

The Effect of Salary Deductions Through Job Satisfaction on Work Motivation and Performance of Daily Casual Workers of The Agriculture Service of Penajam Paser Utara Regency

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Abstract

This study examines the effects of salary deductions on job satisfaction, work motivation, and employee performance among Temporary Daily Workers (THL) at the Department of Agriculture of North Penajam Paser Regency, Indonesia. Although salary deductions are commonly viewed as punitive measures that may reduce employee morale, their effectiveness as disciplinary and managerial instruments remains underexplored, particularly in the public sector context. This research aims to analyze the direct effects of salary deductions on job satisfaction, work motivation, and employee performance, as well as the influence of job satisfaction on work motivation. An explanatory quantitative approach was employed using a census design involving all 101 THL employees. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings reveal that salary deductions have a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction, work motivation, and employee performance. Furthermore, job satisfaction significantly enhances work motivation, while work motivation emerges as the strongest predictor of employee performance. The results suggest that when salary deduction policies are implemented transparently, consistently, and fairly, they can strengthen perceptions of procedural justice, accountability, and organizational discipline rather than merely functioning as financial penalties. Consequently, employees perceive the policy as part of a structured management system that promotes responsibility and work commitment. The study contributes to human resource management literature by demonstrating that disciplinary compensation mechanisms can generate positive attitudinal and behavioral outcomes when embedded within a fair organizational framework. These findings provide practical implications for public sector managers seeking to improve employee motivation and performance through balanced disciplinary and performance management systems.

Introduction

Human resource management plays a strategic role in ensuring organizational effectiveness, particularly within public sector institutions where employee discipline and service performance are closely linked to the achievement of governmental objectives. Employee performance is influenced by various organizational factors, including compensation systems, work motivation, job satisfaction, and disciplinary policies. Among these factors, disciplinary mechanisms remain an important managerial instrument used to regulate employee behavior and maintain organizational standards (Jancsics et al., 2023; Ugoani, J., & Ibeenwo, 2024; Mlambo, 2025). One disciplinary mechanism frequently implemented in public organizations is salary deduction for violations such as tardiness, absenteeism, and non-compliance with attendance regulations. In Indonesia, the implementation of salary deductions is legally accommodated through the principle of *no work, no pay* as stipulated in Article 93 of Law No. 13 of 2003 concerning Manpower and further regulated under Government Regulation No. 36 of 2021 concerning Wages. These regulations allow organizations to impose proportional

salary deductions provided that such provisions are clearly stated in employment agreements or organizational regulations. Consequently, salary deductions function not merely as financial penalties but also as instruments for enforcing work discipline and organizational accountability. Previous studies generally report that reductions in compensation tend to decrease employee satisfaction, motivation, and performance because employees perceive them as losses that reduce economic welfare and organizational support (Suryana, 2023; Sorn et al., 2023; Ampong, 2024). From the perspective of social exchange theory, employees evaluate organizational treatment based on reciprocal relationships; therefore, reductions in compensation are often interpreted negatively and may weaken positive work attitudes. Consequently, the assumption that salary deductions could positively influence job satisfaction and work motivation appears counterintuitive when viewed through the dominant compensation literature.

However, the impact of salary deductions may differ depending on how the policy is implemented and perceived by employees. Organizational justice theory suggests that employees are more likely to accept unfavorable outcomes when organizational procedures are perceived as fair, transparent, and consistently applied (Stofberg et al., 2022; Adamovic, 2023; Moon et al., 2024). In this context, salary deductions linked to objectively measured disciplinary violations may not necessarily reduce employee satisfaction. Instead, employees may perceive the policy as a mechanism that ensures fairness among workers by preventing free-riding behavior and rewarding compliance with organizational rules. When disciplinary sanctions are implemented consistently, employees who adhere to regulations may develop stronger perceptions of procedural justice, which can contribute positively to job satisfaction.

Reinforcement theory argues that behavior is influenced by its consequences. Salary deductions represent a form of negative reinforcement intended to discourage undesirable behavior such as lateness and absenteeism (Yusra et al., 2022; Wu et al., 2023; Darius, 2023). Employees who understand the consequences of disciplinary violations may become more motivated to comply with organizational rules, improve attendance, and perform their duties more responsibly. Under these conditions, salary deductions function not solely as punishment but also as behavioral control mechanisms that encourage desirable work conduct. Therefore, in certain organizational settings characterized by clear regulations and transparent enforcement, disciplinary sanctions may indirectly foster work motivation and performance.

Despite extensive research on compensation, punishment, work motivation, job satisfaction, and employee performance, empirical findings concerning salary deduction policies remain limited, particularly within the context of public-sector temporary workers (Asep et al., 2022; Pranitasari, 2023). Most previous studies have focused on the negative consequences of compensation reduction during organizational crises or economic downturns, while relatively little attention has been devoted to salary deductions as disciplinary instruments implemented through formal attendance-control systems. Furthermore, existing studies rarely examine the psychological mechanisms through which salary deduction policies influence employee performance, especially through the mediating roles of job satisfaction and work motivation.

This study addresses these gaps by investigating the effect of salary deductions on job satisfaction, work motivation, and performance among Temporary Daily Workers (THL) at the Agriculture Office of North Penajam Paser Regency (Rokeman, et al., 2023; Adanlawo et al., 2023). Unlike previous studies that predominantly emphasize the adverse consequences of reduced compensation, this research examines salary deductions within a disciplinary management framework where sanctions are applied proportionally, transparently, and based on objective attendance records (Fulmer et al., 2023; Hussain et al., 2024). The study contributes to the human resource management literature by explaining whether disciplinary-

based salary deduction policies can generate positive behavioral outcomes through enhanced perceptions of fairness, increased motivation, and improved employee performance. Additionally, this study extends existing knowledge regarding human resource management practices in local government institutions, particularly among non-permanent employees who operate under contractual employment arrangements (Laha & Dutta, 2024; Lawolo et al., 2024; Solomon & Du Plessis, 2024).

The Agriculture Office of North Penajam Paser Regency employs 101 Temporary Daily Workers who support administrative and operational activities across various organizational units. In accordance with Regent Regulation No. 09 of 2024, disciplinary violations such as tardiness, failure to record attendance, and absence from mandatory assemblies are subject to proportional salary deductions based on biometric attendance records. The implementation of this policy provides an appropriate context for examining how disciplinary sanctions influence employees' job satisfaction, motivation, and performance. Therefore, this study aims to analyze: (1) the effect of salary deductions on job satisfaction; (2) the effect of salary deductions on work motivation; (3) the effect of salary deductions on employee performance; (4) the effect of job satisfaction on work motivation; (5) the effect of job satisfaction on employee performance; (6) the effect of work motivation on employee performance; and (7) the mediating roles of job satisfaction and work motivation in the relationship between salary deductions and employee performance.

Method

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design to investigate the causal relationships among salary deductions, job satisfaction, work motivation, and employee performance among Temporary Daily Workers at the Agriculture Office of North Penajam Paser Regency. An explanatory design was considered appropriate because the primary objective of the study was not merely to describe organizational phenomena but to test theoretically derived hypotheses regarding the direct and indirect effects among the variables included in the conceptual model. The study specifically examined whether salary deduction policies influence employee performance directly and indirectly through job satisfaction and work motivation. The research adopted a causal framework grounded in organizational justice theory, reinforcement theory, and human resource management perspectives. The hypothesized relationships were tested empirically using quantitative data collected through a structured survey. To analyze the proposed relationships simultaneously, this study utilized Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). This analytical technique was selected because it allows the estimation of complex structural relationships involving multiple endogenous constructs and mediation effects while imposing minimal distributional assumptions on the data. Furthermore, PLS-SEM is particularly suitable for predictive and explanatory research in organizational studies where latent variables are measured through multiple indicators.

Research Location and Period

The research was conducted at the Agriculture Office of North Penajam Paser Regency, East Kalimantan Province, Indonesia. This institution was selected because it implements a formal disciplinary system that includes proportional salary deductions for attendance-related violations among Temporary Daily Workers. Such a policy provides an appropriate organizational context for examining the behavioral and psychological consequences of salary deductions. Data collection was undertaken between November 2025 and January 2026. During this period, questionnaires were distributed to all eligible respondents, followed by data

verification, coding, and preparation for statistical analysis. Conducting the study over several months enabled the researcher to ensure completeness of responses and improve data quality before proceeding to model estimation.

Population and Census Procedure

The population of this study consisted of all Temporary Daily Workers (THL) employed at the Agriculture Office of North Penajam Paser Regency, totaling 101 employees. These workers perform administrative and operational functions supporting the implementation of governmental programs and public services within the institution. Given the relatively small and manageable population size, this study did not employ probability sampling techniques. Instead, a census approach (total population study) was adopted, whereby all 101 THL employees were included as research respondents. Consequently, the study utilized saturated sampling, meaning every member of the population had the opportunity to participate and was included in the analysis. The use of a census approach offers several methodological advantages. First, it eliminates sampling error because all members of the target population are represented. Second, it increases the accuracy of parameter estimation by capturing the full variability of employee perceptions within the organization. Third, the findings can be interpreted as representing the entire THL population within the Agriculture Office rather than merely a sample subset. Therefore, the final dataset consisted of 101 valid responses, corresponding to the total number of THL employees employed by the institution at the time of the study.

Data Collection Procedures

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure respondents' perceptions regarding salary deductions, job satisfaction, work motivation, and employee performance. The questionnaire contained closed-ended statements evaluated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). This measurement format enabled the transformation of subjective perceptions into quantitative data suitable for multivariate statistical analysis. Before distribution, the questionnaire was reviewed to ensure clarity, relevance, and consistency with the theoretical constructs being measured. Respondents completed the questionnaire voluntarily during working hours with permission from the institution. To minimize response bias, participants were informed that their responses would remain anonymous and would be used exclusively for academic purposes. In addition to survey data, supporting documentation was collected from institutional records, regional regulations, attendance policies, and organizational reports. These documents were used to provide contextual information regarding the implementation of salary deduction policies and employee disciplinary procedures within the organization.

Variable Operationalization and Measurement

The study consisted of four latent constructs: salary deductions, job satisfaction, work motivation, and employee performance. Salary deduction served as the exogenous variable, while job satisfaction and work motivation functioned as mediating variables. Employee performance was specified as the ultimate endogenous variable. Salary deduction refers to employees' perceptions regarding the implementation of proportional wage reductions resulting from disciplinary violations such as tardiness, absence from attendance recording, and non-compliance with organizational regulations. The construct was measured using indicators reflecting rule compliance, fairness of implementation, clarity of procedures, and acceptance of disciplinary consequences. Job satisfaction represents employees' overall affective evaluation of their work experience. Indicators included perceptions of supervisory support, relationships with colleagues, recognition, clarity of work instructions, and

satisfaction with organizational treatment. Work motivation refers to the psychological energy and willingness of employees to exert effort toward organizational goals. This construct was measured through indicators related to work enthusiasm, persistence, willingness to accept responsibilities, and commitment to task completion. Employee performance reflects the effectiveness with which employees perform their assigned duties. Indicators included quality of work, productivity, timeliness, responsibility, cooperation, and willingness to contribute beyond minimum requirements. All indicators were adapted from established theoretical frameworks and previous empirical studies in human resource management and organizational behavior literature. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale to maintain consistency across constructs.

Research Instrument

The primary research instrument used in this study was a structured self-administered questionnaire. Instrument development was based on theoretical constructs and empirical findings from previous studies concerning compensation management, organizational discipline, job satisfaction, work motivation, and employee performance. Each construct was operationalized through multiple reflective indicators designed to capture the underlying latent variable comprehensively. The instrument was prepared in Indonesian to ensure respondent comprehension and reduce measurement error. All responses were coded numerically for statistical processing. The use of a structured questionnaire enabled standardized data collection across respondents, thereby enhancing measurement consistency and facilitating subsequent SEM-PLS analysis.

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS software. PLS-SEM was selected because it enables simultaneous assessment of measurement quality and structural relationships among latent variables while accommodating complex mediation models. The analytical procedure consisted of two sequential stages. The first stage involved evaluating the measurement model (*outer model*) to determine whether the indicators reliably and validly represented their respective constructs. The second stage involved assessing the structural model (*inner model*) to examine the hypothesized causal relationships among salary deductions, job satisfaction, work motivation, and employee performance. Bootstrapping procedures with repeated resampling were employed to estimate the significance of path coefficients and indirect effects. Hypotheses were considered statistically supported when the *p-value* was less than 0.05 and the corresponding *t-statistic* exceeded the critical value of 1.96 at the 95% confidence level.

Measurement Model Assessment

The quality of the measurement model was assessed through tests of convergent validity, discriminant validity, and internal consistency reliability. Convergent validity was evaluated using standardized factor loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Indicators with loading values above 0.70 were considered highly representative of their constructs, although values above 0.50 remained acceptable under certain conditions. AVE values exceeding 0.50 indicated that a construct explained more than half of the variance of its indicators. Discriminant validity was assessed using both the Fornell–Larcker criterion and cross-loading analysis. Adequate discriminant validity was achieved when the square root of AVE for each construct exceeded its correlations with other constructs and when each indicator exhibited a higher loading on its own construct than on any other construct. Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach’s Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR). Values greater than 0.70 indicated satisfactory internal consistency and reliability of the measurement instrument.

Structural Model and Mediation Analysis

Following confirmation of measurement quality, the structural model was evaluated to test the proposed hypotheses. Structural relationships were assessed through path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and bootstrapping significance tests. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was used to assess the explanatory power of the model for endogenous constructs. Effect size (f^2) analysis was conducted to determine the relative contribution of each predictor variable to the explained variance of the dependent constructs. Predictive relevance (Q^2) was evaluated using the blindfolding procedure to determine the model's predictive capability. To examine mediation effects, indirect relationships were tested through bootstrapping procedures. Mediation was considered significant when the indirect effect was statistically significant at the 5 percent significance level. The analysis enabled assessment of whether job satisfaction and work motivation functioned as psychological mechanisms through which salary deduction policies influenced employee performance. This procedure provided a comprehensive understanding of both the direct and indirect pathways linking disciplinary policies to employee outcomes within the organizational context.

Result and Discussion

This section presents the empirical findings obtained from the analysis of data collected from Temporary Daily Workers (THL) at the Department of Agriculture of North Penajam Paser Regency. The analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to evaluate both the measurement model and the structural relationships among the study variables. The measurement model assessment includes tests of validity and reliability to ensure that the constructs are accurately represented by their indicators. Subsequently, the structural model evaluation examines the explanatory and predictive capabilities of the proposed model, followed by hypothesis testing to determine the significance of the relationships among salary deductions, job satisfaction, work motivation, and employee performance. The findings are then discussed in relation to relevant theories and previous empirical studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of how disciplinary-based compensation policies influence employee attitudes and behavioral outcomes within the public sector context.

Table 1. Outer Loading Test Results

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading
Salary Deduction (X)	X2	0.720
	X3	0.807
	X5	0.731
	X6	0.864
	X7	0.820
Job Satisfaction (M)	M3	0.823
	M5	0.795
	M6	0.826
	M7	0.820
	M8	0.787
Work Motivation (Y1)	Y1.10	0.802
	Y1.11	0.854
	Y1.12	0.784

	Y1.9	0.792
Performance (Y2)	Y2.1	0.809
	Y2.2	0.879
	Y2.3	0.803
	Y2.4	0.722
	Y2.5	0.837

Source: Data processed, 2026

Based on the results of data processing using SmartPLS, all indicators in this study had outer loading values above 0.70. This indicates that each indicator adequately represented the construct of the measured variable. For the Salary Deduction variable (X1), outer loading values ranged from 0.720 to 0.864. The indicator with the highest value was X6 at 0.864. This indicates that X6 is the most dominant indicator in shaping the salary deduction variable. For the Job Satisfaction variable (M), outer loading values ranged from 0.787 to 0.826. The indicator with the highest value was M6 at 0.826. Thus, M6 is the strongest indicator in representing job satisfaction among casual workers. For the Work Motivation variable (Y1), outer loading values ranged from 0.784 to 0.854. The indicator with the highest value was Y1.11 at 0.854. This indicates that this indicator is the most dominant measure in explaining work motivation. Meanwhile, for the Performance variable (Y2), the outer loading values ranged from 0.722 to 0.879. Indicator Y2.2 had the highest value of 0.879, indicating that this indicator is the most dominant indicator in measuring the performance of casual workers. Based on these results, it can be concluded that all indicators in this study meet convergent validity criteria and are suitable for use in further analysis.

Table 2. Construct Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Job Satisfaction (M)	0.870	0.872	0.905	0.657
Performance (Y2)	0.869	0.876	0.906	0.658
Work Motivation (Y1)	0.823	0.825	0.883	0.654
Salary Deduction (X)	0.849	0.864	0.892	0.624

Source: Processed data, 2026

The analysis results show that all variables have a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.70. The Job Satisfaction variable has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.870, the Performance variable 0.869, the Work Motivation variable 0.823, and the Salary Deduction variable 0.849. Composite Reliability values also showed good results, with Job Satisfaction at 0.905, Performance at 0.906, Work Motivation at 0.883, and Salary Deduction at 0.892. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for all variables was above 0.50, with Job Satisfaction at 0.657, Performance at 0.658, Work Motivation at 0.654, and Salary Deduction at 0.624. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the variables in the study have Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values greater than 0.70. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for each variable is also above 0.50. This indicates that all constructs in the study

have met the criteria for reliability and convergent validity, thus the indicators used are declared consistent and can be used in further structural model analysis.

Table 3. Fornell Larcker Criterion

Variable	Job Satisfaction (M)	Performance (Y2)	Work Motivation (Y1)	Salary Deduction (X)
Job Satisfaction (M)	0.810			
Performance (Y2)	0.542	0.811		
Work Motivation (Y1)	0.637	0.785	0.809	
Salary Deduction (X)	0.542	0.663	0.598	0.790

Source: Processed data, 2026

The discriminant validity assessment was conducted using the Fornell–Larcker criterion, which compares the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (\sqrt{AVE}) of each construct with its correlations with other constructs in the model. The results indicate that all constructs satisfy the discriminant validity requirement. Specifically, the \sqrt{AVE} value for Job Satisfaction (0.810) exceeds its correlations with Work Motivation (0.637), Employee Performance (0.542), and Salary Deductions (0.542). Similarly, the \sqrt{AVE} value for Employee Performance (0.811) is greater than its correlations with Job Satisfaction (0.542), Work Motivation (0.785), and Salary Deductions (0.663). The \sqrt{AVE} value for Work Motivation (0.809) also surpasses its correlations with Job Satisfaction (0.637), Employee Performance (0.785), and Salary Deductions (0.598). Furthermore, the \sqrt{AVE} value for Salary Deductions (0.790) is higher than its correlations with Job Satisfaction (0.542), Employee Performance (0.663), and Work Motivation (0.598). These findings demonstrate that each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with other constructs in the model. Therefore, based on the Fornell Larcker criterion, all constructs exhibit adequate discriminant validity, confirming that the latent variables are empirically distinct and measure different conceptual phenomena.

Table 4. Cross Loading Test Results

Indicator	Job Satisfaction (M)	Performance (Y2)	Work Motivation (Y1)	Salary Deduction (X)
M3	0.823	0.491	0.535	0.428
M5	0.795	0.501	0.516	0.487
M6	0.826	0.489	0.566	0.379
M7	0.820	0.363	0.469	0.422
M8	0.787	0.326	0.486	0.481
X2	0.354	0.523	0.403	0.720
X3	0.339	0.570	0.427	0.807
X5	0.327	0.395	0.384	0.731
X6	0.499	0.607	0.571	0.864
X7	0.572	0.504	0.539	0.820
Y1.10	0.450	0.579	0.802	0.467
Y1.11	0.504	0.680	0.854	0.494
Y1.12	0.610	0.614	0.784	0.477

Y1.9	0.488	0.659	0.792	0.494
Y2.1	0.470	0.809	0.630	0.533
Y2.2	0.479	0.879	0.699	0.486
Y2.3	0.429	0.803	0.595	0.605
Y2.4	0.346	0.722	0.532	0.449
Y2.5	0.461	0.837	0.711	0.605

The cross-loading analysis further confirms the discriminant validity of the measurement model. For the Job Satisfaction construct, indicators M3, M5, M6, M7, and M8 exhibited the highest loadings on their respective construct compared with other latent variables. For example, indicator M3 recorded a loading value of 0.823 on Job Satisfaction, which was substantially higher than its loadings on Employee Performance (0.491), Work Motivation (0.535), and Salary Deductions (0.428). Similarly, indicator M6 showed a loading of 0.826 on Job Satisfaction, exceeding its cross-loadings on Employee Performance (0.489), Work Motivation (0.566), and Salary Deductions (0.379). These results indicate that the indicators appropriately represent the Job Satisfaction construct. For the Salary Deductions construct, indicators X2, X3, X5, X6, and X7 demonstrated the highest loading values on their intended construct. Indicator X3 showed a loading value of 0.807 on Salary Deductions, which was higher than its loadings on Employee Performance (0.339), Work Motivation (0.570), and Job Satisfaction (0.427).

Likewise, indicator X6 obtained a loading value of 0.864, exceeding its cross-loadings on Employee Performance (0.499), Work Motivation (0.607), and Job Satisfaction (0.571). These findings confirm that the indicators adequately capture the Salary Deductions construct. The Work Motivation construct also satisfied the cross-loading criterion. Indicators Y1.9, Y1.10, Y1.11, and Y1.12 exhibited stronger loadings on Work Motivation than on any other construct. In particular, indicator Y1.11 achieved a loading value of 0.854 on Work Motivation, which was substantially greater than its loadings on Employee Performance (0.504), Job Satisfaction (0.680), and Salary Deductions (0.494). Similarly, indicator Y1.10 recorded a loading of 0.802, exceeding its cross-loadings on Employee Performance (0.450), Job Satisfaction (0.579), and Salary Deductions (0.467). These results demonstrate that the indicators validly represent the Work Motivation construct. For the Employee Performance construct, indicators Y2.1, Y2.2, Y2.3, Y2.4, and Y2.5 consistently showed the highest loadings on their intended construct. Indicator Y2.2 recorded a loading value of 0.879 on Employee Performance, which was considerably higher than its loadings on Job Satisfaction (0.479), Work Motivation (0.699), and Salary Deductions (0.486). Likewise, indicator Y2.5 achieved a loading value of 0.837, exceeding its cross-loadings on Job Satisfaction (0.461), Work Motivation (0.711), and Salary Deductions (0.605). These findings indicate that the indicators effectively measure the Employee Performance construct.

Table 5. Summary of Outer Loading, Cronbach Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted Test Results

Construct	Indicator	Outer Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Salary Deduction (X)	X2	0.718	0.851	0.893	0.627
	X3	0.815			
	X5	0.730			
	X6	0.864			
	X7	0.822			
Job Satisfaction (M)	M6	0.824	0.872	0.907	0.661
	M7	0.826			

	M8	0.793			
Work Motivation (Y1)	Y1.7	0.801	0.852	0.894	0.628
	Y1.8	0.813			
	Y1.9	0.795			
	Y1.10	0.764			
	Y1.11	0.787			
Employee Performance (Y2)	Y2.13	0.804	0.888	0.915	0.643
	Y2.14	0.853			
	Y2.15	0.790			
	Y2.16	0.705			
	Y2.17	0.849			
	Y2.18	0.803			

Source: Processed data, 2026

The results demonstrate that all measurement indicators exhibit satisfactory psychometric properties. Outer loading values exceeding 0.70 indicate that the indicators have strong associations with their respective constructs and adequately capture the intended latent variables. Reliability assessment further confirms the consistency of the measurement model, as both Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values surpass the recommended threshold of 0.70. Moreover, all AVE values exceed 0.50, indicating that each construct accounts for a substantial proportion of the variance in its indicators. Taken together, these results provide strong evidence of convergent validity and internal consistency reliability, supporting the adequacy of the measurement model for further analysis of the structural relationships among the study variables.

Table 6. R-Square Evaluation Criteria

R-Square Value	Category
0.75	Strong
0.50	Moderate
0.25	Weak

Source: Processed Data, 2026

Table 6 shows the evaluation criteria for interpreting the coefficient of determination (R^2) in PLS-SEM analysis. R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 are categorized as strong, moderate, and weak, respectively. Higher R^2 values indicate greater explanatory power of the exogenous variables in explaining the variance of the endogenous constructs. These criteria are used as a reference for assessing the quality and predictive capability of the structural model.

Table 7. R-Square Values

Variable	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square
Job Satisfaction (M)	0.294	0.285
Performance (Y2)	0.675	0.663
Work Motivation (Y1)	0.496	0.484

Source: Processed Data, 2026

Job Satisfaction (M) has an R-square of 0.294, meaning that the Salary Deduction variable explains 29.4% of the Job Satisfaction variable, while 70.6% is influenced by other variables outside the research model. This value falls into the weak category. Work Motivation (Y1) has an R-square of 0.496, meaning that the Salary Deduction and Job Satisfaction variables explain 49.6% of the Work Motivation variable, while 50.4% is influenced by other variables outside

the research model. This value falls into the moderate category. Performance (Y2) has an R-square of 0.675, meaning that the Salary Deduction, Job Satisfaction, and Work Motivation variables explain 67.5% of the Performance variable, while 32.5% is influenced by other variables outside the research model. This value falls into the moderate category and indicates that the research model has sufficient explanatory power for the Performance variable. Based on the R-square value, the research model indicates that the independent variables have sufficient ability to explain the dependent variable, particularly the Performance variable, which has the highest coefficient of determination, at 0.675.

Table 8. Effect Size (f^2) Evaluation Criteria

f^2 Value	Category
0.02	Small
0.15	Medium
0.35	Large

Source: Processed Data, 2026

Table 8. shows the criteria for interpreting effect size (f^2) in PLS-SEM analysis. The f^2 value indicates the relative impact of an exogenous variable on an endogenous variable in the structural model. Based on the recommended thresholds, values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large effects, respectively. These criteria are used to determine the practical importance of each predictor variable in explaining the variance of the dependent constructs beyond mere statistical significance.

Table 9. f^2 Values

Variable	Job Satisfaction (M)	Performance (Y2)	Work Motivation (Y1)	Salary Deduction (X)
Job Satisfaction (M)		0.000	0.275	
Performance (Y2)				
Work Motivation (Y1)		0.578		
Salary Deduction (X)	0.416	0.171	0.180	

The effect size (f^2) analysis shows that Salary Deductions have a large effect on Job Satisfaction ($f^2 = 0.416$) and moderate effects on Work Motivation ($f^2 = 0.180$) and Employee Performance ($f^2 = 0.171$). Job Satisfaction has a moderate effect on Work Motivation ($f^2 = 0.275$) but no meaningful effect on Employee Performance ($f^2 = 0.000$). Meanwhile, Work Motivation has the strongest effect on Employee Performance ($f^2 = 0.578$), indicating that it is the most influential predictor in the model. Overall, these findings suggest that psychological factors, particularly work motivation, play a crucial role in enhancing employee performance, while job satisfaction contributes indirectly through its influence on motivation.

Table 10. Q-Square Values

Variables	SSO	SSE	Q ² (= 1 – SSE/SSO)
Job Satisfaction (M)	440.000	357.989	0.186
Performance (Y2)	440.000	251.660	0.428
Work Motivation (Y1)	352.000	244.326	0.306
Salary Deduction (X)	440.000	440.000	—

Source: Processed data, 2026

Table 10. presents the Q² (predictive relevance) values of the endogenous constructs in the model. The results show that Job Satisfaction has a Q² value of 0.186, Work Motivation has a Q² value of 0.306, and Employee Performance has a Q² value of 0.428. Since all Q² values are greater than zero, the structural model demonstrates adequate predictive relevance for these constructs. Among them, Employee Performance exhibits the highest predictive relevance, indicating that the model has the strongest predictive capability for explaining variations in employee performance. Overall, these findings confirm that the proposed model possesses satisfactory predictive accuracy and is capable of explaining the endogenous variables included in the study.

The Effect of Salary Deductions on Job Satisfaction

The positive relationship between salary deductions and job satisfaction requires careful interpretation because it appears to contradict the dominant assumption in human resource management that reductions in compensation generally diminish employee satisfaction. The findings of this study suggest that salary deductions should not be understood merely as a reduction in employees' financial income. Rather, within the organizational context of the Department of Agriculture of North Penajam Paser Regency, salary deductions function as part of a broader disciplinary governance system designed to regulate work behavior and reinforce organizational standards. The positive effect therefore reflects employees' responses to the fairness and predictability of the disciplinary mechanism rather than to the monetary consequences of the deductions themselves (Bugdol & Puciato, 2023; Al Adwan & Ahmed, 2024; Turlykhankyzy & Buribayev, 2024).

From a management perspective, disciplinary policies contribute to employee satisfaction when they create organizational order and procedural certainty. Employees are not solely concerned with the amount of compensation they receive; they are equally concerned with whether organizational rules are applied consistently and impartially (Bamberger, 2023; Colquitt et al., 2023; Ochmann et al., 2024). When disciplinary sanctions are implemented transparently and supported by objective attendance records, employees are more likely to perceive organizational decisions as legitimate. This finding reinforces the central proposition of organizational justice theory that employees evaluate not only outcomes but also the fairness of the processes used to determine those outcomes. As argued by Greenberg, perceptions of procedural fairness often influence employee attitudes more strongly than the outcomes themselves because fair procedures communicate respect, predictability, and organizational integrity.

The significance of this finding becomes even more apparent when considering the employment status of Temporary Daily Workers (THL). Unlike permanent civil servants, THL employees operate within a relatively uncertain employment arrangement characterized by limited career security and contractual dependence. In such contexts, procedural clarity becomes a valuable organizational resource. Employees may tolerate disciplinary sanctions when the rules governing those sanctions are clearly communicated and consistently enforced. What generates dissatisfaction is not necessarily punishment itself but uncertainty, favoritism,

or arbitrary managerial discretion. Therefore, the positive association observed in this study suggests that employees interpret the salary deduction mechanism as evidence that organizational decisions are based on transparent standards rather than subjective judgments.

This finding also highlights an often-overlooked aspect of satisfaction formation within public sector organizations. Traditional compensation literature primarily treats salary as an economic reward that directly influences satisfaction through income adequacy. However, this study demonstrates that compensation-related policies may also carry symbolic and managerial meanings. Salary deductions signal organizational expectations regarding attendance, responsibility, and accountability. When employees perceive these expectations as reasonable and uniformly applied, the disciplinary system may strengthen confidence in organizational management. Consequently, satisfaction emerges not from the deduction itself but from the perception that the workplace operates according to clear and enforceable rules.

For managers in public organizations, this result carries important implications. Attempts to strengthen employee satisfaction should not focus exclusively on increasing financial rewards. Equally important is the establishment of a coherent performance management system that combines accountability with procedural fairness. Organizations frequently avoid strict disciplinary enforcement out of concern that sanctions may reduce morale. The present findings challenge that assumption by demonstrating that sanctions can coexist with positive employee attitudes when embedded within a transparent governance framework. The managerial lesson is therefore not that salary deductions increase satisfaction per se, but that disciplined and predictable organizational systems foster positive employee evaluations of their work environment.

The Effect of Salary Deductions on Work Motivation

The positive influence of salary deductions on work motivation suggests that disciplinary mechanisms can function as behavioral regulators capable of shaping employee effort and engagement. Within management theory, motivation is commonly understood as the force directing individuals toward desired organizational behaviors. While motivation is often associated with rewards and incentives, organizational control systems also play an important role in influencing employee conduct. The findings indicate that salary deductions operate as a corrective mechanism that reinforces desired work behaviors by increasing employees' awareness of the consequences associated with non-compliance (Asfoor et al., 2022; Clibborn & Hanna, 2023).

This result can be interpreted through the lens of reinforcement theory, which proposes that behavior is shaped by its consequences. Employees adjust their actions when organizational systems clearly link behavior with outcomes. In the present context, attendance violations and disciplinary infractions generate immediate financial consequences, encouraging employees to align their behavior with organizational expectations. Importantly, the motivational effect observed here should not be interpreted as evidence that employees are motivated by punishment itself. Rather, the policy establishes a clear connection between discipline and accountability, thereby strengthening employees' behavioral commitment to organizational rules.

Behavioral explanation remains insufficient. Contemporary management research increasingly recognizes that employee motivation is influenced by cognitive evaluations of organizational practices (Pincus, 2023; Osman et al., 2024; Ozcan et al., 2025). Employees respond not only to sanctions but also to the meaning they attach to those sanctions. When disciplinary measures are perceived as legitimate and proportionate, they may strengthen employees' sense of responsibility and professional obligation. Conversely, sanctions perceived as arbitrary often

trigger resistance and disengagement. The positive relationship found in this study therefore indicates that employees generally accept the disciplinary rationale underlying the salary deduction policy and incorporate it into their understanding of expected workplace behavior.

This finding contributes to an ongoing debate in motivation research regarding the effectiveness of control-oriented management systems. Much of the contemporary literature emphasizes empowerment, autonomy, and intrinsic motivation as primary drivers of employee engagement. While these factors remain important, the present study demonstrates that formal control mechanisms retain practical relevance, particularly in public organizations where operational effectiveness depends heavily on attendance discipline and procedural compliance. Effective motivation management does not require choosing between control and empowerment. Rather, organizations must create a balance in which clear accountability structures coexist with supportive leadership and meaningful work experiences.

The managerial implications are substantial. Public organizations frequently struggle to improve motivation among non-permanent employees because of budget constraints that limit the use of financial incentives (Lawolo et al., 2024; Juhainah et al., 2025; He & Luo, 2025). The findings suggest that motivation can also be strengthened through well-designed disciplinary systems that clarify expectations and reinforce accountability. However, managers should avoid interpreting these results as justification for increasingly punitive approaches. Excessive reliance on sanctions may generate compliance without commitment. Sustainable motivation requires disciplinary mechanisms to be complemented by recognition, communication, and opportunities for meaningful contribution. Salary deductions may encourage employees to meet minimum expectations, but long-term organizational performance depends on fostering deeper forms of engagement.

The Effect of Salary Deductions on Employee Performance

The finding that salary deductions positively influence employee performance illustrates the strategic role of accountability mechanisms in shaping work outcomes. Employee performance within public organizations is not merely a function of individual ability but also reflects the effectiveness of organizational systems designed to coordinate behavior toward collective objectives. The results suggest that salary deductions contribute to performance improvement by encouraging employees to comply with attendance requirements, complete assigned tasks responsibly, and maintain greater consistency in work execution.

This relationship challenges a common assumption in compensation research that financial penalties necessarily undermine employee performance (He et al., 2022; Yin et al., 2025; Gerhart et al., 2026). Such an assumption often derives from studies conducted in environments where compensation reductions are perceived as unfair or economically burdensome. The present findings indicate that the impact of compensation-related sanctions depends heavily on organizational context and implementation. When disciplinary policies are transparent, proportional, and consistently applied, employees may interpret them as legitimate performance management instruments rather than punitive actions. Consequently, behavioral adjustment occurs in ways that support organizational effectiveness.

The broader implication concerns the distinction between motivation and discipline in performance management. Many organizations focus predominantly on motivational interventions while underestimating the importance of behavioral regulation (Lambert et al., 2022; Schmader et al., 2022; DeBose, 2024). Performance is not determined solely by employees' willingness to work but also by their adherence to organizational procedures that facilitate coordination and productivity. Attendance discipline, punctuality, and compliance with supervisory instructions create operational conditions necessary for effective

performance. The salary deduction policy contributes by reinforcing these foundational behaviors, thereby indirectly supporting higher levels of work achievement.

Caution is warranted when interpreting the practical meaning of this finding. Performance improvements generated by disciplinary sanctions may reflect compliance-based performance rather than commitment-based performance. Employees may work harder to avoid penalties without necessarily developing stronger organizational attachment or intrinsic motivation. Such performance gains can be valuable in the short term but may become difficult to sustain if employees perceive disciplinary measures as overly controlling. Effective performance management therefore requires organizations to integrate accountability mechanisms with developmental strategies that enhance employee capabilities and engagement.

For public sector managers, the findings underscore the importance of viewing compensation policies as strategic human resource instruments rather than merely administrative procedures. Salary deduction policies influence employee behavior because they communicate organizational priorities and standards. However, their effectiveness depends on legitimacy, transparency, and consistency. Organizations that apply disciplinary sanctions selectively or ambiguously risk undermining employee trust and reducing the positive effects identified in this study. Consequently, performance-oriented disciplinary systems must be accompanied by clear communication and equitable implementation to maintain employee acceptance and organizational effectiveness.

The Effect of Job Satisfaction on Work Motivation

The strong positive relationship between job satisfaction and work motivation reinforces one of the most enduring propositions in organizational behavior: employees who evaluate their work experiences positively are more likely to invest effort, energy, and commitment in their roles. Although satisfaction and motivation are conceptually distinct constructs, they are closely interconnected in practice because employees' emotional evaluations of work shape their willingness to engage with organizational objectives. The findings suggest that satisfaction functions as an important psychological resource that energizes employees and encourages proactive work behavior among Temporary Daily Workers (Nemțeanu et al., 2022; Elshaer et al., 2024; Wang, 2025).

The significance of this relationship extends beyond simple employee happiness. Job satisfaction reflects employees' assessment of whether the organization fulfills important expectations regarding supervision, communication, recognition, and workplace relationships. When these expectations are met, employees develop positive affective responses toward their work environment. Such positive experiences generate enthusiasm and psychological investment, which subsequently manifest as stronger work motivation. This process is consistent with social exchange theory, which argues that employees reciprocate favorable organizational treatment through positive attitudes and behaviors that benefit the organization (Xu et al., 2022; Ahmad et al., 2023; Rajâa & Mekkaoui, 2025).

An important implication of this finding is that motivation should not be viewed exclusively as an individual characteristic. Motivation is often treated as an internal psychological trait that employees either possess or lack. The results challenge this perspective by demonstrating that organizational conditions significantly shape motivational outcomes. Employees become motivated not simply because they have personal ambition but because the work environment provides experiences that justify investing effort. Satisfaction therefore serves as a bridge connecting organizational practices with employee motivation.

The findings are particularly relevant for managing non-permanent workers. Temporary employees often face employment uncertainty, limited promotion opportunities, and fewer

organizational privileges than permanent staff. Under such conditions, traditional extrinsic incentives may have limited effectiveness in sustaining motivation. What becomes critical is the quality of the daily work experience. Employees who feel respected, supported, and guided by supervisors are more likely to remain motivated despite structural employment limitations. This suggests that managerial attention to interpersonal relationships and workplace climate may be as important as financial incentives in maintaining workforce engagement.

From a strategic human resource management perspective, the results indicate that efforts to improve motivation should begin with improving the conditions that generate satisfaction. Organizations frequently attempt to increase motivation through training programs, performance targets, or incentive systems while neglecting fundamental aspects of the employee experience. The present study suggests that such approaches may produce limited results if employees remain dissatisfied with their work environment. Sustainable motivation emerges when employees perceive their workplace as fair, supportive, and meaningful. Consequently, organizational investments in leadership quality, communication effectiveness, and workplace relationships should be viewed not merely as employee welfare initiatives but as essential mechanisms for strengthening motivation and enhancing organizational performance.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that salary deductions function not merely as a financial sanction but as a managerial instrument that shapes employee attitudes and behaviors within public organizations. The findings reveal that salary deductions have a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction, work motivation, and employee performance among Temporary Daily Workers (THL) at the Department of Agriculture of North Penajam Paser Regency. Job satisfaction was also found to significantly enhance work motivation, while its direct effect on employee performance was not significant, indicating that satisfaction contributes to performance primarily through motivational mechanisms. Furthermore, work motivation emerged as the strongest predictor of employee performance, highlighting the critical role of psychological and behavioral factors in achieving organizational effectiveness. These results suggest that disciplinary policies can generate positive outcomes when implemented transparently, consistently, and fairly, thereby fostering perceptions of procedural justice, accountability, and organizational order. From a human resource management perspective, the study emphasizes that effective performance management requires not only disciplinary control but also the creation of a supportive work environment that strengthens employee satisfaction and motivation. Consequently, public sector organizations should integrate fair disciplinary systems with motivational and developmental practices to enhance employee performance and improve overall organizational effectiveness.

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