaction are very important for maintaining high service levels and a united team.

All current employees working at CV Soerasi Mandiri in Demak Regency, Central Java, Indonesia, took part in the study. The company is a typical SME, like many in Indonesia and, recently, in other kinds of commercial spaces. The population being relatively small with everyone accessible, the study decided to use census sampling. This meant each employee was selected to take part which in total came to 100 respondents. Because the population can be fully covered, we can use census sampling to explore internal dynamics within a company without relying on probabilistic or stratified sampling. Besides, this way, the study becomes more reliable internally because it avoids biased results and gives each employee a voice in the data.

Respondents were given a questionnaire to fill out which covered all the necessary topics. The instrument is meant to assess three main areas: how much money they earn, their satisfaction with their job and their successful work performance. All questions in the instrument were built using recognized scales and theories to make sure the content is relevant and valid. Participants responded by selecting one of the five Likert scale options: strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree or strongly agree. The scaling technique helped to spotlight attitudes across the company and allowed the researchers to observe changes in individual experiences. The instrument was developed to record current levels of each variable and to examine their connections, so it includes questions on how employees view their compensation, what they feel at work, how they think about their job and how they rate their achievements.

All the gathered data were processed using IBM SPSS version 25 which is popular in social science research. At the beginning of the analysis, tests were used to ensure the instrument was valid and reliable. To find out if the items measured the intended constructs, a Pearson correlation was run on the data. Those items were considered valid when the correlation coefficients exceeded the critical value set for the sample size. In order to check the instrument's consistency, Cronbach's Alpha was used. Internal consistency was measured by setting the minimum threshold at 0.60; a higher number indicated a stronger reliability of the scores. Consequently, both salary and job satisfaction fulfilled these criteria, meaning that the data from the itemized instrument could be analyzed farther.

After finishing the validation, we used the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test to see if the data were normally distributed. The test checks that residuals are normally distributed so that regression analysis and similar statistics can be performed. A significance value bigger than 0.05 meant that the observations were normally distributed as required by linear regression. A further check on multicollinearity was done using VIF and tolerance. The data showed that salary and job satisfaction were not strongly correlated, as all VIF values were below 10 and all tolerance values were greater than 0.10.

The Glejser test was carried out to confirm that the variance of residuals is equal in each group. Non-significant p-values for the independent variables indicate that the residual variances are the same for every level of those variables. The absence of heteroscedasticity was supported by the analysis and helped confirm the accuracy of the regression results. All the assumptions were in place, so the research moved to multiple linear regression analysis to see how salary and job satisfaction influence employee performance together and each on its own.

It assumed employee performance would be explained by the amount of salary and how much they enjoyed their job, with the existence and direction of those relationships shown by the coefficients. T-tests showed that each independent variable had a genuine effect on the dependent variable if the p-value was less than 0.05. In addition, the F-test was used to judge the fit of the entire model. A meaningful F-value revealed that the adjusted combination of salary and job satisfaction predicted employee performance as well.

To judge how well the model explains the data, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was computed. It showed the ratio of variability in performance that was due to salary and how satisfied employees are at their jobs. From the R^2 value, we can tell that these two factors are very important in explaining employee results in our organization.

Because the study was done in a traditional SME, its approach is still meaningful, mainly to businesses moving towards digital transformation. Now that companies are shifting to hybrid work or use social commerce, strong employee performance is more important than ever for employee satisfaction and motivation. Therefore, the model in this study can be used for similar studies in future, since compensation and job content are essential for organizational strength and employee adaptability.

Results and Discussion

Validity Test

The results of the validity test analysis are that all indicators used to measure variables in this study have r count > r table (0.1680), thus all indicators are valid.

Reliability Test

Table 1. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Information
Salary	0.908	Reliable
Job Satisfaction	0.539	Reliable

From the table 1, it is known that all variables (Salary, Job Satisfaction) have Cronbach's Alpha values > 0.06 Thus, all indicators are reliable.

Normality Test Results

Table 2. Normality Test Results

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		100
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	.000000
	Std. Deviation	1.19517

Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.059
	Positive	.057
	Negative	-.059
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.738
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.124

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.

The value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistical test is 0.738. Significant asymp value 0,124 > 0,05 means Ho is rejected, meaning the residual data is normally distributed.

Multicollinearity Test

Table 3. Multicol

Coefficientsa		
Model	**Collinearity Statistics Tolerance**	**VIF**
(Constant)	0.465	2.148
Salary	0.284	3.521
Job Satisfaction	0.257	3.897

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

Based on table 3, it can be concluded that there is no correlation between independent variables (independent) or there is no multicollinearity because all have a VIF value < 10 or a tolerance value > 0,1

Heteroscedasticity Test

Table 4. Results Heteroscedasticity Test

Coefficientsa		
Model	**T**	**Sig.**
(Constant)	3.792	.000
Salary	.602	.738
Job Satisfaction	0.411	.671

a. Dependent Variable: Abs_Res

The results of the heteroscedasticity test for the independent variables (Salary, Job Satisfaction) did not occur heteroscedasticity because the results of the significance probability were > 0.05 (5%).

Multiple Linear Regression

Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Results

Coefficientsa				
Model		**Standardized Coefficients Beta**	**T**	**Sig.**
1	(Constant)		-1.361	.177
	Salary	.462	1.474	.044
	Job Satisfaction	.396	0.940	.035

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

Based on the table above, the multiple linear regression equation is as follows:

Performance = 0.462_Salary+ 0.396_ Job-Satisfaction + e

The regression equation has the following meaning: a) The value of the Salary coefficient shows a positive number of 0,462, meaning that if the Salary is increased, the Performance will increase; b) The Job Satisfaction coefficient value shows a positive number of 0,396 meaning that if the Job Satisfaction is increased, the Peerformance will increase.

Hypothesis Testing 1

The first hypothesis states that the Salary has an effect on performance. Based on the results of statistical tests, the significance value of the salary is 0.044 < 0.05, then H1 is accepted, meaning that Salary has an effect on Job Satisfaction.

Hypothesis Testing 2

The second hypothesis states that Job Satisfaction has an effect on Performance. Based on the results of statistical tests, the significance value of Job Satisfaction is 0,035 > 0.05, so H2 is rejected, meaning that Job Satisfaction has effect on Performance.

Model Feasibility Test Results (F Test)

Table 6. Model Feasibility Test Results (F Test)

ANOVAa

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	314.875	2	62.236	10,804	,000b
1	Residual	0.693	97	5.170		
	Total	**705.841**	**99**			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Job Satisfaction, Salary

From the results of the F test output, the calculated F value is with a significance level of 0,000 < 0,05, meaning that Salary and Job Satisfaction are appropriate in explaining the Performance variables.

Coefficient of Determination Test (R^2)

Table 7. Model Feasibility Test Results (F Test)

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.855a	.809	.779	3.89152

a. Predictors: (Constant), Salary, Job Satisfaction

From the output above, it is known that the adjusted R square value in the regression model is 0.779, meaning that 77.9% of the Performance variables can be explained by the salary and Job Satisfaction variables, while the remaining 22.1% is explained by other variables. outside of this research, such as; organizational culture, competencies, etc..

Salary and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance

This study investigated the effects of salary and job satisfaction on employee performance in a small-to-medium enterprise (SME) context. The findings confirm that both salary and job satisfaction exert significant positive influences on employee performance, which not only reinforces foundational theories in human resource management but also offers relevant insights for contemporary business environments marked by high customer interactivity, digital visibility, and fast-paced operations. As companies increasingly rely on human-facing operations in both online and offline spaces, understanding how internal organizational factors affect employee behavior becomes a practical necessity.

The positive influence of salary on employee performance confirms that compensation remains a fundamental factor in motivating and sustaining productive behavior. This aligns with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg, 1986), which identifies salary as a key hygiene factor—necessary to eliminate dissatisfaction and create a baseline condition for motivation. The result also supports equity-based models of motivation (Magnan & Martin, 2019), where fair and adequate compensation strengthens an employee's sense of justice and increases work engagement. Employees are more likely to exert effort and align their work behavior with organizational goals when they perceive that their remuneration reflects their contributions (Rivai, 2014; Sutrisno et al., 2022).

This relationship between salary and performance carries particular importance in high-contact, customer-driven business settings—especially those where employees serve as the primary interface between the organization and its consumers. In such work environments, compensation not only incentivizes effort but also functions as a signal of employee value and trust. Employees who feel adequately compensated are more likely to take ownership of customer interactions, respond more promptly, and act as representatives of the company's brand values (Yim et al., 2008; Korschun et al., 2014). Compensation, in this way, underwrites both employee retention and customer satisfaction. According to Hayati & Caniago (2012), the perception of being paid fairly increases organizational commitment, which is directly linked to service quality and operational efficiency.

The findings regarding job satisfaction also highlight its important role in improving employee performance. Job satisfaction, defined as an individual's overall emotional and cognitive response to their work role, has been shown to correlate strongly with a variety of performance indicators, including productivity, discretionary effort, and organizational citizenship behavior (Shockley et al., 2012; Karmila & Kadarusman, 2020; Prabowo et al., 2018). In the present study, the significant influence of satisfaction suggests that employees who experience a sense of contentment in their roles are more likely to maintain consistent work quality, collaborate with colleagues, and pursue organizational goals more proactively.

These findings are consistent with the Job Characteristics Model proposed by Hackman & Oldham (1976), which argues that satisfaction is derived from specific psychological states triggered by work characteristics such as task significance, autonomy, and feedback. When these conditions are present, employees tend to experience higher internal motivation, which directly translates into improved performance. Widayanti & Widiastini (2021) further support this, suggesting that satisfaction contributes to the emotional resilience and adaptability of workers—qualities that are particularly important in environments with dynamic customer demands, rapid communication cycles, and multitasking expectations.

Moreover, job satisfaction is often associated with the willingness to go beyond the formal requirements of a job, especially in service-oriented roles. These include behaviors such as offering personalized assistance, maintaining a positive attitude during stressful interactions, and staying engaged with ongoing workplace improvements—all of which have significant downstream effects on customer experience and business outcomes (Maylett & Wride, 2017; Azhari et al., 2021). These behaviors are increasingly critical in today's commercial environments where businesses must differentiate themselves not only through products and prices but through personalized, human-centered service delivery.

It is also noteworthy that while some researchers have found weak or inconsistent relationships between job satisfaction and performance (e.g., Fitri & Endratno, 2021; Fauziek & Yanuar, 2021), these inconsistencies are often explained by contextual variables such as unclear performance expectations, limited autonomy, or lack of recognition. In organizational contexts that empower employees and give them a voice in shaping their work experience, the satisfaction–performance link is generally stronger (Seibert et al., 2004; Rasheed et al., 2017). In this study, it is likely that the alignment between employee expectations, managerial support, and role clarity contributes to the observed positive relationship.

The combined explanatory power of salary and job satisfaction—as indicated by an adjusted R^2 value of 0.779—demonstrates that these two factors collectively account for a substantial proportion of variance in employee performance. This is particularly important for businesses operating with lean structures or limited managerial layers, where employee behavior and performance directly shape service outcomes. When salary and satisfaction are managed strategically, organizations can reduce costly turnover, enhance teamwork, and create more consistent and professional customer-facing processes (Tabakovic, 2024).

From a practical standpoint, these findings offer several implications for performance management in business environments where employee roles are customer-facing, emotionally intensive, or subject to digital monitoring. First, organizations should treat salary not just as a cost but as an investment in employee engagement, brand consistency, and customer loyalty. Second, fostering job satisfaction requires more than periodic rewards—it involves the continuous cultivation of a positive work culture, supportive leadership, recognition mechanisms, and opportunities for growth. As Bakker & Demerouti (2008) highlight in their Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model, job satisfaction increases when job resources meet or exceed demands, reducing strain and supporting intrinsic motivation.

Conclusion

The present study tried to identify how salary and job satisfaction influence employee performance by applying a quantitative approach to CV Soerasi Mandiri's workforce. The research results pointed out that both motivation variables positively and significantly influence employee performance, supporting the theories that state extrinsic and intrinsic motivation are important for improving work behavior. Financial security, fairness and a steady supply of effort were connected to performance because of salary. Job satisfaction, by contrast, turned out to be a psychological and emotional aspect that boosts employee involvement, trust and extra efforts.

These discoveries are valuable for the development of human resource policies as well as for leadership in organizations. All improvements in workforce performance should consider financial aspects as well as other important points. Fair compensation plans encourage employees to keep working for the organization and do their best. At the same time, providing recognition, choices in their tasks, opportunities for growth and a positive culture helps keep employees happy and makes the workplace thrive.

Because of these findings, companies in customer-facing or online areas have clearer guidance to follow. When it comes to customer service, employees are usually the first people customers see, via face-to-face service, chats online or platforms for live selling. When workers consider their pay equitable, they usually act with dependability, good manners and take lead roles at work. In the same manner, employees who are happy at work tend to serve customers well, manage customer interactions skillfully and support a positive reputation for their brand. Therefore, regards for salary and job satisfaction must be at the heart of any performance strategy for businesses. As a result, companies should regularly check their compensation policies, thank and praise their team, offer courses for growth and make sure everyone feels supported and happy at work. In business areas that require a lot of interaction, like retail, hospitality, digital customer service and live commerce, considering the customer can directly make services better, keep customers happier and improve business results.

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