



Work environment, career development, and workload: determinants of job satisfaction in the civil service police unit of barito kuala regency

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ABSTRACT

Employee job satisfaction is a critical factor influencing organizational performance and effectiveness, particularly in public sector institutions such as the Civil Service Police Unit. A positive work environment and career development opportunities are known to enhance employee engagement, motivation, and productivity, while workload has been identified as a potential stressor that can undermine job satisfaction. This study investigates the effects of the work environment, career development, and workload on the job satisfaction of employees at the Civil Service Police Unit in Barito Kuala Regency. The study involved a sample of 45 employees, and data were analyzed to assess the relationships between these variables. The findings reveal that both the work environment and career development have a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction. In contrast, workload does not have a significant effect on job satisfaction. These results suggest that fostering a supportive and well-structured work environment, along with offering opportunities for career development, can significantly enhance employee satisfaction and contribute to organizational success. Meanwhile, workload management alone may not be a key determinant of job satisfaction in this context, highlighting the need for a more holistic approach to employee well-being. These insights can inform human resource policies and management strategies aimed at improving job satisfaction and optimizing employee performance in public service agencies.

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INTRODUCTION

Employee job satisfaction plays a critical role in the success of an organization, as it directly influences an agency's ability to achieve its objectives. According to Robbins & Judge (2024), job satisfaction is an individual's evaluative response to their work, reflecting the perceived discrepancy between the rewards received and those that are expected. Job satisfaction is commonly conceptualized as a reflection of an employee's overall feelings of contentment and well-being related to their work, encompassing both cognitive and affective components

(Aeknarajindawat & Jermsittiparsert, 2020; Srimarut & Mekhum, 2020). A high level of job satisfaction indicates that employees perceive their work as rewarding, meaningful, and aligned with their personal goals and values. Conversely, low job satisfaction may manifest as feelings of dissatisfaction, frustration, and disengagement, potentially leading to reduced motivation and performance. Therefore, job satisfaction serves as a crucial indicator of the psychological state of employees within an organization and plays a significant role in shaping their behavior, commitment, and performance outcomes (Goetz & Wald, 2022; Wong et al., 2019).

Moreover, job satisfaction is defined as a positive and favorable attitude toward work, which is reflected in an individual's dedication, compliance with organizational rules, and the quality of their work outcomes. In essence, job satisfaction represents an emotional response or attitude of employees toward their work, influenced by various factors within the organizational context (Gottwald & Lejsková, 2023). Therefore, job satisfaction is not only crucial for the agency in achieving its goals but also for the well-being and motivation of the employees themselves. Optimal and effective employee performance can be achieved when supported by a conducive work environment, opportunities for career development, and a manageable workload. When these factors are in place, employees are more likely to experience satisfaction with their jobs, contributing positively to the organization's overall success (Dorta-afonso et al., 2023; Montuori et al., 2022).

This indicates that job satisfaction has a significant impact on the quality of employee performance (Gazi et al., 2024; Stirpe et al., 2022). Employees who are satisfied with their work tend to contribute more effectively, demonstrating greater efficiency, higher quality output, and a stronger sense of motivation and enthusiasm in completing their tasks. This, in turn, leads to improved overall performance and facilitates the achievement of organizational goals. In contrast, employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs may exhibit reduced motivation, decreased productivity, and a tendency to procrastinate, all of which can hinder the organization's progress and negatively impact its objectives. If employees are satisfied with their work, it is unlikely that they will experience emotional exhaustion and cynicism (Wu et al., 2021).

State Civil Apparatus regulations emphasize the importance of merit-based career development, structured work environments, and adherence to public service ethics, which directly influence employee expectations and job satisfaction. Similarly, the hierarchical and bureaucratic nature of public sector organizational culture tends to prioritize stability, clear role definitions, and professional development pathways over dynamic workload variations. Given this context, the inclusion of work environment and career development as key variables aligns with the institutional emphasis on structured support systems and long-term professional growth mandated by State Civil Apparatus policies. These factors are more likely to resonate with public sector employees, whose motivation and satisfaction are often tied to clarity of roles, fair promotion systems, and organizational support. As a government agency, the Civil Service Police Unit operates within the framework of public administration and State Civil Apparatus regulations, making it a relevant setting for examining variables such as job satisfaction, career development, work environment, and workload—factors that are highly influenced by bureaucratic structures and policy mandates.

This study focuses on Civil Service Police Unit of Barito Kuala Regency. Based on the results of interviews conducted with a sample of 20 % of the Civil Service Police Unit of Barito Kuala Regency employees, it was found that a significant proportion of employees expressed dissatisfaction with their current working conditions. This dissatisfaction is primarily attributed to three key factors: an uncondusive work environment, limited opportunities for career development, and an unbalanced workload. The dissatisfaction experienced by employees has the potential to negatively impact overall organizational productivity and performance. Given these findings, it is imperative for the institution to address the factors contributing to job dissatisfaction in order to enhance employee well-being and motivation. Improving job satisfaction is expected to

result in higher work enthusiasm, better work quality, and increased employee contributions toward achieving the organization's goals. Among these factors, the work environment emerges as a particularly critical area of focus, as it serves as the foundation for fostering positive employee experiences and engagement within the organization.

One effective approach that organizations can implement to enhance employee job satisfaction is by ensuring favorable conditions within the work environment. The work environment encompasses the physical, social, and psychological factors that surround employees and has a significant influence on their job satisfaction (Auriantika & Perdhana, 2023). A well-structured and supportive work environment—equipped with appropriate facilities, resources, and a positive organizational climate—can empower employees to perform their duties effectively and comfortably. When employees feel supported and their needs are met within the work environment, they are more likely to work productively and achieve optimal results. Therefore, fostering a conducive work environment is essential for promoting employee satisfaction and driving organizational success.

Employees are increasingly aware of the importance of the work environment, which encompasses various factors such as working hours, job safety and security, relationships with co-workers, esteem needs, and the support provided by top management. These elements play a crucial role in shaping employee perceptions of their work environment and, ultimately, influence their level of job satisfaction (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). Moreover, a study conducted by Díaz-carrión et al. (2020) concludes that working condition affects the job satisfaction of employees. The working conditions that influence job satisfaction are largely shaped by the institutional context in which employees operate. The work environment can be broadly categorized into two components: the social environment and the physical environment. The social environment encompasses the quality of interpersonal relationships within the organization, particularly the social support perceived by employees, which includes positive interactions with supervisors and colleagues as well as the absence of abusive behaviors in the workplace (Wisse et al., 2018). This dimension is particularly critical for employee well-being, as it mitigates the adverse effects of work-related stressors. Specifically, the social environment construct comprises two subdimensions: adverse social behavior and social support. In contrast, the physical environment pertains to factors such as environmental hazards, workspace conditions, and posture-related risks, which are essential considerations for employee health, safety, and overall job satisfaction (Koh & Ong, 2017; Meku Lelo, 2024). A well-maintained physical environment contributes to job hygiene factors, supporting employee performance and reducing the risk of occupational health issues.

Moreover, improved working conditions are associated with enhanced employee well-being, leading to higher levels of satisfaction, engagement, and productivity. To foster a supportive work environment, organizations can take several key actions, such as providing adequate facilities, ensuring workplace safety and security, and upholding fairness in employee treatment. When employees perceive their work environment as unfavorable—whether due to inadequate facilities, safety concerns, or perceived injustice—it can lead to reduced focus, motivation, and engagement. Conversely, a well-structured and comfortable work environment promotes employee concentration, enthusiasm, and the ability to perform tasks optimally, ultimately enhancing organizational performance (Díaz-carrión et al., 2020; Erro-Garcés & Ferreira, 2019).

Another important factor influencing employee job satisfaction is career development. Career development refers to a structured process aimed at enhancing employee knowledge, skills, and competencies while supporting their career progression within the organization. Effective career development initiatives not only facilitate employee growth but also contribute to personal development, increasing job satisfaction and fostering long-term organizational commitment. Ali et al. (2019) define career development as a sequence of positions or roles that an individual undertakes over the course of their working life. Consequently, the availability of career development opportunities plays a critical role in enhancing employees' skills, knowledge, and

overall competence in the workforce. When employees perceive opportunities to enhance their knowledge and gain experience within the organization, they are more likely to be motivated and persistent in their efforts, recognizing the potential benefits for their future career development. Thus, career development initiatives are not only advantageous for employees' personal growth but also contribute to the organization's long-term success by fostering a skilled and committed workforce (Ali et al., 2019; Cherif, 2020).

Furthermore, career development opportunities play a critical role in enhancing employees' skills, knowledge, and understanding of their work. Career development has been shown to have a significant impact on employee performance, as demonstrated by improvements in work quality, punctuality, initiative, and overall competence. Additionally, the cultivation of creativity through career development can contribute to both career satisfaction and the personal and professional growth of employees (Hosen et al., 2024; Yoopetch et al., 2021). Ironically, a study conducted by Bezdrob & Sunje (2021) highlights that actual career progress, as reflected in employees' job performance, does not have a significant impact on job satisfaction. This unexpected finding may, in part, be explained by the proposition that an individual's personal dispositions play a greater role in shaping perceived job satisfaction. In other words, employees' expectations for their job performance and career advancement may exert a stronger influence on their job satisfaction than their actual performance outcomes.

Another factor influencing employee satisfaction is workload. Workload refers to the tasks and responsibilities assigned by the organization that employees are expected to complete. When workload demands exceed an employee's capacity, it can lead to physical and mental stress, which may ultimately result in decreased job satisfaction. Conversely, a balanced workload that aligns with an employee's abilities can foster a sense of accomplishment and positively contribute to job satisfaction. Employee workload is a key factor influencing both productivity and turnover. When workload falls below an optimal level, employees may become disengaged, leading to increased idle time and involvement in non-productive activities, such as workplace politics, which can negatively affect overall performance. Conversely, an excessive workload can overwhelm employees, increasing the risk of burnout, health issues, and emotional exhaustion. This may result in decreased job satisfaction, negative attitudes toward work, and ultimately lead employees to seek alternative employment in roles that are perceived as less demanding (Inegbedion et al., 2020; Rajan, 2018).

This indicates that an increase in perceived workload is typically associated with a decline in work performance, and this relationship tends to become more evident over extended periods. The pressure of a high workload can impair an employee's ability to maintain focus, accuracy, and efficiency, particularly when sustained over time. Moreover, perceived workload—as it manifests in diminished work performance—has a direct and significant impact on employee job satisfaction. Employees who struggle to meet the demands of their workload may experience stress, frustration, and a sense of inefficacy, which can ultimately erode their satisfaction with their job and reduce engagement with organizational goals (Gottwald & Lejsková, 2023).

Previous studies conducted by Auriatika & Perdhana (2023) and Manalu & Lubis (2022) conclude that workload has a negative and significant influence on employee job satisfaction. When employees are required to manage excessive or unrealistic workloads, they often experience increased stress, fatigue, and a sense of being overwhelmed. This can lead to a decline in motivation, engagement, and overall job satisfaction. Furthermore, high workloads may reduce employees' capacity to maintain a healthy work-life balance, ultimately affecting their physical and mental well-being. In contrast, a manageable and appropriately distributed workload allows employees to complete tasks effectively, fosters a sense of competence, and contributes positively to job satisfaction. These findings underscore the importance of workload management as a key consideration for organizations seeking to enhance employee well-being and maintain optimal performance levels.

Furthermore, the Civil Service Police Unit in carrying out its duties is required to be able to overcome problems in the community, cooperate and build good relations with the community in complying with and obeying regional regulations and providing good services to the community. In carrying out its duties, employee job satisfaction is very important for achieving results in carrying out its duties. Therefore, a comfortable work environment, high career development and sufficient workload are very important to achieve maximum employee job satisfaction. Accordingly, this study seeks to explore the influence of the work environment, career development, and workload on employee job satisfaction. The findings of this research are anticipated to offer valuable insights and serve as a basis for decision-making within agencies, particularly in efforts to enhance job satisfaction among employees of the Civil Service Police Unit in Barito Kuala Regency.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative research approach to assess the influence of the work environment, career development, and workload on employee job satisfaction within the Civil Service Police Unit of Barito Kuala Regency. The population of this study consists of all employees of the Civil Service Police Unit in Barito Kuala Regency. In this study, the population comprised all personnel of the Civil Service Police Unit in Barito Kuala Regency, totaling 92 individuals. Among them, 45 were officially designated as State Civil Apparatus (ASN), while the remaining 47 were non-ASN employees.

Additionally, the sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique. The sample was determined based on official employment status and relevant organizational regulations. The employees who do not have formal State Civil Apparatus status, such as honorary or contract workers, interns, or temporary staff, since their employment conditions, rights, and responsibilities differ from those of permanent Civil Apparatus status employees, were excluded. These criteria ensure that the study sample accurately represents the target population with consistent employment status and job characteristics relevant to the research objectives. This approach was chosen to ensure that the participants included in the study possess the status of Apparatus of the State Civil (ASN), as their roles, responsibilities, and experiences are directly relevant to the variables being examined—namely, work environment, career development, workload, and job satisfaction. A total of 45 employees were selected to provide a representative and meaningful reflection of the study's objectives, enabling a focused analysis of how these factors collectively influence job satisfaction within the institutional context.

Data were obtained through a structured questionnaire, which was developed based on established constructs from prior research. The instrument measured employees' perceptions of the work environment, career development opportunities, workload, and job satisfaction, using a Likert-scale format for response collection. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis to examine the relationships between the independent variables (work environment, career development, and workload) and the dependent variable (job satisfaction). Statistical measures, including significance levels (p-values) and regression coefficients, were used to evaluate the strength and direction of these relationships.

Prior to analysis, validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure the accuracy, consistency, and internal coherence of the measurement instruments. Additionally, the respondents were provided with clear instructions on how to complete the questionnaire and informed about the purpose of the study to encourage honest and thoughtful responses. The results were then interpreted in relation to the research objectives and existing literature on employee satisfaction in public sector organizations. Moreover, tests of classical regression assumptions—namely normality, heteroscedasticity, and multicollinearity—were conducted to evaluate the adequacy and robustness of the data for regression modeling. These diagnostic

procedures were essential to ensure the validity and dependability of the statistical inferences drawn from the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Before distributing the questionnaires, both validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure the quality and consistency of the research instrument. The results of the validity test indicated that all questionnaire items had *r*-values exceeding the critical *r*-table value of 0.444, confirming the validity of each item. Reliability testing further demonstrated that the instrument met acceptable standards, with Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of 0.880 for work environment, 0.862 for career development, 0.934 for workload, and 0.871 for job satisfaction. As these values exceed the minimum threshold of 0.60, it can be concluded that the instrument exhibits strong internal consistency.

Additionally, classical assumption tests were conducted to ensure the suitability of the data for regression analysis. The normality test, performed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method, produced a significance value of 0.200, which is greater than the 0.05 threshold, indicating that the data are normally distributed. Multicollinearity testing yielded tolerance values above 0.10 and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values below 10.00, indicating no multicollinearity issues within the model. Furthermore, the heteroscedasticity test revealed no signs of heteroscedasticity, confirming that the regression model satisfies the necessary assumptions for accurate analysis.

The results of the regression analysis are presented in the following tables:

Table 1. Result of Partial Test

		Coefficients ^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	14.862	5.550		2.678	.011
	Work Environment	.246	.118	.315	2.083	.044
	Career Development	.338	.142	.361	2.375	.022
	Workload	.102	.076	.176	1.347	.185

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Source: SPSS Output, 2025

Work environment has a positive and significant effect on employee job satisfaction within the Civil Service Police Unit of Barito Kuala Regency. This finding suggests that improvements in the physical work environment are associated with higher levels of employee satisfaction. A comfortable and supportive work environment contributes positively to employees' ability to perform their tasks effectively. Moreover, a conducive work environment enhances employees' resilience under work-related pressures, enabling them to maintain productivity and deliver optimal performance. Thus, creating and maintaining a favorable work environment is essential for fostering job satisfaction and promoting sustained organizational effectiveness.

This result indicates that improved working conditions are positively correlated with enhanced employee well-being, which in turn contributes to increased job satisfaction, engagement, and productivity. The institution can promote a supportive work environment by providing sufficient and functional facilities, maintaining workplace safety and security standards, and ensuring fairness and equity in employee treatment. When employees perceive their work environment as unsupportive—whether due to inadequate resources, safety concerns, or perceived inequities—they are more likely to experience decreased concentration, motivation, and engagement. In contrast, a well-structured, safe, and equitable work environment fosters employees' ability to focus, work enthusiastically, and perform their tasks effectively, ultimately

driving improved organizational performance (Díaz-carión et al., 2020; Erro-Garcés & Ferreira, 2019).

Career development has a significant and positive effect on employee job satisfaction. This finding indicates that when employees are provided with opportunities for professional growth – such as skill enhancement programs, training, mentoring, and clear advancement pathways – they are more likely to feel valued and motivated within the organization. Career development initiatives not only equip employees with the necessary competencies to perform their current roles effectively but also prepare them for future challenges, fostering a sense of progression and personal achievement. This, in turn, enhances employees' emotional attachment to their work, increases engagement, and boosts overall satisfaction.

Employees who perceive that the organization offers opportunities for enhancing their knowledge and gaining new experiences are more likely to develop intrinsic motivation and demonstrate perseverance in their work. The availability of career growth opportunities fosters a sense of purpose and optimism, motivating employees to actively engage in skill development and learning activities. Ultimately, career development initiatives benefit both employees and the organization by supporting personal and professional advancement while also creating a highly competent, motivated, and dedicated workforce capable of driving organizational effectiveness, adaptability, and long-term success. (Ali et al., 2019). Consequently, organizations that prioritize career development are likely to experience higher levels of employee satisfaction, lower turnover rates, and improved performance outcomes.

Workload has an insignificant effect on employee job satisfaction. This suggests that variations in workload, whether perceived as high or low, do not necessarily translate into corresponding changes in employees' levels of job satisfaction. One possible explanation for this outcome is that employees may have adapted to the demands of their workload over time or developed coping mechanisms that mitigate its potential impact on their overall job satisfaction. Moreover, in the specific context of the Civil Service Police Unit, employees may perceive workload as an inherent aspect of their role and responsibilities, viewing it as part of the professional demands rather than a source of dissatisfaction.

It is also possible that other factors, such as the quality of the work environment, interpersonal relationships, or the availability of career development opportunities, play a more prominent role in shaping employees' job satisfaction, thereby diluting the effect of workload. These findings align with the perspective that while excessive workload can contribute to stress and fatigue, it does not singularly determine satisfaction levels unless it interacts with other variables, such as perceived fairness, support, or reward structures.

Moreover, the insignificant effect of workload on job satisfaction in this study can be more deeply understood by examining the work culture of local government agencies, particularly in the Indonesian public sector context. In many local government agencies, including the Civil Service Police Unit, a high or inconsistent workload may be perceived as a routine aspect of public service. Employees often accept workload as part of their duty (especially in law enforcement or regulatory units), which can reduce its perceived impact on their overall job satisfaction. Additionally, even when workload increases, job satisfaction might remain stable if employees feel valued, supported, or have strong relationships with colleagues and superiors.

Table 2. Result of Simultaneous Test

		ANOVA ^a				
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	151.558	3	50.519	6.881	.000 ^b
	Residual	301.020	41	7.342		
	Total	452.578	44			

a. Dependent Variable: JOB SATISFACTION

b. Predictors: (Constant), WORK ENVIRONMENT, CAREER DEVELOPMENT, WORKLOAD

The table above shows the simultaneous effects of the work environment, career development, and workload on the job satisfaction of employees within the Civil Service Police Unit in Barito Kuala Regency. The results demonstrate that these variables, when analyzed together, significantly shape the overall level of employee satisfaction. Specifically, a positive and conducive work environment, along with the availability of career development opportunities, are key factors that contribute to higher levels of job satisfaction. Conversely, workload, although important, does not exhibit a significant direct influence on satisfaction in this organizational context.

By analyzing these factors simultaneously, the study highlights the complex and interconnected nature of the elements that influence job satisfaction. It reveals that job satisfaction is not solely determined by individual factors in isolation, but rather by the combined effect of the workplace conditions, the perceived opportunities for growth, and the nature of the tasks assigned. This integrated approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of employee well-being, as it acknowledges that the interplay between the work environment, career development, and workload collectively shapes how employees experience their roles.

Furthermore, based on the interview findings with the Head of the Civil Service Police Unit, it was revealed that a considerable number of personnel perceived their workload to be excessive, primarily due to the frequent emergence of unanticipated assignments and the necessity for fieldwork. A critical contributing factor to the elevated workload is the disproportion between the limited number of available personnel and the extensive scope of duties that must be carried out, including the broad geographical areas under their supervision. This imbalance is further exacerbated by the prevalence of public order disturbances, such as the widespread presence of unauthorized street vendors, and by the generally low level of public awareness and compliance with local regulations. These contextual challenges collectively contribute to the perception and reality of a high workload within the unit.

The findings underscore the importance of adopting a holistic strategy in human resource management, particularly in public sector organizations. By fostering a supportive work environment and offering structured career development programs, agencies can enhance employee satisfaction, engagement, and ultimately, performance. Meanwhile, the relatively insignificant effect of workload on satisfaction suggests that workload management, while important for operational efficiency, should be complemented by broader organizational efforts that address employees' psychological, developmental, and relational needs. These insights contribute to the growing body of knowledge on public sector human resource management, emphasizing the need for integrated and context-sensitive approaches in promoting employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the critical role of employee job satisfaction in supporting organizational performance, particularly in public service agencies such as the Civil Service Police Unit of Barito Kuala Regency. The findings demonstrate that a positive work environment and effective career development programs significantly influence job satisfaction, fostering higher employee engagement, motivation, and productivity. In contrast, workload does not have a significant impact on job satisfaction, suggesting that factors beyond workload management play a more prominent role in shaping employee well-being. These results emphasize the importance of creating a supportive and conducive work environment and providing structured opportunities for career advancement. Focusing on these aspects can lead to improved job satisfaction and, in turn, contribute to achieving organizational goals.

Based on the findings, it is proposed for the institution to enhance the work environment by creating a positive and safe work environment that promotes collaboration, communication,

and mutual respect among employees. The improvements in physical workspace, access to resources, and supportive management practices can enhance overall job satisfaction are also suggested. Additionally, the organization should design and implement structured career development initiatives, such as training programs, mentorship opportunities, and clear pathways for promotion.

Regular performance evaluations and feedback sessions can help employees align their career goals with organizational needs. Moreover, while workload was found not to have a significant effect on job satisfaction in this study, it remains important to ensure that workloads are manageable and fairly distributed. Since employees may be accustomed to high workloads, providing greater autonomy in task management and flexible scheduling can help them feel more in control and reduce stress without having to reduce the workload itself. In addition, providing regular training and clear task guidelines enables employees to manage tasks more efficiently and reduces the negative impact of sudden assignments. This enhances competence and confidence, which are strongly linked to satisfaction.

A balanced approach that considers both task demands and employee capacity can help maintain productivity without compromising well-being. In addition, the institution can adopt a holistic approach to employee well-being by addressing not only workload and career growth but also factors such as recognition, work-life balance, and access to support systems. Furthermore, these findings can inform the development of human resource policies and strategies aimed at enhancing employee satisfaction, thereby supporting long-term organizational success. Additionally, future research could explore other factors influencing job satisfaction, such as leadership styles, employee recognition systems, or psychological well-being, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of employee motivation in public sector organizations.

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