The Influence of Work Environment and Work-Life Balance on Teacher Performance with Motivation as a Mediator

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

A B S T R A C T

This study aims to analyze the mediating role of work motivation in the influence of the work environment and work-life balance on the performance of teachers and employees. The research was conducted at SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya using a quantitative approach and survey method. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to teachers and employees and then analyzed using WarpPLS-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The research results show that the work environment and work-life balance have a positive and significant effect on motivation, with path coefficients of 0.493 ($p = 0.001$) and 0.501 ($p < 0.001$), respectively. The work environment also has a significant effect on performance ($\beta = 0.438$; $p = 0.004$). This research also indicates a weak significance for the mediating role of the motivation variable ($\beta = 0.229$; $p = 0.092$). In this mediation model, it was found that work-life balance does not have a direct effect on performance ($\beta = 0.183$; $p = 0.148$).

INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, Vocational High Schools (SMK) are essential for cultivating skilled and employable human resources (Mulyasa, 2013). Specifically, the performance of employees, particularly educators and staff within the school setting, is crucial for achieving effective and efficient educational objectives (Directorate General of Vocational Education, 2021; Suyanto & Djihad, 2020). At institutions like SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya, employee performance significantly impacts both daily operations and the quality of educational services delivered to students. In vocational education, high performance is increasingly vital, as it directly correlates with students' preparedness for the workforce (Handoko et al., 2021).

At SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya, management faces the primary challenge of ensuring that employees maintain high motivation and optimal performance levels. To address this, it is crucial to identify the factors influencing employee performance, particularly concerning the work environment and work-life balance. However, the role of work motivation as a mediator between these factors and employee performance remains underexplored in educational research, especially within vocational schools.

The work environment significantly influences employee performance. A healthy, supportive, and conducive environment fosters a sense of security and comfort, enabling employees to work more productively. Armstrong (2020) notes that a positive work environment encompasses good interpersonal relationships, management support, and adequate facilities. It is vital for SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya to investigate how the work environment impacts employee motivation and performance.

In recent years, work-life balance has emerged as a critical topic in human resource management research. This balance pertains to how employees allocate their time and energy between professional obligations and personal lives. Greenhaus and Allen (2013) assert that a healthy work-life balance can enhance job satisfaction and reduce stress, ultimately benefiting employee performance.

At SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya, employees often face challenges in balancing work demands with significant family responsibilities. This struggle can lead to increased stress and decreased satisfaction, subsequently affecting their motivation and performance.

Work motivation is a key factor in understanding how elements such as the work environment and work-life balance influence employee performance. Herzberg's (1966) Two-Factor Theory emphasizes that intrinsic motivators, such as achievement, recognition, and responsibility, are crucial for enhancing performance. In this study, motivation serves as a mediating variable that affects the relationship between the work environment, work-life balance, and employee performance at SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya.

Employees at SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya may encounter difficulties in managing their time between personal and work commitments. Notably, married employees often face greater challenges in time allocation compared to their single counterparts. Research focusing on employee performance in vocational schools, particularly at SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya, remains limited, with most studies concentrating on employees in industrial or governmental sectors. There is a scarcity of research examining the mediating role of motivation between the work environment, work-life balance, and employee performance in vocational education settings (Amalia & Setyawan, 2023; Hanafi & Yohana, 2017; Harahap et al., 2022; Jainudi et al., 2023; Li & Zhang, 2023; Pratama & Suharto, 2023; Rahman & Wulandari, 2021; Rahmawati, 2023; Rini & Indrawati, 2021; Safitri, 2023).

This study introduces novelty through several aspects: the research context, the mediating role of motivation, and the focus on both teaching and non-teaching employees. Conducted at SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya, a vocational school in West Kalimantan Province, this research addresses a context that has been underrepresented in performance management and work motivation studies. It aims to provide specific and relevant insights into the factors affecting employee performance in a vocational school environment. Furthermore, this study seeks to understand motivation as a mediating variable that links the work environment, work-life balance, and employee performance. This approach is relatively rare, particularly in the Indonesian educational context, and offers a fresh perspective on the interplay between these variables. Additionally, while most studies on motivation and performance in schools focus on teaching staff, this research encompasses all employees at SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya, including non-teaching staff, who are also vital to the school's operations.

Thus, the study aims to enhance understanding of the factors influencing employee performance by emphasizing the role of motivation as a crucial element connecting the work environment, work-life balance, and employee performance outcomes within the educational setting.

The work environment encompasses all elements surrounding the workplace that impact employees in fulfilling their responsibilities. Robbins & Judge (2019) define the work environment as including the physical conditions of the workplace, social interactions among employees, and psychological and managerial factors that shape employee behavior. A conducive work environment features adequate facilities, a comfortable atmosphere, positive interpersonal relationships, and support from both leaders and colleagues.

Work-life balance, often referred to as work-life integration, is the individual's ability to manage the demands of work alongside personal responsibilities and social life. This concept highlights the importance of achieving harmony between time spent on work and time dedicated to family, leisure, and other activities outside of work. Greenhaus & Beutell (1985) suggest that work-life balance is attained when individuals do not experience stress or disruption from conflicts between professional and personal demands.

Motivation is a process that drives an individual's energy, direction, and persistence toward achieving goals (Santrock, J. W., 2007). According to Robbins & Judge (2019), motivation can be understood as an internal or external force that compels individuals to take specific actions. In an organizational context, motivation relates to how employees feel compelled to contribute and perform effectively within the workplace.

Based on theoretical foundations and empirical studies concerning motivation, work environment, work-life balance, and performance, the author proposes the following conceptual framework:
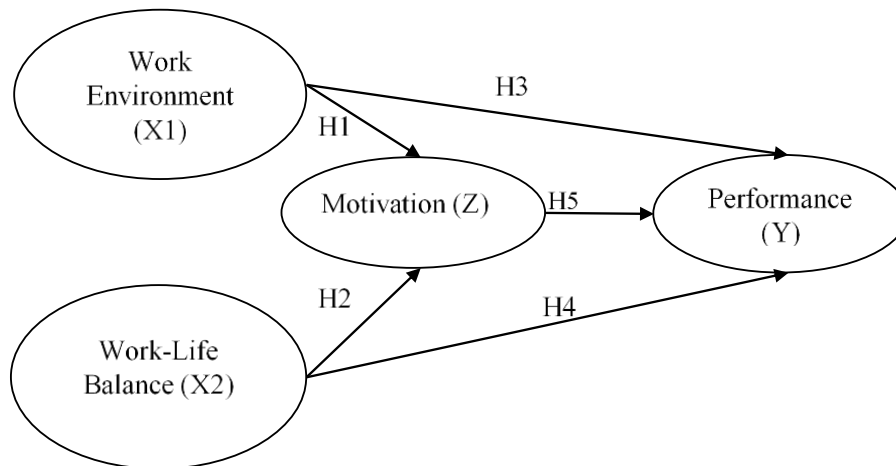
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Based on the formulation of the problem and the conceptual framework image, the author determines the form of hypothesis in this study is an associative hypothesis with the following description:

H_1: Work environment has a positive and significant effect on employee work motivation at SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya.

H_2: Work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee work motivation at SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya.

H_3: Work environment has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya.

H_4: Work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya.

H_5: Work motivation mediates the influence of work environment and work-life balance on employee performance at SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research methodology. Quantitative research is characterized by the use of numerical data and statistical analysis to present findings (Saebani & Sutisna, 2018). This method is particularly suitable when the research problem is well-defined. Specifically, a survey was utilized as the quantitative research method. The researchers aimed to gather comprehensive information from a population, assess the impact of specific treatments on various outcomes, test research hypotheses, acquire precise data based on observable and measurable phenomena, and validate or challenge existing knowledge, theories, and products (Sugiyono, 2017).

The analysis focused on the predictive relationships among motivation, work environment, work-life balance, and the performance of teachers and employees. Additionally, the study examined the mediating role of motivation in the relationships between these three predictors and employee

performance. The causal relationships among the variables were established through a series of statistical tests aligned with the predetermined hypotheses.

The sample comprised 30 teachers and staff from SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya in Kubu Raya District. The primary data collection instrument was a questionnaire designed using a Likert scale, which provided response options reflecting varying degrees of agreement or disagreement with specific statements, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This approach aimed to gather accurate data aligned with the study's objectives and was developed based on relevant concepts and theories, ensuring that the questionnaire effectively measured the studied variables (Mas'ud, 2004). Furthermore, a literature review was conducted to establish a theoretical foundation, identify knowledge gaps, and validate research findings (Arikunto, 2013).

Descriptive data analysis techniques were employed to calculate the average responses from participants and identify variations in their answers. This initial step in data analysis aimed to summarize the main characteristics of the dataset. Respondent answers were categorized on a continuum from low to high or from very negative to very positive (Sugiyono, 2017).

Inferential statistical analysis was also utilized to test the hypotheses. This analysis enabled the researchers to determine whether the relationships or differences observed in the sample data were sufficiently robust to be generalized to the broader population. The data analysis for this study utilized Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on variance, specifically Partial Least Squares path modeling (PLS-SEM), implemented using WarpPLS 7.0 software. WarpPLS, developed by Ned Kock, is an advanced tool for PLS-SEM analysis that facilitates the identification and prediction of both linear and nonlinear relationships among latent variables (Solimun et al., 2017). The PLS-SEM analysis process included specifying path models and measurement models, collecting and screening data, estimating the PLS-SEM model, evaluating the results of the measurement model tests, assessing the structural model test results, and interpreting the findings to draw conclusions (Hair et al., 2017).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The evaluation of the measurement model is essential for assessing the reliability and validity of the constructs involved in this study. This process involves analyzing the relationships between indicators and their respective constructs, focusing on both reliability and validity. In this research, two types of constructs are examined: reflective constructs and formative constructs. The reflective constructs identified include motivation, work environment, work-life balance, and performance, specifically denoted as work environment (X1), work-life balance (X2), motivation (Z1), and performance (Y1).

The following table presents the latent variable coefficients derived from the PLS-SEM analysis, highlighting critical metrics such as Composite Reliability, Cronbach's Alpha, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

Table 1. Latent Variable Coefficients (Composite Reliability, Cronbach's Alpha, And AVE)

	Motivation	Work Environment	Work-Life Balance	Performance
Composite Reliability	0.858	0.899	0.887	**0.887**
Cronbach's Alpha	0.746	0.826	0.830	**0.838**
Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	**0.671**	**0.750**	**0.664**	**0.616**

The first criterion for evaluating the reflective measurement model is internal consistency reliability. This metric assesses the overall reliability of the construct, determined through Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability. Higher values indicate greater reliability. For exploratory research, a Cronbach's alpha of at least 0.60 is acceptable, whereas subsequent research phases require a minimum of 0.70. As shown in Table 1, the Cronbach's alpha values for the constructs are as follows: Motivation

(0.746), Work Environment (0.826), Work-Life Balance (0.830), and Performance (0.838). All reflective constructs exceed the 0.70 threshold, affirming their reliability.

Further evaluation of internal consistency reliability is conducted through the Composite Reliability coefficient. The results indicate that the Motivation construct has a Composite Reliability of 0.858, the Work Environment construct has 0.899, the Work-Life Balance construct has 0.887, and the Performance construct also has 0.887. These findings confirm that all reflective constructs meet the acceptable threshold of 0.70, thus validating their internal consistency reliability. It is noteworthy that Cronbach's alpha provides a robust estimate of reliability, particularly when the degree of heterogeneity among loadings within each latent variable is low, a scenario that often occurs in practice (Kock, 2019).

The second criterion is convergent validity, which measures the extent to which indicators correlate positively with alternative measures of the same construct. This validity is assessed by examining the outer loading of each indicator and the AVE. High outer loading values signify that the indicator is well-explained by the construct being measured. Ideally, the outer loading of all indicators should be statistically significant, adhering to a minimum threshold of 0.708 or an AVE of at least 0.500, indicating that the construct explains over 50% of the variance.

According to the data presented in Table 1, the AVE values are as follows: Motivation (0.671), Work Environment (0.750), Work-Life Balance (0.664), and Performance (0.616). These results demonstrate that all reflective constructs surpass the 0.500 threshold, confirming that each indicator explains more than 50% of its latent construct. Thus, the criteria for convergent validity are satisfied.

The third criterion is discriminant validity, which assesses how distinct a latent variable is from other constructs based on empirical research results. Discriminant validity is evaluated by comparing the correlation values of a reflective indicator with its latent construct against correlations with other constructs in the research model. This can be assessed through cross-loadings and the Fornell-Larcker criterion. Specifically, the loading of an indicator on its corresponding construct should exceed its loading on other constructs. The Fornell-Larcker criterion further asserts that the square root of the AVE for each construct should be greater than its correlation with other constructs. The following table provides the indicator loadings and cross-loadings.

Table 2. Indicator Loadings and Cross Loadings

Indicators	Work Environment	Work-Life Balance	Motivation	Performance	Type	SE	P-Value
X1.1	(0.918)	-0.147	0.184	-0.212	Reflective	0.118	<0.001
X1.2	(0.660)	0.640	-0.666	-0.103	Reflective	0.135	<0.001
X1.3	(0.857)	-0.336	0.315	0.306	Reflective	0.122	<0.001
X2.1	0.731	(0.732)	-0.755	-0.182	Reflective	0.130	<0.001
X2.2	-0.025	(0.964)	0.010	0.011	Reflective	0.115	<0.001
X2.3	-0.577	(0.884)	0.615	0.139	Reflective	0.120	<0.001
Z.1	0.231	0.289	(0.804)	-0.185	Reflective	0.125	<0.001
Z.2	-0.194	-0.065	(0.743)	0.158	Reflective	0.129	<0.001
Z.3	-0.245	-0.070	(0.875)	0.289	Reflective	0.121	<0.001
Z.4	0.207	-0.148	(0.831)	-0.267	Reflective	0.123	<0.001
Y.1	0.111	-0.083	-0.230	(0.875)	Reflective	0.121	<0.001
Y.2	0.196	-0.410	0.139	(0.873)	Reflective	0.121	<0.001
Y.3	0.429	0.522	-0.888	(0.779)	Reflective	0.127	<0.001
Y.4	-0.192	0.041	0.091	(0.786)	Reflective	0.126	<0.001
Y.5	-0.787	-0.014	1.219	(0.575)	Reflective	0.141	<0.001

The loading factor quantifies the extent to which an indicator accounts for its construct's variance and serves as a measure of the reliability of reflective construct indicators. The guideline for loading factor

reliability is a minimum of 0.5 for exploratory research and confirmatory research. Data in Table 2 indicate that the loading factors for all indicators measuring their respective constructs are greater than their cross-loadings. For instance, the loadings for indicators X1.1, X1.2, and X1.3, which assess the work environment construct, exceed their loadings on the constructs related to work-life balance, motivation, and performance. Similarly, the loadings for indicators X2.1, X2.2, and X2.3 (work-life balance), Z.1, Z.2, Z.3, and Z.4 (motivation), and Y.1, Y1.2, Y1.3, Y1.4, and Y1.5 (performance) are all greater than their respective cross-loadings, fulfilling the criteria for discriminant validity.

The subsequent table illustrates the correlations among latent variables alongside the square roots of the AVE.

Table 3. Correlations Among Latent Variables with Square Roots of AVE

	Work Environment	Work-Life Balance	Motivation	Performance
Work Environment	(0.819)	0.630	0.772	**0.679**
Work-Life Balance	0.630	(0.866)	0.778	**0.645**
Motivation	0.772	0.778	(0.815)	**0.665**
Performance	**0.679**	**0.645**	**0.665**	(0.785)

The square roots of the AVE displayed in Table 3 reveal the correlation values between reflective indicators and their latent constructs. The constructs of motivation, work environment, work-life balance, and performance exhibit higher correlation values with their respective constructs compared to others, thereby confirming that the discriminant validity criteria are met.

The structural model in PLS-SEM is designed to estimate a one-way (recursive) model, which is the approach adopted in this study and is thus appropriate for PLS-SEM estimation. The following table presents the fit model and quality indices derived from the SEM analysis conducted using WarpPLS 7.0.

Table 4. Fit Model and Quality Indices

Fit Model	Results	Rule of Thumb	Conclusion
Average Path Coefficient (APC)	0.369 P=0.006	$P<0.05$	**Accepted**
Average R-Squared (ARS)	0.724 P<0.001	$P<0.05$	**Accepted**
Average Adjusted R-Squared (AARS)	0.693 P<0.001	$P<0.05$	**Accepted**
Average Block VIF (AVIF)	2.456	≤ 5 ideally ≤ 3.3	**Accepted**
Average Full Collinearity VIF (AFVIF)	2.899	≤ 5 ideally ≤ 3.3	**Accepted**
Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)	0.699	Small ≥ 0.1, medium ≥ 0.25, large $\geq 0,36$	**Accepted**
Simpson's Paradox Ratio (SPR)	1.000	≥ 0.7, ideally $= 1$	**Accepted**
R-Squared Contribution Ratio (RSCR)	1.000	≥ 0.9, ideally $= 1$	**Accepted**

Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR)	1.000	≥ 0.7	**Accepted**
Nonlinear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR)	**1.000**	≥ 0.7	**Accepted**

Data in Table 4 demonstrate that, based on a comparison of the analysis results with established benchmarks, all model categories in this study yield favorable and acceptable outcomes. This indicates that the model employed is both fit and feasible. Following the evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and structural model (inner model) using WarpPLS 7.0, the resulting model representation is provided.
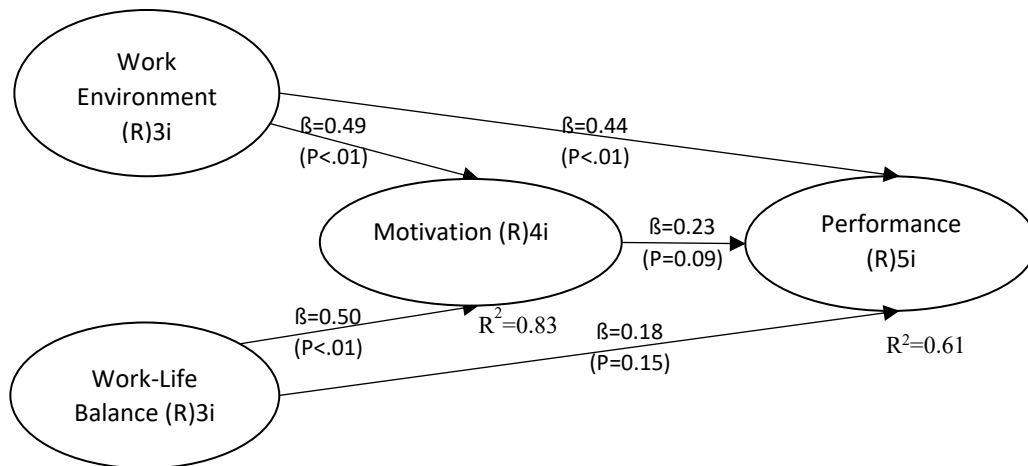
Figure 2. A Resulted Model of Analyzed Data

The data underwent further testing and analysis utilizing WarpPLS to facilitate hypothesis testing, aimed at elucidating the relationships among the variables previously formulated in this study. The results of the hypothesis tests are summarized in the following table.

Table 5. Hypothesis Tests

Hypotheses	Path Coefficients (β)	P Values	Conclusion
H1: Work Environment → Motivation	0.493	0.001	Accepted (Significant)
H2: Work-Life Balance → Motivation	0.501	<0.001	Accepted (Significant)
H3: Work Environment → Performance	0.438	0.004	Accepted (Significant)
H4: Work-Life Balance → Performance	0.183	0.148	Rejected (Insignificant)
H5: Work Environment → Work-Life Balance → Motivation → Performance	0.229	0.092	Accepted (Significant)

Table 5 indicates that the first, second, third, and fifth hypotheses are significantly supported, while the fourth hypothesis is not substantiated and is therefore rejected. The first hypothesis posits that the work environment positively and significantly influences motivation, evidenced by a path coefficient (β) of 0.493 and a P value of 0.001 (≤ 0.05). The second hypothesis, asserting that work-life balance positively

and significantly affects motivation, is validated by a path coefficient (β) of 0.501 and a P value <0.001. Additionally, the third hypothesis, which states that the work environment impacts performance, is supported by a path coefficient (β) of 0.438 and a P value of 0.004 ($\leq$ 0.05). Conversely, the fourth hypothesis, suggesting that work-life balance affects performance, is not validated, as indicated by a path coefficient (β) of 0.183 and a P value of 0.148 (>0.05). The fifth hypothesis, which posits that the interplay of work environment, work-life balance, and motivation significantly influences performance, is statistically supported with a P value of 0.092 (<0.10).

Overall, this model demonstrates robust predictive power, as reflected by an R^2 value of 0.614 for the performance variable, indicating that 60.14% of the variance in performance can be explained by the independent variables incorporated in the model.

The analysis results indicate that the work environment significantly and positively influences employee motivation at SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya, evidenced by a path coefficient of 0.493 and a p-value of 0.001. This finding suggests that an optimal work environment plays a crucial role in enhancing employee motivation at this institution. Specifically, a supportive workplace characterized by adequate facilities—such as comfortable classrooms and comprehensive teaching aids—alongside a conducive atmosphere and effective communication among colleagues and leadership, fosters a positive environment for both teaching and administrative staff. Such an environment motivates employees to engage more enthusiastically in their responsibilities, thereby enhancing productivity and overall performance (Handaya et al., 2023).

Furthermore, additional research reveals that work-life balance also exerts a positive and significant effect on employee motivation at SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya, with a path coefficient of 0.501 and a p-value of less than 0.001. This underscores the notion that employees who successfully manage the interplay between their professional and personal lives experience heightened motivation (Lestari et al., 2020).

Conversely, the work environment positively impacts employee performance, demonstrated by a path coefficient of 0.438 and a p-value of 0.004, indicating a significant relationship. A work environment that enables comfort and productivity is directly correlated with improved employee performance. At SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya, a well-resourced environment, including adequate facilities and positive inter-collegial relationships, empowers employees to perform more effectively. For instance, well-equipped classrooms with advanced learning technologies enhance teachers' instructional capabilities, while administrative staff benefit from sufficient resources to optimize their efficiency (Sulistyo & Hasanah, 2021).

In contrast, the influence of work-life balance on employee performance appears to be insignificant, as indicated by a path coefficient of 0.183 and a p-value of 0.148. This suggests that perceptions of work-life balance do not directly contribute to performance enhancement, leading to the rejection of this hypothesis.

The mediation analysis reveals that motivation serves as a mediator in the relationships between the work environment, work-life balance, and employee performance, exhibiting a strong direct effect (indirect effect of 0.229 with a p-value of 0.092). This finding implies that both the work environment and work-life balance can indirectly influence performance through their impact on employee motivation at SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya.

Notably, the relationship between the work environment and performance is significantly direct and is further reinforced by motivation as a mediating factor. This aligns with Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, which posits that a favorable work environment is a hygiene factor that fosters comfort and satisfaction, subsequently nurturing intrinsic motivation. When employees perceive their work environment as supportive—characterized by adequate facilities, open communication, and harmonious interpersonal

relationships—they are more likely to engage in their duties with enthusiasm and accountability, resulting in improved performance.

Moreover, although work-life balance does not exhibit a significant direct effect on performance, mediation results indicate that it still has an indirect influence through motivation. This suggests that while the balance between work and personal life may not sufficiently drive productivity enhancement directly, it remains vital in cultivating work motivation. Employees who perceive a balance between their professional and personal time experience reduced psychological stress, leading to greater calmness, focus, and enthusiasm in their workplace responsibilities.

These findings offer valuable insights for the management of SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya, emphasizing the importance of effectively managing the work environment and addressing employee work-life balance. Implementing a framework aimed at enhancing work motivation could lead to improved effectiveness. Concrete measures such as recognizing employee performance, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and fostering an environment conducive to discussion and participation in decision-making can further bolster motivation, ultimately contributing to sustainable performance improvements.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, work motivation serves as a vital psychological factor in facilitating effective performance. While a supportive work environment and a healthy work-life balance are essential, they alone cannot ensure high performance without an adequate level of motivation. Optimal performance necessitates not only favorable working conditions but also the mental readiness and psychological energy of employees to execute their tasks effectively. Work motivation emerges as a critical element in enhancing employee performance, as high levels of motivation inspire employees to approach their responsibilities with greater focus, accountability, and enthusiasm.

Consequently, managerial strategies at SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya should prioritize initiatives aimed at boosting work motivation. This can be achieved through various means, such as recognizing achievements, promoting career development opportunities, and fostering a workplace culture that encourages participation and a sense of belonging within the institution. Implementing policies that provide adequate work facilities, flexible scheduling, support for balancing professional and personal roles, and encouraging open communication will significantly contribute to cultivating high motivation among educators and staff. By creating a conducive work environment and ensuring a proper work-life balance, schools can establish a healthier, more productive, and sustainable work atmosphere, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of the institution's performance.

However, this study does have several limitations that warrant consideration. Firstly, the research was conducted solely at SMK Santa Monika Sungai Raya, which means the findings may not be generalizable to other schools with different characteristics. Secondly, the reliance on questionnaires as a data collection tool is contingent upon the honesty and comprehension of the respondents, introducing the potential for social bias. Thirdly, the study focused exclusively on the work environment, work-life balance, and motivation, neglecting other influential factors such as job satisfaction, organizational culture, or leadership styles that may also impact performance. Additionally, the assessment of performance remains subjective, relying on the perceptions of respondents rather than objective evaluations from the principal or data-driven indicators.

Regarding respondent participation, all 30 employees (out of 31) met the study criteria, with the researcher intentionally excluded to maintain the objectivity and neutrality of the data, in accordance with the research principles articulated by Neuman (2014). Thus, a saturated sampling method was employed, resulting in a 100% response rate.

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