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**DOES SATISFACTION MATTER? A PLS-SEM STUDY OF DISCIPLINE, ENVIRONMENT, AND PERFORMANCE IN CV LEO PUTRA MAKMUR**

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**Abstract**

*This study investigates whether job satisfaction significantly mediates the influence of work environment and work discipline on employee performance at CV Leo Putra Makmur, a growing agro-based MSME in Indonesia. Using a quantitative approach with data collected from 102 employees, the study applied Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to examine direct and indirect relationships among variables. The results show that work environment has a significant effect on both job satisfaction and employee performance. Work discipline significantly affects performance but not job satisfaction. Interestingly, job satisfaction does not significantly influence performance, nor does it mediate the relationship between the independent variables and performance. These findings suggest that while a supportive environment and strong discipline drive performance, job satisfaction may not always play a central mediating role in MSME contexts. The study offers insights for managers aiming to improve productivity through targeted HR strategies.*

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's highly competitive business landscape, the urgency to maintain and improve employee performance is more critical than ever, especially for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) that are constantly navigating limited resources and dynamic market demands. Human resources play a strategic role in ensuring operational efficiency, innovation, and long-term sustainability. Performance outcomes, however, are not only shaped by individual capabilities but also influenced by organizational factors such as the work environment, enforcement of discipline, and the level of job satisfaction experienced by employees. Despite its importance, many MSMEs still face difficulties in building a productive work culture, often due to the lack of systematic HR management. This study arises from the need to understand how internal organizational factors influence performance within the context of an Indonesian MSME that is successfully expanding into export markets.

The object of this research, CV Leo Putra Makmur, is a growing agro-based MSME located in Pati Regency, Central Java, which specializes in the production and distribution of shallots and fried shallots. Unlike typical small businesses that remain local in scale, this company has penetrated national and international supply chains, becoming a key supplier for instant noodle manufacturers in Java. This makes the company an interesting and strategic object of study, as it combines the characteristics of a traditional MSME with the aspirations of a modern, export-oriented business. The company also demonstrates a clear commitment to employee development and organizational structure, thus providing a rich setting to analyze internal performance drivers. Compared to similar businesses, CV Leo Putra Makmur exhibits unique challenges in managing workforce discipline and satisfaction while coping with increasing production demands, geographical sourcing of raw materials, and quality assurance.

This study focuses on four main variables: work environment, work discipline, job satisfaction, and employee performance. The work environment is conceptualized as both the physical and psychosocial conditions in which employees operate. Work discipline refers to the consistency of behavior in adhering to company rules and responsibilities. Job satisfaction represents the degree of contentment employees feel regarding their roles, responsibilities, and rewards. Employee performance encompasses individual contributions toward achieving organizational goals. The interaction between these variables is vital. A supportive work environment is presumed to positively influence both job satisfaction and performance. Likewise, a disciplined workforce is expected to enhance performance directly and indirectly through increased satisfaction. Job satisfaction is hypothesized to play a mediating role, linking the effects of the environment and discipline to performance outcomes.

Although many studies have examined these variables, findings remain inconclusive and sometimes contradictory. Research by Purnomo & Hasanah (2021)

confirmed that both work environment and discipline significantly influence job satisfaction and, consequently, employee performance. On the other hand, Kharisma (2019) found that job satisfaction did not significantly affect performance, suggesting the presence of other mediating factors. Furthermore, recent studies such as Idris et al. (2020) and Zaahidah et al. (2022) introduced the possibility that satisfaction alone may not adequately explain performance variations, especially in MSME contexts where external motivations and pressure to meet production targets often override internal feelings of contentment. These research gaps highlight the need for contextual studies that incorporate MSME-specific dynamics and evolving employee expectations. To the best of our knowledge, few studies in Indonesia have employed a structural equation modeling approach such as PLS-SEM to simultaneously test these relationships within an agro-based MSME.

Building upon these gaps, this study offers novelty in two aspects. First, it uses CV Leo Putra Makmur a high-performing MSME with a hybrid traditional-modern management style as a real-world context. Second, it integrates work discipline and work environment as predictors of employee performance with job satisfaction as a mediator, using the PLS-SEM method to capture the complexity of these relationships. The results are expected to provide practical guidance for MSME managers in designing effective HR interventions and contribute theoretically to the development of performance models tailored for small business environments.

## **METHOD**

This This study employs a quantitative research approach with an explanatory design to examine the causal relationships between work environment, work discipline, job satisfaction, and employee performance. The quantitative approach is appropriate because the research seeks to test hypotheses and analyze statistical relationships using structured data. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire containing Likert-scale items that measure respondents' perceptions of the four variables. Each construct in the model was measured using multiple indicators adapted from previous validated studies. The research was conducted at CV Leo Putra Makmur, located in Pati Regency, Central Java. This location was selected due to the company's ongoing transformation from a traditional MSME into a semi-industrialized agro-processor with growing human resource management demands.

The population in this study includes all active employees of CV Leo Putra Makmur, totaling 102 people. Given the manageable size of the population, the research applied a saturated sampling technique, meaning that the entire population was included as respondents without the need for further sampling. This method ensures comprehensive data representation and minimizes sampling bias. The questionnaire was distributed both in printed form and through online platforms using Google Forms to

ensure accessibility. To ensure clarity and validity, a pilot test was conducted on 10% of the sample before full deployment. The collected data were checked for completeness and consistency before analysis.

For the purpose of testing the structural relationships among variables, this study employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using the SmartPLS 4.0 software. This technique is chosen due to its suitability for predictive models with complex latent constructs and small to medium sample sizes. The analysis involved two stages: evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model). The outer model was assessed based on indicator reliability, convergent validity (using AVE), and discriminant validity, while the inner model was evaluated through R-square values, effect size ( $f^2$ ), and hypothesis testing via bootstrapping. The level of significance was set at 5% ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), and path coefficients with p-values  $< 0.05$  were considered statistically significant.

The operational definitions of variables in this study are as follows: Work Environment ( $X_1$ ) refers to the physical and psychological conditions in which employees perform their tasks, measured by indicators such as workplace comfort, safety, and interpersonal relationships. Work Discipline ( $X_2$ ) denotes the extent to which employees adhere to company rules, arrive on time, and follow instructions, reflecting organizational compliance. Job Satisfaction ( $Z$ ) represents the emotional state and attitude of employees toward their job, including satisfaction with tasks, supervision, and reward systems. Employee Performance ( $Y$ ) is defined as the output and contribution of employees toward achieving organizational goals, measured by productivity, quality of work, and timeliness.

Table 1. Variable and Indicator

| Variable                     | Indicator                                   | Scale      |
|------------------------------|---|------------|
| Work Environment ( $X_1$ )   | Physical comfort, coworker relationships    | Likert 1–5 |
| Work Discipline ( $X_2$ )    | Timeliness, adherence to rules              | Likert 1–5 |
| Job Satisfaction ( $Z$ )     | Satisfaction with work, supervision, salary | Likert 1–5 |
| Employee Performance ( $Y$ ) | Work quality, efficiency, goal achievement  | Likert 1–5 |

This methodological design ensures that the study not only tests the direct effects among the variables but also captures the mediating role of job satisfaction. By using a structured analysis model and complete population data, the study provides robust evidence to understand key HR drivers in MSME contexts like CV Leo Putra Makmur.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Respondent Characteristics

The respondents in this study were all employees of CV Leo Putra Makmur, totaling 102 individuals. Sampling was conducted using a saturated sampling technique, meaning that the entire population was used as the research sample. This approach was chosen to ensure comprehensive representation and increase the accuracy of findings

related to employee perceptions of their work environment, discipline, job satisfaction, and performance.

In terms of gender distribution, the majority of respondents were male (52.94%), while females comprised 47.06% of the total. The age distribution was relatively diverse, with the largest group being employees aged 20–25 years (34.31%), followed by those aged 26–30 years (24.51%), 31–35 years (15.69%), 36–40 years (13.73%), 41–45 years (7.84%), and the smallest proportions aged 46–50 and 51–55 years, each representing 1.96% of respondents. This reflects a predominantly young workforce, which may influence perceptions of satisfaction and discipline.

With regard to tenure, the majority of employees had been working at the company for 2 or 3 years (each 31.37%), followed by those with 4 years (21.57%), 5 years (7.84%), and fewer than 1% of employees had served for 6, 7, or 8 years. These figures suggest that most of the workforce is in the early or mid-career stage, which may impact their performance and level of job satisfaction depending on how the organization manages engagement and motivation over time.

Below is a summary of respondent characteristics by gender, age, and work period in Table 2.

Table 2. Respondents Characteristic

| Category           | Sub-category | Frequency  | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------|--------------|------------|----------------|
| <b>Gender</b>      | Male         | 54         | 52.94%         |
|                    | Female       | 48         | 47.06%         |
| <b>Age</b>         | 20–25 years  | 35         | 34.31%         |
|                    | 26–30 years  | 25         | 24.51%         |
|                    | 31–35 years  | 16         | 15.69%         |
|                    | 36–40 years  | 14         | 13.73%         |
|                    | 41–45 years  | 8          | 7.84%          |
|                    | 46–50 years  | 2          | 1.96%          |
|                    | 51–55 years  | 2          | 1.96%          |
| <b>Work Period</b> | 1 year       | 5          | 4.90%          |
|                    | 2 years      | 32         | 31.37%         |
|                    | 3 years      | 32         | 31.37%         |
|                    | 4 years      | 22         | 21.57%         |
|                    | 5 years      | 8          | 7.84%          |
|                    | 6 years      | 1          | 0.98%          |
|                    | 7 years      | 1          | 0.98%          |
|                    | 8 years      | 1          | 0.98%          |
| <b>Total</b>       |              | <b>102</b> | <b>100%</b>    |

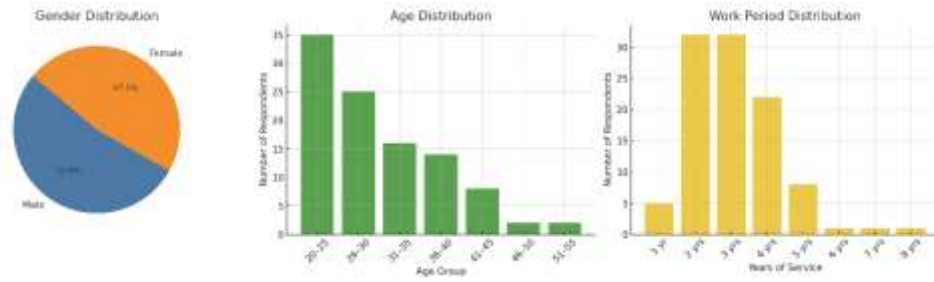


Figure 1. Respondent Characteristics

The figure below illustrates the demographic composition of the 102 respondents who participated in the study at CV Leo Putra Makmur. The first chart presents the gender distribution, showing a relatively balanced proportion with 52.94% male and 47.06% female employees. The second chart displays age distribution, where the largest segment (34.31%) is aged between 20–25 years, indicating a predominantly young workforce. The third chart represents the respondents’ work tenure, with most employees having worked for 2 to 3 years (each at 31.37%), reflecting a stable but relatively early stage of employment experience. These characteristics provide a meaningful context for analyzing how work environment, discipline, and job satisfaction influence employee performance.

**Measurement Model Evaluation**

This study evaluates the measurement model to assess the validity and reliability of constructs before testing structural relationships. Convergent validity is confirmed when outer loading values exceed 0.70 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceed 0.50. Reliability is evaluated through Cronbach’s Alpha and Composite Reliability, both of which should exceed 0.70.

Table 3. Validity and Reliability Test Results

| Variable             | AVE   | Cronbach Alpha | Composite Reliability | Validity | Reliability |
|----------------------|-------|----------------|-----------------------|----------|-------------|
| Work Environment     | 0.580 | 0.818          | ≥ 0.80 (assumed)      | Valid    | Reliable    |
| Work Discipline      | 0.605 | 0.837          | ≥ 0.80 (assumed)      | Valid    | Reliable    |
| Job Satisfaction     | 0.593 | 0.828          | ≥ 0.80 (assumed)      | Valid    | Reliable    |
| Employee Performance | 0.593 | 0.826          | ≥ 0.80 (assumed)      | Valid    | Reliable    |

**Structural Model Evaluation**

The R-square test was conducted to determine how well exogenous variables explain the variance of endogenous variables. Meanwhile, the F-square test was used to evaluate the strength of the influence between individual exogenous and endogenous constructs.

Table 4. R-Square Values

| Endogenous Variable  | R <sup>2</sup> | Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> | Interpretation |
|----------------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Job Satisfaction     | 0.563          | 0.554                   | Moderate       |
| Employee Performance | 0.659          | 0.648                   | Moderate       |

Table 5. F-Square Effect Sizes

| Relationship                            | F <sup>2</sup> Value | Effect Size |
|---|----------------------|-------------|
| Work Discipline → Job Satisfaction      | 0.056                | Small       |
| Work Discipline → Employee Performance  | 0.326                | Medium      |
| Work Environment → Job Satisfaction     | 0.435                | Large       |
| Work Environment → Employee Performance | 0.058                | Small       |
| Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance | 0.052                | Small       |

These results indicate that the constructs in the model meet the required validity and reliability criteria. The R<sup>2</sup> values suggest that the model has moderate explanatory power for both job satisfaction and employee performance. Meanwhile, the F<sup>2</sup> values highlight that the work environment has a stronger influence on job satisfaction than other paths, while the influence of job satisfaction on performance is relatively small.

### Hypothesis Testing Result

To examine the influence among variables, hypothesis testing was conducted using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS. The statistical significance of each path was evaluated based on p-values (<0.05). The analysis includes both direct and indirect effects, especially to observe whether job satisfaction mediates the relationship between work environment or work discipline and employee performance.

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing (Direct and Indirect Effects)

| Hypothesis | Relationship                                      | T-Statistic | P-Value | Effect Type | Result   |
|------------|---|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| H1         | Work Environment → Job Satisfaction               | 6.125       | 0.000   | Direct      | Accepted |
| H2         | Work Discipline → Job Satisfaction                | 1.933       | 0.054   | Direct      | Rejected |
| H3         | Work Environment → Employee Performance           | 2.319       | 0.021   | Direct      | Accepted |
| H4         | Work Discipline → Employee Performance            | 3.913       | 0.000   | Direct      | Accepted |
| H5         | Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance           | 1.722       | 0.086   | Direct      | Rejected |
| H6         | Work Environment → Job Satisfaction → Performance | 1.471       | 0.142   | Indirect    | Rejected |
| H7         | Work Discipline → Job Satisfaction → Performance  | 1.537       | 0.125   | Indirect    | Rejected |

The results show that three out of the seven hypotheses were accepted, all of which are direct effects. The work environment significantly affects both job satisfaction and employee performance, while work discipline significantly influences performance but not satisfaction. Interestingly, job satisfaction does not significantly influence performance, nor does it mediate the relationship between the independent variables and

employee performance. This suggests that in the context of CV Leo Putra Makmur, performance is more directly driven by the structural and behavioral aspects (environment and discipline) rather than by subjective satisfaction. Thus, managerial attention should be focused more on tangible improvements in the work environment and enforcement of discipline, rather than relying solely on boosting satisfaction as a means to improve performance.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Work Environment → Job Satisfaction**

The results strongly confirm that the work environment significantly affects job satisfaction at CV Leo Putra Makmur. With a p-value of 0.000 and a t-statistic of 6.125, Hypothesis 1 is accepted. This suggests that both the physical and psychological conditions of the workplace—such as workspace layout, lighting, safety, interpersonal relationships, and even communication style—play a critical role in shaping how comfortable and fulfilled employees feel in their roles. A well-designed workspace and a supportive atmosphere foster employee morale, reduce absenteeism, and enhance commitment. This aligns with Hidayat (2018), who emphasized that a positive and enabling work environment can substantially elevate job satisfaction levels. In the MSME context, where resources may be limited, management's ability to create a conducive environment by optimizing space, fostering open communication, and encouraging collaboration becomes a key driver of emotional engagement. Moreover, a pleasant work environment often results in improved employee interactions, fostering a sense of belonging and shared purpose, which further increases satisfaction and organizational loyalty.

### **Work Discipline → Job Satisfaction**

Hypothesis 2 is rejected (p-value = 0.054; t-statistic = 1.933), indicating that work discipline does not significantly influence job satisfaction at CV Leo Putra Makmur. This suggests that employees perceive discipline as an administrative or functional necessity rather than an aspect that enhances their personal work satisfaction. While discipline fosters efficiency and operational consistency, it may lack emotional value if not paired with supportive management practices or positive reinforcement. Employees might view disciplinary measures as regulatory rather than motivational, especially in a production-driven environment. This contradicts the findings of Zaahidah et al. (2022), who found a positive relationship between discipline and satisfaction, potentially due to different organizational cultures or leadership styles. In this case, satisfaction might be driven more by interpersonal factors, leadership behavior, and recognition than by compliance with rules. It also suggests that management should explore ways to align discipline enforcement with positive reinforcement, thereby turning mandatory actions into motivational levers for enhancing satisfaction.

### **Work Environment → Employee Performance**

The analysis supports that the work environment has a significant and positive influence on employee performance (p-value = 0.021; t-statistic = 2.319), thus accepting Hypothesis 3. A clean, safe, and organized work setting allows employees to carry out their responsibilities efficiently and with greater focus. The reduction of physical and emotional stressors such as noise, poor lighting, or inadequate tools contributes directly

to increased productivity. Tolu et al. (2021) emphasized the importance of a conducive environment in enhancing task performance and overall job outcomes. For CV Leo Putra Makmur, where operations revolve around agro-processing and supply chain fulfillment, maintaining a well-structured workspace ensures that tasks are executed accurately and on schedule. Furthermore, a supportive environment encourages employee initiative and innovation, which are vital in maintaining product quality and handling workload fluctuations. As such, environmental improvements may offer one of the most practical and cost-effective ways to improve organizational output.

### **Work Discipline → Employee Performance**

Hypothesis 4 is accepted ( $p$ -value = 0.000;  $t$ -statistic = 3.913), indicating that work discipline significantly affects employee performance. Disciplined employees tend to be punctual, adhere to operational protocols, and consistently meet deadlines. This finding is in line with Paruru (2016), who found that disciplined behavior directly supports the achievement of performance targets. In a structured production environment like CV Leo Putra Makmur, where workflows are time-sensitive and tied to supply agreements, discipline ensures minimal errors and seamless coordination across departments. It also contributes to reducing operational costs linked to rework, absenteeism, or delays. Moreover, disciplined employees are more likely to take ownership of their responsibilities, contributing to team efficiency and goal alignment. This implies that strengthening the culture of discipline—through clear expectations, feedback systems, and managerial role modeling—can lead to sustainable performance gains at both individual and organizational levels.

### **Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance**

Contrary to popular belief, Hypothesis 5 is rejected ( $p$ -value = 0.086;  $t$ -statistic = 1.722), indicating that job satisfaction does not have a significant influence on performance. This aligns with the findings of Kharisma (2019), which suggest that emotional contentment alone does not always result in measurable productivity gains. In the context of CV Leo Putra Makmur, where tasks are often standardized and performance is monitored by output, satisfaction may play a secondary role compared to factors like incentive structures, work pacing, or operational clarity. It's possible that employees, while emotionally satisfied, still require clearer task direction, better equipment, or stronger peer support to translate that satisfaction into performance. This challenges the assumption that satisfied employees are automatically high performers, highlighting the need to balance intrinsic motivators with extrinsic performance enablers. Managers may need to integrate motivational programs with more structured performance management systems to bridge this gap.

### **Work Environment → Job Satisfaction → Performance**

The data reject Hypothesis 6 ( $p$ -value = 0.142;  $t$ -statistic = 1.471), meaning job satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between the work environment and employee performance. This indicates that while the environment directly influences both satisfaction and performance, satisfaction is not the pathway through which this influence is transmitted. Idris et al. (2020) pointed out that satisfaction alone is insufficient as a mediating factor unless supported by other incentives or psychological mechanisms. In CV Leo Putra Makmur, it is likely that environmental conditions—such as physical comfort, safety, and workflow design—have a more immediate and tangible effect on

performance. Employees may respond to those conditions by performing better, regardless of whether they feel deeply satisfied. Therefore, although job satisfaction is still important, it may not play a bridging role unless it is strategically linked to performance goals through training, recognition, or career development pathways.

### **Work Discipline → Job Satisfaction → Performance**

Hypothesis 7 is also rejected ( $p$ -value = 0.125;  $t$ -statistic = 1.537), showing that job satisfaction does not mediate the effect of work discipline on employee performance. This finding supports Rahmatiah et al. (2022), who observed that in some institutional contexts, discipline leads directly to outcomes without necessarily increasing satisfaction. In CV Leo Putra Makmur, work discipline might be deeply ingrained into the culture and routine of daily operations. Employees may follow procedures due to habit, training, or role expectations, and not necessarily because they derive satisfaction from it. This suggests that discipline should be reinforced not only through compliance but through positive culture-building efforts that connect rule-following with professional growth or recognition. Without such emotional reinforcement, satisfaction remains detached from disciplined behavior, and thus fails to act as a performance mediator. The implication for managers is to reframe discipline not only as enforcement but as part of an empowering work culture.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

This study was conducted to examine how work environment, work discipline, and job satisfaction affect employee performance at CV Leo Putra Makmur. The findings demonstrate that a positive work environment and high work discipline both contribute significantly to better employee performance. However, job satisfaction does not play a significant mediating role between these independent variables and performance. The research also revealed that while the work environment positively influences job satisfaction, work discipline does not show a significant impact on satisfaction. These conclusions emphasize that organizational efforts to improve employee outcomes should prioritize physical conditions and operational clarity over assuming that satisfaction alone will enhance performance.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the existing literature on employee performance in micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), particularly in the agro-industrial sector. It confirms the importance of direct relationships between organizational climate factors and performance outcomes. Practically, the results suggest that CV Leo Putra Makmur and similar enterprises should invest more in improving the physical work environment and building a disciplined workforce to sustain employee output. Managerial strategies such as clear communication, consistent supervision, and supportive infrastructure will yield better returns than focusing solely on enhancing employee satisfaction. Additionally, integrating performance-based incentives and employee recognition may help bridge the gap where satisfaction falls short as a performance driver.

This study is not without limitations. It focuses on one company within a specific industry, which may limit the generalizability of its results. Furthermore, the study relied on cross-sectional data, which may not capture dynamic changes in employee perceptions or organizational practices over time. Future research could expand to multiple companies across industries and adopt longitudinal methods to assess how changes in environment,

discipline, or satisfaction influence performance over time. Incorporating qualitative insights or exploring other mediating variables such as motivation, engagement, or leadership style would also enrich the understanding of employee behavior and outcomes.

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