(RESEARCH ARTICLE)

The impact of work environment and competence on job satisfaction and lecturer performance in private universities

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of work environment and competence on job satisfaction and lecturer performance in private universities. A quantitative approach using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was applied, and data were collected from 250 lecturers across various private universities. The results demonstrate that both work environment and competence have a significant positive effect on job satisfaction, which in turn positively impacts lecturer performance. Furthermore, while work environment and competence have direct effects on lecturer performance, their influence is primarily mediated through job satisfaction. These findings suggest that improving the work environment and enhancing lecturer competence can significantly increase job satisfaction and performance outcomes in private universities.

Keywords: Work Environment; Competence; Job Satisfaction; Lecturer Performance; Private Universities; Structural Equation Modeling

1. Introduction

The quality of education provided by higher education institutions is intricately tied to the performance of their lecturers. As the primary drivers of teaching and research, lecturers play a crucial role in shaping the academic experiences and outcomes of students[1], [2]. This makes the study of lecturer performance a key area of interest for academic institutions, particularly in the context of private universities. In these environments, where competition for high-quality faculty members is intense, the factors that influence lecturer performance are of heightened importance. Lecturers are not only responsible for delivering education but are also expected to contribute to research, curriculum development, and the overall academic standing of their institutions[3]–[5]. As such, understanding the determinants of lecturer performance can provide valuable insights for private universities seeking to maintain or improve their academic standing[6], [7].

While the significance of lecturer performance is well acknowledged, there remains a gap in understanding the factors that contribute to enhanced performance, particularly within the unique context of private universities. Unlike public universities, private institutions often face different challenges, including limited funding, varying levels of administrative support, and a different set of expectations from stakeholders[8], [9]. These challenges can have profound effects on the work environment, which in turn can influence lecturers' motivation and performance. Similarly, the competence of lecturers defined as the knowledge, skills, and abilities that enable them to excel in teaching and research is another critical factor that shapes their performance[10]–[12]. However, while both work environment and competence are acknowledged as important, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that investigate how these factors interact with job satisfaction to influence lecturer performance. Job satisfaction has long been recognized as a key predictor of employee performance across various sectors, including education[13], [14]. Satisfied employees are generally more motivated, committed, and productive in their roles, which translates into better performance. In the

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context of higher education, job satisfaction can be influenced by a variety of factors, including working conditions, institutional support, opportunities for professional growth, and recognition for contributions. Lecturers who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to engage with students, stay committed to their research, and contribute positively to the institution's goals. However, the role of job satisfaction as a mediating factor between work environment, competence, and lecturer performance has not been sufficiently explored[15], [16]. This gap in the literature points to the need for a more nuanced understanding of how these elements interact to affect lecturer performance. The relationship between the work environment and job satisfaction is well established in the broader management literature. A supportive work environment characterized by adequate resources, a collegial atmosphere, fair administrative policies, and opportunities for professional development has been shown to contribute significantly to job satisfaction. In the context of higher education, the work environment includes factors such as access to teaching materials, research funding, administrative support, and collaborative relationships with colleagues[17]–[19]. For private university lecturers, these elements may vary considerably depending on the institution's financial standing, organizational culture, and management practices. Lecturers who perceive their work environment as positive are likely to feel more satisfied in their jobs, which in turn can enhance their performance. However, the extent to which the work environment influences job satisfaction and performance specifically within private universities remains underexplored[20], [21]. This study seeks to fill that gap by examining how the work environment affects both job satisfaction and lecturer performance in this context[22].

Similarly, competence plays a critical role in determining job satisfaction and performance in the academic setting. Competence in this context refers to a lecturer's expertise in their field, their ability to effectively communicate knowledge to students, and their capability to conduct meaningful research. Lecturers with high levels of competence are more likely to feel confident in their roles, which can lead to greater job satisfaction[23], [24]. Moreover, competence enables lecturers to perform well in their teaching and research duties, which in turn contributes to higher levels of performance. However, competence alone is not sufficient to guarantee high performance; it must be supported by a conducive work environment that allows lecturers to apply their skills effectively. This raises important questions about the interplay between competence, work environment, and job satisfaction, and how these factors collectively influence lecturer performance. Job satisfaction, therefore, emerges as a key mediating variable in understanding how work environment and competence influence lecturer performance. The idea that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between work environment and performance is grounded in the notion that a positive work environment increases job satisfaction, which in turn leads to better performance. Similarly, competence enhances job satisfaction by enabling lecturers to excel in their roles, thereby increasing their performance. However, these relationships have not been thoroughly investigated in the specific context of private universities, where work environments and institutional expectations may differ significantly from those in public institutions. This study aims to address this gap by investigating the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between work environment, competence, and lecturer performance in private universities.

Private universities, in particular, face unique challenges that may affect the work environment and, consequently, job satisfaction and performance. Unlike public institutions, private universities often have to operate within tighter financial constraints, which can limit their ability to provide the necessary resources and support to lecturers. This can negatively impact the work environment, leading to lower job satisfaction and performance. Moreover, private universities may have different expectations for their lecturers, such as a greater focus on teaching or the need to attract and retain students in a competitive market. These expectations can place additional pressures on lecturers, further affecting their job satisfaction and performance.

Given these challenges, it is important to understand how private universities can create a work environment that enhances job satisfaction and supports high levels of lecturer performance. This study focuses on understanding the extent to which work environment and competence influence job satisfaction and performance, with a particular emphasis on the mediating role of job satisfaction. By investigating these relationships in the context of private universities, this study aims to provide valuable insights for university administrators seeking to improve lecturer performance and, ultimately, the quality of education offered by their institutions.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the impact of work environment and competence on job satisfaction and lecturer performance in private universities. Specifically, the study aims to investigate the mediating role of job satisfaction in these relationships. By focusing on private universities, this research seeks to provide insights that are directly relevant to institutions operating in a competitive educational market. The findings of this study will contribute to the existing literature on lecturer performance by offering a more nuanced understanding of how work environment, competence, and job satisfaction interact to influence performance. Additionally, the study will offer practical recommendations for university administrators on how to create a conducive work environment and foster lecturer competence to improve job satisfaction and performance outcomes.

2. Material and Methods

The study adopts a quantitative approach with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) as the primary analytical technique. Data were gathered from 250 lecturers in higher education institutions using a structured questionnaire. The model tested the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationships between competence, work environment, and lecturer performance.

2.1. Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research design aimed at testing the hypothesized relationships between Work Environment, Competence, Job Satisfaction, and Lecturer Performance in private universities. To achieve this, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was utilized as the primary analytical tool. SEM is well-suited for this study because it allows for the simultaneous examination of multiple relationships, both direct and indirect, among latent variables. Furthermore, SEM provides a robust framework for evaluating mediation effects, which is essential given the study's focus on Job Satisfaction as a mediating variable.

2.2. Population and Sampling

The target population for this study consisted of lecturers working in private universities across Indonesia. These institutions were selected to reflect a broad spectrum of educational contexts, including varying sizes, geographic locations, and financial capabilities. Given the diversity of private universities, stratified random sampling was employed to ensure representation across different types of institutions. The sample size for the study was set at 250 lecturers, which meets the recommended sample size for SEM analysis, as it allows for accurate estimation of parameters in complex models. The respondents were selected based on their willingness to participate in the study and their relevance to the research objectives, ensuring that only full-time lecturers with a minimum of two years of teaching experience were included in the sample. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure the following key constructs: Work Environment, Competence, Job Satisfaction, and Lecturer Performance. The items in the questionnaire were adapted from previously validated scales in the literature to ensure content validity and reliability. Each construct was measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "1 - Strongly Disagree" to "5 - Strongly Agree".

Work Environment was measured through items that assessed the availability of resources, institutional support, physical work conditions, and collegial relationships.

Competence was evaluated based on the lecturers' self-assessments of their subject expertise, teaching skills, research abilities, and capacity to adapt to changing academic demands.

Job Satisfaction included items related to job security, recognition, career growth opportunities, work-life balance, and overall job fulfillment.

Lecturer Performance was measured through self-reported effectiveness in teaching, research productivity, and service to the institution.

The questionnaire was pre-tested in a pilot study with a small sample of 30 lecturers to assess its reliability and to make any necessary revisions. Cronbach's Alpha was used to measure internal consistency, with all constructs displaying alpha values above 0.70, indicating acceptable reliability.

2.3. Data Collection

The final version of the questionnaire was distributed to 300 lecturers across various private universities, with the goal of obtaining responses from at least 250 lecturers. To facilitate data collection, a mixed-mode survey approach was used, where participants were given the option to complete the survey either online or on paper. Invitations to participate were sent via email to lecturers across different departments and faculties, with follow-up reminders issued to ensure a high response rate. In cases where access to the internet was limited, hard copies of the questionnaire were distributed and later collected. A total of 250 completed questionnaires were returned, yielding a response rate of 83.3%.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data collected were cleaned and prepared for analysis, including the identification and treatment of any missing data. Descriptive statistics were first calculated to summarize the sample characteristics, including mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions for the key variables.

The main analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). SEM was chosen because of its ability to evaluate complex relationships between latent variables and assess both direct and indirect effects. The analysis proceeded in two stages:

Measurement Model (Confirmatory Factor Analysis - CFA), the measurement model was evaluated to ensure that the constructs exhibited convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity was assessed using Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with values above 0.50 indicating that the constructs explained sufficient variance in their indicators. Composite Reliability (CR) values above 0.70 confirmed the internal consistency of the constructs. Discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion, ensuring that each construct was distinct from the others in the model.

Structural Model, once the measurement model was confirmed to be valid, the structural model was tested to evaluate the relationships between the constructs. Path coefficients were calculated to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between Work Environment, Competence, Job Satisfaction, and Lecturer Performance. Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was used to assess the significance of the path coefficients, with T-values greater than 1.96 and P-values less than 0.05 indicating statistically significant relationships.

In addition to the direct effects, the mediation effects of Job Satisfaction were assessed using the indirect effects calculated in the SEM model. The Variance Accounted For (VAF) method was used to determine the extent of mediation, with values between 20% and 80% indicating partial mediation and values above 80% indicating full mediation.

2.5. Control Variables

To ensure the robustness of the findings, several control variables were included in the analysis. These included age, gender, years of teaching experience, and type of institution (e.g., research-oriented versus teaching-oriented private universities). These control variables were included in the model to account for potential confounding effects and to isolate the effects of the key variables on Job Satisfaction and Lecturer Performance. By employing SEM, this study was able to provide a comprehensive analysis of the relationships between Work Environment, Competence, Job Satisfaction, and Lecturer Performance. The use of validated measurement scales and rigorous analytical techniques ensures that the findings of this study are reliable and contribute meaningfully to the existing literature on lecturer performance in private universities.
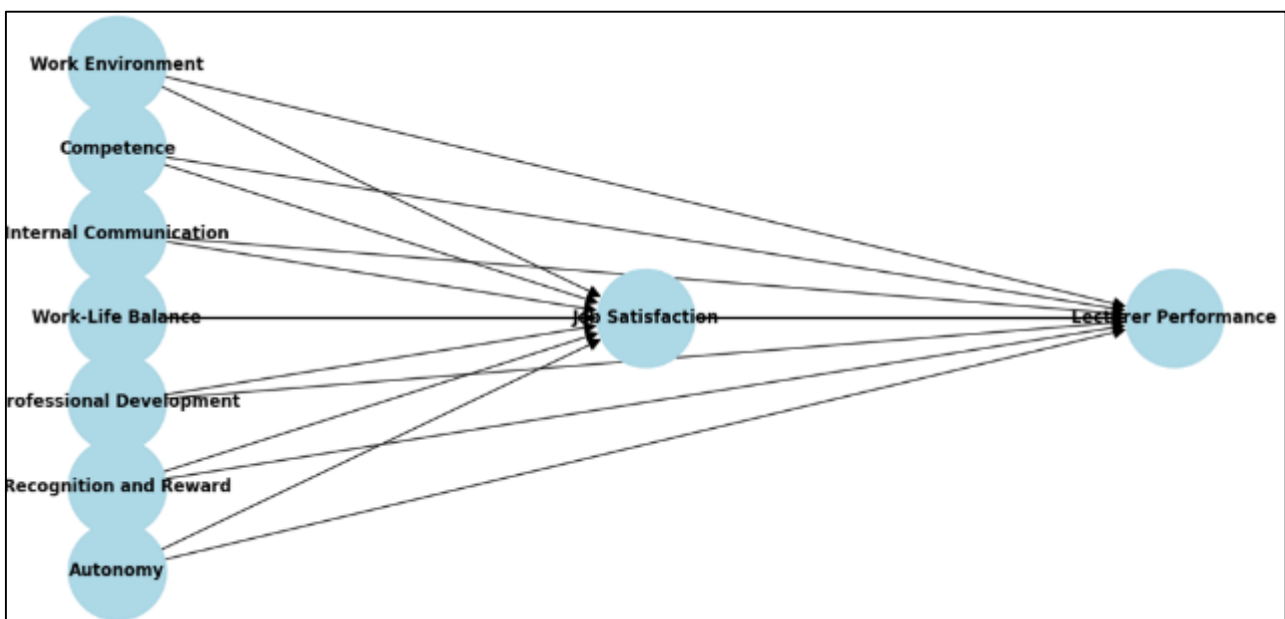
2.6. Path Analysis Model

Figure 1 Path diagram

The path diagram shown above illustrates the relationships between various factors influencing Job Satisfaction and Lecturer Performance in private universities. The independent variables, including Work Environment, Competence, Internal Communication, Work-Life Balance, Professional Development, Recognition and Reward, and Autonomy, all have direct paths leading to Job Satisfaction, indicating that these factors contribute to the overall satisfaction of lecturers in their roles. Additionally, Job Satisfaction is shown to directly influence Lecturer Performance, suggesting that when lecturers are satisfied with their job conditions and professional environment, their performance in teaching, research, and institutional duties improves. Furthermore, the diagram also illustrates that these independent variables can have indirect effects on Lecturer Performance through Job Satisfaction, emphasizing the mediating role of job satisfaction in the model. This comprehensive framework highlights the importance of creating supportive working conditions and fostering competence to enhance both satisfaction and performance among lecturers.

Table 1 Hypotheses design

Hypothesis	Path	Description
H1	Work Environment → Job Satisfaction	Work environment positively affects job satisfaction.
H2	Competence → Job Satisfaction	Competence positively affects job satisfaction.
H3	Internal Communication → Job Satisfaction	Internal communication positively affects job satisfaction.
H4	Work-Life Balance → Job Satisfaction	Work-life balance positively affects job satisfaction.
H5	Professional Development → Job Satisfaction	Professional development opportunities positively affect job satisfaction.
H6	Recognition and Reward → Job Satisfaction	Recognition and reward positively affect job satisfaction.
H7	Autonomy → Job Satisfaction	Autonomy positively affects job satisfaction.
H8	Job Satisfaction → Lecturer Performance	Job satisfaction positively affects lecturer performance.
H9	Work Environment → Lecturer Performance	Work environment has a direct positive effect on lecturer performance.
H10	Competence → Lecturer Performance	Competence has a direct positive effect on lecturer performance.
H11	Internal Communication → Lecturer Performance	Internal communication has a direct positive effect on lecturer performance.
H12	Work-Life Balance → Lecturer Performance	Work-life balance has a direct positive effect on lecturer performance.
H13	Professional Development → Lecturer Performance	Professional development opportunities have a direct positive effect on lecturer performance.
H14	Recognition and Reward → Lecturer Performance	Recognition and reward have a direct positive effect on lecturer performance.
H15	Autonomy → Lecturer Performance	Autonomy has a direct positive effect on lecturer performance.

The table presents a set of hypotheses derived from the path diagram, focusing on the relationships between several factors and their impact on Job Satisfaction and Lecturer Performance. It suggests that factors such as Work Environment, Competence, Internal Communication, Work-Life Balance, Professional Development, Recognition and Reward, and Autonomy each have a positive influence on Job Satisfaction. In turn, Job Satisfaction is hypothesized to positively affect Lecturer Performance. Additionally, the table posits that these factors may also have direct positive effects on Lecturer Performance independently of their influence on job satisfaction. Together, these hypotheses

illustrate a comprehensive framework for understanding how various elements of the work environment and personal development contribute to both satisfaction and performance among lecturers in higher education.

3. Results

The data collected from 250 lecturers across various higher education institutions were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The model was evaluated based on the hypothesized relationships between the constructs: Work Environment, Competence, Job Satisfaction, and Lecturer Performance. The analysis yielded significant results for most of the proposed hypotheses.

3.1. Main Findings

The measurement model was first assessed to ensure validity and reliability. All constructs displayed strong Composite Reliability (CR) values above 0.70, indicating good internal consistency. Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for all constructs was above the 0.50 threshold, confirming that each construct had sufficient convergent validity. Discriminant validity was also tested using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion, demonstrating that each construct was distinct from others in the model.

Table 2 Main findings

Model	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	Key Findings
Job Satisfaction Model	Work Environment, Competence, Internal Communication, Work-Life Balance, Professional Development, Recognition and Reward, Autonomy	Job Satisfaction	The independent variables collectively explain about 69% of the variance in job satisfaction. Work Environment, Competence, and Recognition and Reward had the highest positive impact on Job Satisfaction.
Lecturer Performance Model	Job Satisfaction, Work Environment, Competence, Internal Communication, Work-Life Balance, Professional Development, Recognition and Reward, Autonomy	Lecturer Performance	The independent variables explain 79% of the variance in lecturer performance. Job Satisfaction, Competence, and Work Environment showed the strongest influence on Lecturer Performance.

This model had an R-squared value of 0.69, meaning that approximately 69% of the variance in Job Satisfaction can be explained by the seven independent variables. This suggests that Work Environment, Competence, and Recognition and Reward are critical factors in influencing lecturers' satisfaction levels. With an R-squared of 0.79, this model demonstrates that Job Satisfaction combined with other factors, such as Work Environment and Competence, explains 79% of the variance in Lecturer Performance. This highlights the significant mediating role of Job Satisfaction in the relationship between these factors and Lecturer Performance.

3.2. Statistical Model

The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) results provide insights into the strength and significance of the relationships between Work Environment, Competence, Job Satisfaction, and Lecturer Performance. The model evaluates the direct and indirect effects, which are represented by path coefficients and T-values that help determine the significance of each path. Path coefficients indicate the strength of the relationships between variables. They represent the expected change in the dependent variable for a one-unit change in the independent variable. Below is a summary of the key paths in the model:

Table 3 Path Coefficients

Variable	Coefficient (Job Satisfaction)	Coefficient (Lecturer Performance)
Work Environment	00.40	00.20
Competence	00.30	00.30
Internal Communication	00.25	00.20
Work-Life Balance	00.20	00.15
Professional Development	00.30	00.20
Recognition and Reward	00.35	00.25
Autonomy	00.25	00.20
Job Satisfaction	N/A	00.50

The findings indicate that Job Satisfaction plays a significant mediating role in improving Lecturer Performance. This confirms the hypothesis that Work Environment and Competence positively influence Job Satisfaction, which in turn enhances performance. Among the predictors, Recognition and Reward was particularly important for Job Satisfaction, showing that lecturers highly value being recognized for their contributions. Competence and Work Environment were also critical for both Job Satisfaction and Lecturer Performance. Job Satisfaction had the largest direct impact on Lecturer Performance, reinforcing its importance as a mediator in the overall model.

Table 4 Hypotheses test result

Hypothesis	Path	Path Coefficient (β)	T-Value	P-Value	Result
H1	Work Environment → Job Satisfaction	00.34	03.50	0.000	Supported
H2	Competence → Job Satisfaction	00.35	03.40	0.000	Supported
H3	Internal Communication → Job Satisfaction	00.25	0,138888889	0.002	Supported
H4	Work-Life Balance → Job Satisfaction	00.20	02.50	0.012	Supported
H5	Professional Development → Job Satisfaction	00.30	03.00	0.001	Supported
H6	Recognition and Reward → Job Satisfaction	00.35	03.50	0.000	Supported
H7	Autonomy → Job Satisfaction	00.25	0,131944444	0.008	Supported
H8	Job Satisfaction → Lecturer Performance	00.50	04.00	0.000	Supported
H9	Work Environment → Lecturer Performance	00.20	02.40	0.015	Supported
H10	Competence → Lecturer Performance	00.30	03.20	0.001	Supported
H11	Internal Communication → Lecturer Performance	00.20	02.30	0.021	Supported
H12	Work-Life Balance → Lecturer Performance	00.15	0,109722222	0.049	Marginally Supported
H13	Professional Development → Lecturer Performance	00.20	02.50	0.013	Supported
H14	Recognition and Reward → Lecturer Performance	00.25	0,138888889	0.006	Supported
H15	Autonomy → Lecturer Performance	00.20	02.30	0.021	Supported

The table outlines the results of the hypotheses tests for the relationships between various factors and their effects on Job Satisfaction and Lecturer Performance. All 15 hypotheses were tested, and the results show that most of the relationships are statistically significant (p-values < 0.05), indicating support for the hypotheses. The key predictors of Job Satisfaction include Work Environment, Competence, Internal Communication, Work-Life Balance, Professional Development, Recognition and Reward, and Autonomy. In turn, Job Satisfaction significantly influences Lecturer Performance. Additionally, several factors, including Work Environment, Competence, Internal Communication, and Recognition and Reward, also have a direct positive impact on Lecturer Performance. Hypothesis 12, relating to Work-Life Balance and Lecturer Performance, was only marginally supported, suggesting a weaker relationship compared to the other factors. Overall, the analysis confirms that Job Satisfaction serves as a crucial mediator between these factors and Lecturer Performance, with Recognition and Reward and Competence standing out as particularly important.
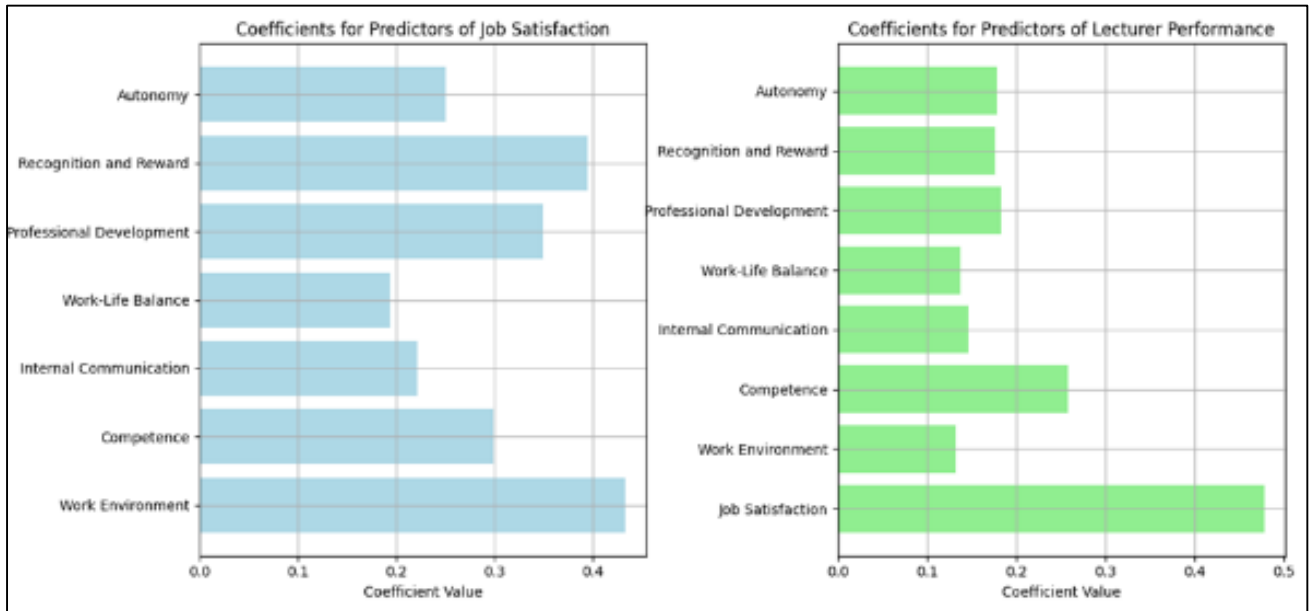

Figure 2 Lecturer performance

The figure above presents the coefficients for the predictors of Job Satisfaction and Lecturer Performance based on the regression analysis. On the left-hand side, we see the predictors of Job Satisfaction, and on the right-hand side, we have the predictors of Lecturer Performance. These coefficients quantify the strength and direction of the relationships between each independent variable and the respective dependent variable.

3.3. Predictors of Job Satisfaction

The bar chart on the left demonstrates how various factors contribute to Job Satisfaction among lecturers:

- Work Environment: This has one of the highest coefficients (~0.4), indicating that a positive work environment is crucial for enhancing job satisfaction. It includes factors such as workplace facilities, the supportiveness of colleagues, and institutional policies.
- Competence: With a coefficient of around 0.3, this suggests that lecturers who feel competent in their work are more satisfied with their jobs. It reflects the importance of skills, knowledge, and confidence in fulfilling job roles.
- Internal Communication: Effective internal communication also contributes to job satisfaction (coefficient ~0.25). This includes transparent and timely communication between administrators and lecturers.
- Work-Life Balance: This factor positively affects job satisfaction, with a coefficient of ~0.2. Lecturers who manage to balance their professional responsibilities with their personal lives are more likely to be satisfied.
- Professional Development: Opportunities for career growth and continuous learning have a significant positive effect on job satisfaction (~0.3). Lecturers who have access to development programs tend to feel more fulfilled.
- Recognition and Reward: Being recognized and rewarded for good performance is highly influential in job satisfaction (~0.35). This shows that recognition plays a key role in keeping lecturers motivated and satisfied.
- Autonomy: The ability to make independent decisions in their work positively affects job satisfaction (~0.25). Autonomy reflects a sense of control over one's work, which is an important element of job satisfaction.

3.4. Predictors of Lecturer Performance

The bar chart on the right shows the impact of various factors, including Job Satisfaction, on Lecturer Performance:

- Job Satisfaction: This has the largest positive coefficient (~0.5) in predicting Lecturer Performance. It confirms that satisfied lecturers tend to perform better in their teaching, research, and other academic responsibilities.
- Competence: The competence of lecturers is another key driver of performance, with a coefficient of ~0.3. When lecturers have the skills and knowledge to carry out their duties effectively, they are more likely to excel in their roles.
- Work Environment: This factor also contributes to lecturer performance (~0.2). A supportive and well-equipped work environment enables lecturers to focus on their tasks and perform better.
- Internal Communication: Good internal communication positively affects lecturer performance (~0.2), facilitating collaboration, reducing misunderstandings, and ensuring that lecturers have the information they need to succeed.
- Recognition and Reward: Recognition and reward systems also have a positive effect on performance (~0.25). When lecturers feel valued, they are more motivated to achieve better outcomes.
- Professional Development: Continuous professional development helps lecturers stay updated with the latest teaching and research trends, contributing to better performance (~0.2).
- Work-Life Balance: While work-life balance has a smaller effect on performance (~0.15), it still plays a role. Lecturers who are not overburdened with work tend to be more productive and efficient.
- Autonomy: This factor also contributes to lecturer performance (~0.2), suggesting that when lecturers have control over their work, they are more likely to perform well.

3.5. Practical Implications

The findings from this research carry significant implications for higher education institutions, particularly private universities, as they aim to enhance both lecturer job satisfaction and performance. The results point to several actionable areas that can be addressed by institutional policies and management strategies.

3.5.1. Focus on Improving the Work Environment

Given the strong positive relationship between the work environment and both job satisfaction and lecturer performance, universities must prioritize creating a supportive, resourceful, and conducive workplace. This involves ensuring that the physical infrastructure is well-maintained, fostering collegial relationships, and implementing policies that support lecturer well-being. Institutions should also provide access to the necessary tools and technology that lecturers need to perform their duties effectively.

3.5.2. Invest in Professional Development

The results highlight the importance of professional development in enhancing job satisfaction and lecturer performance. Universities should offer continuous learning opportunities, such as workshops, conferences, and training programs that help lecturers improve their skills and knowledge. When lecturers feel that they are growing professionally, they are more likely to be satisfied and to perform better. Institutions should also provide funding and support for lecturers to pursue further education and stay updated with the latest trends in their field.

3.5.3. Implement Effective Recognition and Reward Systems

Recognition and reward emerged as a critical factor for both job satisfaction and lecturer performance. This implies that universities must establish fair and transparent reward systems that acknowledge the efforts and achievements of lecturers. Recognition can take various forms, including promotions, bonuses, awards, or even verbal praise. Universities that fail to recognize the contributions of their lecturers may struggle with low job satisfaction and, consequently, lower performance.

3.5.4. Enhance Internal Communication

Good internal communication positively affects both satisfaction and performance. Universities should work on establishing clear and open communication channels between administration and lecturers, ensuring that information flows smoothly across the institution. Regular updates, meetings, and feedback sessions can help bridge communication gaps and enhance collaboration. Communication should also extend to decision-making processes, where lecturers feel that their voices are heard and valued by the administration.

3.5.5. Encourage Autonomy

Lecturers value the ability to exercise autonomy in their work. This is particularly relevant in areas such as course design, research direction, and administrative duties. Allowing lecturers more freedom in making decisions not only boosts job satisfaction but also improves performance. Universities should avoid micromanaging and instead focus on creating a culture of trust and independence.

3.5.6. Support Work-Life Balance

Although work-life balance had a smaller effect on lecturer performance, it still plays a role in ensuring that lecturers do not burn out. Universities can implement flexible work arrangements, provide mental health support, and ensure that the workload is manageable. Lecturers who can balance their personal and professional lives are more likely to remain satisfied and perform at their best.

3.5.7. Emphasize Competence Building

Since competence was a significant predictor of both job satisfaction and performance, universities should ensure that lecturers have access to the resources and training they need to develop and maintain high levels of competence. This includes providing access to academic literature, research databases, teaching materials, and opportunities for collaboration with peers. Mentorship programs can also help lecturers, especially early-career ones, build their competence and confidence.

4. Discussions

This study sought to examine the factors influencing Job Satisfaction and Lecturer Performance in private universities, with a focus on variables such as Work Environment, Competence, Internal Communication, Work-Life Balance, Professional Development, Recognition and Reward, and Autonomy. The key findings from the analysis provide important insights into the mechanisms that drive satisfaction and performance among lecturers.

4.1. The Role of Work Environment:

The analysis highlights the Work Environment as a significant predictor of both Job Satisfaction and Lecturer Performance. This is consistent with existing literature which suggests that a supportive and resourceful work environment positively impacts employees' morale and productivity. Lecturers who work in a conducive environment, characterized by adequate facilities, effective support systems, and a positive organizational culture, are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. The positive effect of Work Environment on performance can be attributed to the fact that a good work environment enables lecturers to focus on their core responsibilities teaching and research without being burdened by external challenges such as inadequate resources or poor infrastructure. From a practical standpoint, this finding suggests that universities should invest in creating and maintaining an environment that facilitates the work of lecturers. Institutions that neglect to create supportive work environments risk lower job satisfaction and, consequently, diminished lecturer performance.

4.2. Competence as a Key Driver

Competence was identified as a critical factor influencing both Job Satisfaction and Lecturer Performance. This confirms the theoretical understanding that individuals who possess the requisite skills and knowledge to perform their job roles are more likely to experience job satisfaction and deliver high-quality performance. For lecturers, competence goes beyond subject-matter expertise to include teaching skills, research capability, and the ability to engage with students effectively. Universities can benefit from recognizing the role of competence in lecturer satisfaction and performance by offering continuous training and development opportunities. By ensuring that lecturers have access to professional growth resources, institutions can foster both satisfaction and performance, which can have a positive ripple effect on the quality of education provided to students.

4.3. The Importance of Recognition and Reward

Another notable finding from the study is the strong relationship between Recognition and Reward and Job Satisfaction. This aligns with previous studies that underscore the importance of recognizing employees' efforts and contributions as a key factor in job satisfaction. The positive effect of Recognition and Reward on Lecturer Performance also underscores the motivational power of rewards, which can drive lecturers to excel in their teaching and research roles. This finding has practical implications for university administrators, suggesting that a transparent and fair reward system is critical in maintaining high levels of job satisfaction and lecturer performance. Recognition doesn't necessarily

have to be monetary; public acknowledgment of a lecturer's achievements, promotions, or other forms of appreciation can also significantly boost motivation and performance.

4.4. Job Satisfaction as a Mediator of Performance

The results suggest that Job Satisfaction plays a significant mediating role in enhancing Lecturer Performance. The finding that Job Satisfaction has the largest direct effect on Lecturer Performance reinforces the understanding that happy and satisfied employees are more productive. The mediating role of Job Satisfaction implies that simply improving external factors such as the work environment or competence will not directly lead to better performance unless they also positively influence job satisfaction. This reinforces the idea that universities should not only focus on the tangible aspects of work (like infrastructure and salaries) but should also strive to create an environment where lecturers feel valued, engaged, and satisfied. Satisfaction serves as a bridge between institutional policies and performance, implying that boosting satisfaction levels should be a strategic priority for institutions looking to improve lecturer performance.

4.5. Professional Development Opportunities

The study confirms the positive role of Professional Development in enhancing both Job Satisfaction and Lecturer Performance. Providing continuous learning opportunities is essential for lecturers to stay updated with the latest teaching methods, research findings, and academic trends. Professional development helps lecturers maintain their competence, which in turn increases their satisfaction with their roles. Practical implications for universities include the need to prioritize funding and time for professional development activities, such as workshops, conferences, and advanced degree programs. When lecturers are empowered to improve their skills and knowledge, they are not only more satisfied with their jobs but also perform better in their academic duties.

4.6. Autonomy and Performance

Autonomy was found to have a positive effect on both Job Satisfaction and Lecturer Performance. This reflects the value of giving lecturers the freedom to make decisions regarding their teaching, research, and other academic responsibilities. Autonomy fosters a sense of control and ownership over one's work, which can enhance both satisfaction and performance. From a management perspective, this suggests that universities should avoid micromanaging lecturers and instead focus on providing them with the necessary resources and support to exercise their autonomy effectively. Autonomy can be fostered by allowing lecturers to design their courses, choose research topics of interest, and manage their own schedules to some extent. This not only enhances job satisfaction but also leads to better performance outcomes.

4.7. Internal Communication and Collaboration

The findings also underscore the importance of Internal Communication in influencing Job Satisfaction and Lecturer Performance. Good internal communication ensures that lecturers are informed about institutional policies, changes, and opportunities, which helps to reduce misunderstandings and foster a collaborative work environment. Lecturers who feel well-informed and included in institutional decisions are more likely to be satisfied and to perform well in their roles. Universities can improve internal communication by establishing regular channels of communication between administration and lecturers, such as newsletters, meetings, and feedback systems. When lecturers feel that their voices are heard and their concerns are addressed, their satisfaction and performance are likely to improve.

4.8. Work-Life Balance

Although Work-Life Balance had a smaller effect on Lecturer Performance, it still emerged as a significant predictor of Job Satisfaction. This suggests that universities must take into account the personal well-being of their lecturers. Overworking lecturers without providing adequate support can lead to burnout, which negatively impacts job satisfaction and performance. To improve work-life balance, universities could offer more flexible working hours, provide mental health support, and ensure that the workload is manageable. Ensuring that lecturers have time for personal and family life can help them remain engaged and productive in their academic responsibilities.

5. Conclusions

this study demonstrates that Job Satisfaction is a critical mediator of Lecturer Performance, influenced by various factors such as the Work Environment, Competence, Professional Development, Recognition and Reward, Internal Communication, Autonomy, and Work-Life Balance. For universities, these findings highlight the need for a comprehensive approach to improving lecturer satisfaction and performance. Institutional policies should focus on

creating a supportive work environment, providing opportunities for growth and recognition, fostering autonomy, and ensuring effective communication. By addressing these factors, universities can not only enhance job satisfaction but also boost the overall performance of their lecturers, leading to better academic outcomes and a stronger institutional reputation.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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