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## Ability, Motivation, and Compensation on Performance: Job Satisfaction as Mediator in Mahkamah Syar'iyah Aceh

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### Abstract

**Objective** – This study investigates the influence of ability, motivation, and compensation on employee performance at Mahkamah Syar'iyah Aceh, specifically focusing on the mediating role of job satisfaction.

**Design/Methodology/Approach** – A quantitative survey approach was employed, utilizing primary data from employee questionnaires. Hypotheses were tested using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to evaluate both direct and indirect effects.

**Findings** – Ability, motivation, and compensation significantly enhance job satisfaction but exert no significant direct effect on employee performance. Job satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between these antecedent variables and employee performance.

**Implications** – Performance improvements in this judicial context are not automatic results of augmented inputs but strictly require the elevation of job satisfaction. Theoretically, this study clarifies human resource mediation mechanisms within public sector institutions. Practically, organizational leadership must prioritize satisfaction-oriented management strategies over direct compensation or ability-focused interventions to optimize employee performance.

**Keywords:** Ability, Motivation, Compensation, Employee Performance, Job satisfaction.



**INTRODUCTION**

The efficiency of government administration and national development relies heavily on the performance of the Civil Service (Aparatur Sipil Negara – ASN). As the vanguard of the bureaucracy, the ASN plays a strategic role in establishing good governance. Following the 1998 Reformation in Indonesia, demands for a professional, adaptive, and innovative bureaucracy have intensified to improve the effectiveness of public services (Supriandi et al., 2022); (DEWI et al., 2023).

As the pinnacle of judicial power, the Supreme Court of Indonesia (*Mahkamah Agung – MA*) oversees four judicial spheres under the "One Roof" (*Satu Atap*) policy. The MA is mandated to foster an organization that is professional, transparent, and accountable to achieve its vision: "The Realization of a Great Indonesian Judiciary" (Suadi, 2021). Central to this mission is the quality of Human Resources (HR), where professionalism and integrity are critical determinants of institutional success (Hamzah, 2023).

Organizational effectiveness is predicated on superior skills and resources. Human resource (HR) development strategies must, therefore, optimize employee performance through proficient leadership, motivation, and proportional compensation (Soetrisno, 2016). Motivation provides the internal drive necessary for operational continuity, whereas compensation functions as a critical reward system that shapes productivity and loyalty (Agusandika, 2024) and (Widodo & Yandi, 2022).

The Mahkamah Syar’iyah Aceh occupies a unique position within the Indonesian judiciary, bearing the specific mandate to implement Sharia law under Aceh’s special autonomy provisions. Despite the introduction of various HR capacity-building programs and performance allowances, internal evaluations reveal significant performance fluctuations. Data from the Directorate General of the Religious Courts (BADILAG) illustrates a declining trend in the institution's performance ranking throughout 2025. This downward trajectory underscores a performance gap characterized by administrative delays, diminished responsiveness to the public, and suboptimal engagement in development activities.

Table 1. Performance Evaluation Ranking of the Mahkamah Syar’iyah of Aceh among Indonesia Religious Courts/Mahkamah Syar’iyah

No	Period	Ranking
1	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	69
2	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	80
3	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	86

*Source: Directorate General of the Religious Courts of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia (BADILAG), 2025.*

This downward trend highlights a performance gap characterized by administrative delays, low responsiveness to the public, and suboptimal participation in development activities. While studies on ability, motivation, and compensation are prevalent in the private sector, there is a distinct research gap regarding these variables within religious judicial institutions, particularly those with the unique regional autonomy of Aceh.

Although studies examining ability, motivation, and compensation are prevalent within the private sector, a notable empirical gap exists regarding these variables in religious judicial institutions, particularly those operating under unique regional autonomy frameworks like Aceh's. Furthermore, academic debate persists concerning the precise nature of these relationships. While some scholars propose a direct influence of these factors on performance (Fajriah et al., 2021), others argue that the relationship is mediated by job satisfaction (Sembiring et al., 2021).

To address these empirical gaps, this research analyzes the effects of ability, motivation, and compensation on employee performance at the Mahkamah Syar'iyah Aceh. The findings are anticipated to advance HR management theory and furnish policymakers with an empirical foundation for enhancing the professionalism of the judicial apparatus in Aceh.

## Literature review

### Ability

Ability is an individual's intellectual and physical capacity to execute tasks efficiently and with high quality (Rais, 2020), originating from a solid combination of formal education, training, and practical knowledge (Praweswari et al., 2022). Consequently, developing this technical competence significantly improves overall service quality and effectiveness in public sector organizations (Mulk, 2022).

### Motivation

Motivation encompasses the internal and external drives that stimulate employee diligence, creativity, and achievement orientation (Dzirusyidi & Heswanda, 2025). Driven by both motivator and hygiene factors that increase psychological satisfaction (Tansala et al., 2025), work motivation acts as a crucial element that significantly improves public sector employee performance by fostering higher discipline and initiative (Patehurohmah, 2024).

### Compensation

Compensation constitutes organizational rewards that, according to the Total Returns model (Newman et al., 2017), include both financial remuneration and relational returns such as career development. When perceived as fair, compensation positively affects employee satisfaction and motivation (Heriswanto, 2021) and, through a well-structured policy, significantly improves overall employee performance and public service quality (Jufrizen & Rahmadhani, 2020).

### Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a positive emotional state fundamentally shaped by fulfilled compensation, a conducive work environment, and harmonious interpersonal relationships (Supardi, 2024). In the public sector, fulfilling this satisfaction is an absolute prerequisite to ensure superior accountability and excellent service quality (Nabawi, 2019), functioning as a vital element that significantly reduces turnover rates and increases organizational commitment (Ekhsan, 2019). Furthermore, high job satisfaction serves as a critical determinant for preserving employee discipline and ensuring consistent performance within regional government institutions (Purwanto et al., 2023).

### Employee Performance

Employee performance is the cumulative work result driven by the integration of individual ability, work motivation, and a conducive environment (Siagian & Khair, 2018), alongside the vital external stimulus of fair compensation (Rosmaini & Tanjung, 2019). Specifically in the public sector, performance is simultaneously determined by competence, motivation, and job satisfaction (Greys & Heriswanto, 2024), a synergy that provides a dominant 85.7% contribution to forming effective apparatus performance (Wandansari et al., 2023)

## METHODS

This research employs a quantitative explanatory approach to examine the causal relationships between variables, specifically investigating the direct and indirect effects of ability, motivation, and compensation on performance, with job satisfaction serving as a mediating variable. The study was conducted at the Mahkamah Syar'iyah Aceh between August and October 2025. The

population comprised the institution's entire 90-employee workforce. Given the relatively small population size, a saturated sampling technique (census method) was utilized, designating all 90 employees as the research sample. Primary data were collected via a questionnaire utilizing a 1–5 Likert scale, supplemented by institutional documentation and direct observation of the work environment.

The collected data were analyzed utilizing Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS) via the SmartPLS 4.0 application. This analytical method was selected due to its suitability for small sample sizes ( $\leq 100$  respondents), its robust capability to test complex relationships involving mediation, and its non-reliance on normally distributed data. The analytical procedure strictly adhered to the established PLS-SEM guidelines delineated by (Hair et al., 2019) and (Hair Jr et al., 2020) . This encompassed outer model evaluation (convergent validity, Average Variance Extracted [AVE], discriminant validity, Cronbach’s Alpha, and composite reliability) and inner model evaluation (structural model including  $R^2$ ,  $f^2$ ,  $Q^2$ , and Path Coefficient), and hypothesis testing based on t-statistics ( $\geq 1.96$ ) and p-values ( $\leq 0.05$ ) to evaluate direct, indirect, and total effects.

Table 2. Convergent Validity Test Model (SmartPLS 4.0 Output)

Variable Type	Research Variable	Operational Definition	Measurement Indicators (1-5 Likert Scale)
Exogenous Variable (Independent)	Ability (X1)	An individual's intellectual, physical, and technical capacity to complete their assigned workload.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Level of technical knowledge.</li> <li>2. Operational skills and capabilities.</li> <li>3. Accumulation of work experience.</li> </ol>
	Motivation (X2)	Internal and external drives that stimulate the direction and persistence of an employee's work behaviour.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Intrinsic motivation (internal drive).</li> <li>2. Extrinsic motivation (external/environmental drive).</li> <li>3. Achievement orientation.</li> </ol>
	Compensation (X3)	The totality of remuneration (both financial and non-financial) provided by the institution in exchange for employee contributions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Financial adequacy (base salary/allowances)</li> <li>2. Proportionality of additional incentives.</li> <li>3. Non-financial compensation (career development opportunities).</li> </ol>
Mediating Variable	Job Satisfaction (Z)	A positive attitude or emotional state resulting from an employee's subjective evaluation of their job and work environment.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Satisfaction with compensation/salary</li> <li>2. Comfort of the physical work environment.</li> <li>3. Quality of interpersonal communication and coworker relations</li> </ol>
Endogenous Variable (Dependent)	Employee Performance (Y)	The cumulative work outcomes and achievements produced by an employee based on their institutional responsibilities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quality of work output.</li> <li>2. Timeliness of task completion.</li> <li>3. Level of work discipline.</li> <li>4. Responsibility towards work assignments.</li> </ol>

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Outer Model Evaluation**

**Outer Model Test**

The measurement model was evaluated to ascertain the validity and reliability of the indicators representing each latent construct. This evaluation encompassed three primary stages: convergent validity (assessed via outer loadings and AVE), construct reliability (measured via Cronbach’s Alpha and Composite Reliability), and discriminant validity. The parameter values indicate that the research instrument met the requisite statistical thresholds to proceed with the structural analysis.

**Convergent Validity (Outer Loadings)**

Convergent validity determines the extent to which indicators of a specific construct share a high proportion of variance. An indicator is generally considered valid if its outer loading exceeds 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 3. Convergent Validity Test Model (SmartPLS 4.0 Output)

Variabel	Outer Loading Range	Remarks
Ability	0.572 – 0.798	Valid (A2 = 0.572 approaching the limit)
Motivation	0.673 – 0.850	Valid
compensation	0.721 – 0.872	Valid
Job Satisfaction	0.684 – 0.774	Valid
Employee Performance	0.644 – 0.860	Valid

Source: SmartPLS Output, processed in 2025.

As demonstrated in Table 3, all indicators exhibit outer loadings above the minimum threshold of 0.50, with the vast majority surpassing 0.70. The lowest recorded value, indicator A2 (0.572), remains acceptable; as (Hair et al., 2019), note, values between 0.50 and 0.70 are permissible in exploratory research utilizing numerous indicators. This robust convergent validity confirms that each indicator accurately represents its respective latent variable, thereby minimizing measurement error and validating the instrument for structural model testing (Hair Jr et al., 2020).

**Construct Reliability Test (Cronbach’s Alpha and Composite Reliability)**

Construct reliability determines the internal consistency among indicators in measuring the same variable. A high reliability value indicates that the indicators consistently measure the specific concept.

Table 4. Construct Reliability Test (SmartPLS 4.0 Output)

Variabel	Outer Loading Range	Remarks
Ability	0.572 – 0.798	Valid (A2 = 0.572 approaching the limit)
Motivation	0.673 – 0.850	Valid
compensation	0.721 – 0.872	Valid
Job Satisfaction	0.684 – 0.774	Valid
Employee Performance	0.644 – 0.860	Valid

Source: SmartPLS Output, processed in 2025.

Table 4 shows that all constructs possess a Cronbach’s Alpha > 0.7 and a Composite Reliability > 0.8, declaring them highly reliable. The highest consistency is found in Employee Performance ( $\alpha = 0.927$ ) and Compensation ( $\alpha = 0.927$ ). According to (Taber, 2018), reliability above 0.70 is good, and above 0.90 is very strong. These results align with (Hair et al., 2019), confirming that the high reliability reinforces the stability of the measurement results, allowing the study to proceed to the inner model analysis.

**Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Test**

The AVE value assesses the magnitude of indicator variance successfully explained by the latent construct. A value above 0.50 means the indicators explain more than 50% of the measured construct's variance.

Table 5. Average Variance Extracted Test Values of the Research (SmartPLS 4.0 Output)

Variabel	AVE	Remarks
Ability	0.513	Valid
Job Satisfaction	0.510	Valid
Employee Performance	0.662	Valid
compensation	0.661	Valid
Motivation	0.591	Valid

Source: SmartPLS Output processed in 2025.

As seen in Table 5, all variables possess an AVE value above 0.50, demonstrating adequate convergent validity. The highest values are in Employee Performance (0.662) and Compensation (0.661), showing that these constructs dominantly explain the variance of their indicators over error variance. Based on the Confirmatory Composite Analysis (CCA) by (Hair Jr et al., 2020), fulfilling these thresholds confirms that the measurement model is fit and ready for structural evaluation.

**Outer Loading Test Based on SmartPLS**

This test determines the strength of the relationship between the indicator and its latent construct. A higher value means a greater contribution to the construct. Values greater than 0.70 are ideal (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 6. Outer Loading Test Values of the Research (SmartPLS 4.0 Output)

Variabel	Indikator	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Keterangan	
Ability	A1	0.738	11.639	0.000	Valid	
	A2	0.572	5.483	0.000	Valid (approaching the limit)	
	A3	0.668	9.999	0.000	Valid	
	A5	0.707	8.671	0.000	Valid	
	A7	0.750	14.581	0.000	Valid	
	A8	0.684	7.939	0.000	Valid	
	A9	0.749	13.924	0.000	Valid	
	A10	0.739	12.374	0.000	Valid	
	Motivation	B1	0.716	9.569	0.000	Valid
		B3	0.715	9.842	0.000	Valid
B5		0.675	9.371	0.000	Valid	
B6		0.732	14.329	0.000	Valid	
B7		0.832	23.508	0.000	Valid	
B8		0.730	10.418	0.000	Valid	
B9		0.849	30.038	0.000	Valid	
B10		0.847	26.796	0.000	Valid	
Compensation		C1	0.770	13.312	0.000	Valid
		C3	0.719	11.114	0.000	Valid
	C4	0.775	13.513	0.000	Valid	

	C5	0.813	18.709	0.000	Valid
	C7	0.870	30.422	0.000	Valid
	C8	0.774	14.792	0.000	Valid
	C9	0.810	15.765	0.000	Valid
	C10	0.803	16.743	0.000	Valid
Job Satisfaction	A4	0.707	8.671	0.000	Valid
	A6	0.684	7.939	0.000	Valid
	B2	0.701	9.340	0.000	Valid
	B4	0.732	14.329	0.000	Valid
	C2	0.774	18.709	0.000	Valid
	C6	0.817	15.765	0.000	Valid
Employee Performance	Z1	0.815	21.260	0.000	Valid
	Z4	0.742	13.922	0.000	Valid
	Z2	0.826	18.555	0.000	Valid
	Z3	0.804	17.097	0.000	Valid
	Z5	0.835	22.975	0.000	Valid
	Z6	0.830	15.904	0.000	Valid
	Z7	0.860	27.706	0.000	Valid
	Z8	0.827	20.988	0.000	Valid
	Z9	0.756	9.685	0.000	Valid
	Z10	0.823	18.555	0.000	Valid

Source: SmartPLS Output, processed in 2025.

Table 6 demonstrates that all indicators possess a T-statistic value > 1.96 and a P-value < 0.05. This means every indicator significantly contributes to its construct. In accordance with (Hair et al., 2019) and (Hair Jr et al., 2020), this good convergent validity confirms that each questionnaire item accurately measures the intended concept, retaining all indicators for the structural model.

**Inner Model Evaluation (Path Coefficients)**

**Inner Model Test**

The inner model evaluation examines the hypothesized relationships between latent variables. A relationship is deemed significant if the t-statistic ≥ 1.96 and the p-value ≤ 0.05 (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 7. Inner Model Test Values of the Research (SmartPLS 4.0 Output)

Relationship Between Variables	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Remarks
Ability → Job Satisfaction	0.333	6.921	0.000	Significant
Ability → Performance	0.151	1.005	0.315	Not Significant
Ability × Job Satisfaction → Performance	0.080	0.371	0.711	Not Significant
Job Satisfaction → Performance	0.649	2.554	0.011	Significant
Compensation → Job Satisfaction	0.340	5.851	0.000	Significant
Compensation → Performance	0.115	0.674	0.500	Not Significant
Compensation × Job Satisfaction → Performance	0.062	0.253	0.800	Not Significant

Motivation → Job Satisfaction	0.361	6.259	0.000	Significant
Motivation → Performance	-0.117	0.807	0.420	Not Significant
Motivation × Job Satisfaction → Performance	-0.134	0.753	0.451	Not Significant

Source: SmartPLS Output, processed in 2025.

Table 7 reveals that ability ( $\beta = 0.333$ ), compensation ( $\beta = 0.340$ ), and motivation ( $\beta = 0.361$ ) exert a significant positive effect on job satisfaction ( $p = 0.000$ ). Consequently, job satisfaction significantly enhances employee performance ( $\beta = 0.649$ ;  $p = 0.011$ ). However, the direct paths from ability, compensation, and motivation to performance are statistically insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ), indicating a fully mediated relationship. Consistent with the findings of (Sudiardhita et al., 2018) and (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020), this demonstrates that motivation and compensation must be channeled through job satisfaction to optimally elevate performance. As (Hair et al., 2019) note, mediating variables dictate the mechanism through which direct effects translate to outcomes, establishing job satisfaction as the critical psychological bridge within the Mahkamah Syar'iyah context.

**Coefficient of Determination Value (R<sup>2</sup>)**

The R<sup>2</sup> value measures the proportion of variance in the endogenous variable explained by exogenous variables. (Hair et al., 2019) categorizes 0.67 as strong, 0.33 as moderate, and 0.19 as weak.

Table 8. Coefficient of Determination (R<sup>2</sup>) Values of the Research (SmartPLS 4.0 Output)

Endogenous Variable	R Square	R Square Adjusted	Category
Job Satisfaction	0.905	0.902	Very Strong
Performance	0.675	0.647	Strong

Source: SmartPLS Output, processed in 2025.

Table 8 shows an R<sup>2</sup> of 0.905 for Job Satisfaction, meaning Ability, Motivation, and Compensation explain 90.5% of its variation. The R<sup>2</sup> for Performance is 0.675, meaning the model explains 67.5% of performance variation, leaving 32.5% to outside factors. Referring to (Sulaeman & Sugiarto, 2024), values in this range confirm the model's substantial predictive capability. It validates that job satisfaction strongly mediates motivational factors and the work environment toward performance.

**Direct Effect Test Between Variables**

This test determines the direct influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables without considering mediation. Significant effects require T-statistics > 1.96 and P-values < 0.05 (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 9. Direct Effect Model of Research Variables (SmartPLS 4.0 Output)

Relationship Between Variables	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Remarks
Ability → Job Satisfaction	0.333	6.921	0.000	Significant
Compensation → Job Satisfaction	0.340	5.851	0.000	Significant
Motivation → Job Satisfaction	0.361	6.259	0.000	Significant
Job Satisfaction → Performance	0.649	2.554	0.011	Significant
Ability → Performance	0.151	1.005	0.315	Not Significant

Compensation → Performance	0.115	0.674	0.500	Not Significant
Motivation → Performance	-0.117	0.807	0.420	Not Significant

Source: SmartPLS Output, processed in 2025.

Table 9 highlights that Ability, Motivation, and Compensation have a positive, significant direct effect on Job Satisfaction. Subsequently, Job Satisfaction significantly improves Employee Performance ( $\beta = 0.649$ ;  $p = 0.011$ ). Because the direct paths from Ability, Motivation, and Compensation to Performance are not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ), Job Satisfaction's dominant role is evident. Aligning with (Robbins et al., 2025), job satisfaction is an evaluative response directly tied to productivity. These results confirm that improving Mahkamah Syar'iyah employee performance relies on cultivating job satisfaction through professional ability, fair compensation, and motivation.

**Indirect Effect Test Between Variables (Mediation)**

The indirect effect test evaluates Job Satisfaction as a mediating variable. A mediation is significant if T-statistics  $> 1.96$  and P-value  $< 0.05$  (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 10. Indirect Effect Model Between Variables of the Research (SmartPLS 4.0 Output)

Mediation Relationship	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Remarks
Ability → Job Satisfaction → Performance	0.226	2.356	0.019	Significant
Compensation → Job Satisfaction → Performance	0.231	2.453	0.014	Significant
Motivation → Job Satisfaction → Performance	0.245	2.283	0.022	Significant

Source: Output SmartPLS, processed in 2025

Table 10 confirms that all indirect relationships are significant ( $p$ -value  $< 0.05$ ; T-statistics  $> 1.96$ ). Job Satisfaction significantly mediates the effects of Ability, Motivation, and Compensation on Performance. This supports (Sulaeman & Sugiarto, 2024), (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020), and (Sudiardhita et al., 2018), proving that managerial interventions regarding motivation and compensation are only effective if they create job satisfaction. Ultimately, job satisfaction serves as the vital psychological bridge driving productivity in the Mahkamah Syar'iyah.

**Discussion**

This section contextualizes the empirical findings regarding the structural relationships among ability, motivation, compensation, job satisfaction, and employee performance at the Mahkamah Syar'iyah Aceh. The management of a comprehensive reward system, both material and non-material, effectively increases staff satisfaction, which positively impacts long-term loyalty and productivity (Riski & Widiana, 2020).

The results establish that ability, motivation, and compensation significantly dictate job satisfaction. A fair compensation policy and the provision of equitable wages cultivate loyalty, morale, and dedication to organizational responsibilities (Kuylo et al.). Furthermore, robust motivation acts as an internal drive that catalyzes optimal output and critically determines the quality of work results (Zikri et al., 2025). This aligns securely with the paradigm proposed by (Damayanti et al., 2025), who argue that job satisfaction is not merely a transient emotion, but rather a profound evaluative reflection that mediates enhanced productivity. The necessity of professional

competence and adequate compensation is corroborated by (Oktafiani et al., 2025), who identify salary and career progression as primary determinants of job satisfaction capable of mitigating turnover intentions. This aligns with recent empirical evidence demonstrating that a well-established organizational culture and effective leadership mechanisms directly elevate employee performance and institutional outcome (Nurmughni & Maulidizen, 2024)

Additionally, the findings reveal that job satisfaction has a significant positive impact on employee performance ( $\beta = 0.649$ ;  $p = 0.011$ ). This substantiates the theoretical framework posited by (Syihabudhin et al., 2024), stating that performance is driven by work attitudes arising from organizational satisfaction. It also aligns with (Sudiardhita et al., 2018), who conclude that job satisfaction highly contributes to enhancing overall productivity and public service quality.

Interestingly, the direct effects of Ability, Motivation, and Compensation on Performance are not significant. However, their indirect effects through Job Satisfaction are significant, confirming that Job Satisfaction acts as a full mediating variable. This strongly supports the studies by (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020) and (Riski & Widiana, 2020), which explain that job satisfaction is a crucial psychological mechanism bridging organizational factors to actual performance outcomes.

Overall, the structural model exhibits robust predictive power, demonstrating an  $R^2$  value of 0.905 for Job Satisfaction (very strong) and 0.675 for Performance (strong). In conclusion, improving employee performance at the Mahkamah Syar'iyah heavily depends on elevating job satisfaction, which is fundamentally driven by professional ability, high motivation, and fair compensation. Organizational efforts must focus on strengthening these specific factors through competency training, performance-based rewards, and supportive work environments.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the PLS analysis of 90 Mahkamah Syar'iyah employees, Ability, Motivation, and Compensation positively and significantly affect Job Satisfaction. As (Robbins et al., 2025) explains, satisfaction is shaped by equity perception and supportive conditions. This fundamentally aligns with (Sudiardhita et al., 2018), confirming that internal and external factors heavily increase public sector employee satisfaction.

Consequently, Job Satisfaction significantly improves Employee Performance. Consistent with the view of (Afandi, 2018), job satisfaction directly reflects employees' feelings that impact discipline and work results. Furthermore, recent research by (Galla et al., 2020) proves that satisfaction acts as a crucial variable that significantly boosts organizational performance, particularly regarding task completion and service responsibility.

Notably, Ability, Motivation, and Compensation have no significant direct effect on Performance, acting only indirectly through Job Satisfaction as a full mediation variable. Supported by (Murgianto et al., 2016), competence alone does not directly enhance performance; these factors only convert into maximum performance when accompanied by a strong internal psychological drive.

The model demonstrates strong explanatory power, with  $R^2$  values showing Job Satisfaction is explained 90.5% by these variables, while Performance is explained 67.5%. Overall, improving Mahkamah Syar'iyah performance fundamentally requires prioritizing job satisfaction through professional development, fair compensation, and targeted motivation.

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