



The Impact of Transformational Leadership and Intrinsic Motivation on Teacher Performance via Job Satisfaction: A Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Partial Least Squares (PLS) Analysis

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Abstract: This study investigates the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between situational leadership and motivation on teacher performance. A quantitative approach was employed, and the research was conducted at Santo Nicholas School, Medan, with all teachers participating as the sample. Data were collected using a six-point Likert survey and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS). The results indicate that situational leadership has no significant direct or indirect impact on teacher performance, whereas motivation has a significant effect on performance through both direct and indirect paths. Job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between motivation and performance, but it does not mediate the relationship between situational leadership and performance. The findings emphasize the importance of motivational support in enhancing job satisfaction and teacher performance.

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Introduction

The educational system in Indonesia undergoes development in response to the policy changes as well as adaptation to global demands, positioning teachers as key pillars in delivering quality learning (Rifa'i, 2025). Teachers are expected to adapt to shifting curricula, innovate, create interactive classroom environments, foster and nurture students' character development. These expectations require support for teachers' professionalism from the school leadership.

Medan as a major educational hub in North Sumatra, reflects these educational dynamics. With over 3,000 educational institutions in the region, several schools have adopted international curricula and an English-speaking environment, such as Batari School, Chandra Kumala School, Prime One School, and Wellington Intelligence School, which implement the Cambridge Curriculum. These schools prioritise academic excellence and character formation within inclusive and multicultural learning contexts.

Santo Nicholas School (SNS) aligns with this educational vision, accentuating academic achievement and forming partnerships, such as with Paya Lebar Methodist Girls' School in Singapore, to exchange best practices. SNS is also recognised for its inclusivity, particularly for students with special needs. The school has consistently celebrated outstanding student achievements in international mathematics competitions, with several gold awards at events such as the Hong Kong International Mathematical Olympiad and the World Mathematics Invitational, as well as scholarships awarded by the Ministry of



Education of Singapore. These accomplishments reflect the school's commitment to academic excellence at both national and international levels. Teachers are also supported with extensive opportunities for professional and personal development, ensuring they are well-prepared to innovate in their practice. Furthermore, SNS actively upholds inclusivity by fostering a safe environment where students of diverse abilities are encouraged to explore their interests and talents. These characteristics make it a particularly relevant site to investigate the role of leadership, motivation, and job satisfaction in teacher performance. Although SNS is a privately managed institution, it encourages teacher participation in decision-making, offers training opportunities, and attends to staff well-being. In such a setting, the role of school leadership is crucial in shaping a positive work atmosphere and sustaining a successful educational system.

Teachers at SNS demonstrate exceptional performance marked by professionalism, content mastery, commitment and accountability. Interestingly, these achievements are not always explained by typical variables such as teaching experience or educational background. This raises a compelling question: to what extent do situational leadership and work motivation explain high teacher performance, and how does job satisfaction serve as a mediator in this relationship? In this study, work motivation is conceptualised as a direct predictor of teacher performance, while job satisfaction functions as the central mediating variable that connects leadership and motivation to performance outcomes. This clarification underscores that job satisfaction, rather than motivation, serves as the mediator in the model. This perspective reserves the common approach by using high performance as the point of departure for analysis.

Leadership practices directly affect teacher satisfaction and performance. One relevant framework is situational leadership, which allows leaders to adjust their style to the readiness and needs of individual teachers. Through this adaptive leadership approach, principals can create a climate that promotes teacher growth and engagement, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of education.

In practice, the application of leadership among schools in Medan varies, including at SNS. Some principals lean toward authoritarian approaches, while others prefer democratic or delegative styles. These variations directly influence teacher motivation. Leaders who are adaptive and responsive tend to foster higher motivation and job satisfaction, whereas inflexible leadership can demotivate and undermine performance. This study also seeks to address inconsistencies in previous findings, where some research suggests that leadership directly influences performance, while others emphasise the mediating role of satisfaction or motivation. By focusing on the Medan context and the distinctive environment of SNS, the study contributes theoretically by clarifying the interplay of leadership, motivation, and satisfaction, and practically by offering insights for school leaders to design strategies that enhance teacher effectiveness. This phenomenon is central to this study, as teacher performance plays a vital role in advancing educational quality.

Job satisfaction is a crucial determinant of teacher effectiveness and productivity. It is a positive emotional state resulting from an individual's appraisal of their job (Gazi et al., 2024). Prior studies have established significant links between school leadership, motivation, and teacher performance (Zulfah, 2023; Endarini et al., 2024; Hidayat et al., 2024). However, other findings suggest that leadership may not directly influence performance without the presence of mediating variables such as motivation and job satisfaction (Herzberg et al., 2017).



Situational leadership is frequently associated with increased work motivation in educational settings. This model involves adjusting leadership style based on the maturity and readiness level of team members (Hersey et al., 2015). By applying this model, school leaders can better recognize and respond to the unique needs of each teacher. Motivation significantly influences teacher behaviour and attitude, which in turn affects their performance (Hayati et al., 2025).

Nonetheless, empirical studies examining the relationship between situational leadership, motivational job satisfaction, and teacher performance have yielded mixed results. Situational leadership can enhance work motivation, which then improves satisfaction and performance (Huda et al., 2025). Meanwhile, Hayati et al. (2025) emphasized the direct impact of leadership and the importance of motivation and satisfaction as mediators. A study in a Lampung Islamic boarding school by showed that effective situational leadership improves teacher performance through increased motivation and satisfaction (Saadah et al., 2021). In contrast, a study reported that situational leadership does not always significantly impact performance without mediating variables (Rachmadi et al., 2024).

Research on teacher performance has extensively explored the influence of leadership and motivation. Prior studies have confirmed that situational leadership enhances work motivation and indirectly supports performance, especially when mediated by job satisfaction (Huda et al., 2025; Saadah et al., 2021). However, findings remain inconsistent. Some studies report insignificant direct effect of leadership without mediators (Hayati et al., 2025; Rachmadi et al., 2024).

Existing literature predominantly focuses on Islamic boarding school, vocational settings, or online learning contexts. There is limited empirical evidence concerning how these dynamics operate within formal, inclusive, and international-curriculum-based schools such as those in Medan, particularly in institutions like Santo Nicholas School that combine high performance with inclusive practices.

This study fills that gap by offering a contextualized analysis of situational leadership, motivation, and job satisfaction in a multicultural, formal school setting in Medan. It shifts the focus from traditional input-based predictors to performance-based analysis, exploring how high-performing teachers are supported by adaptive leadership and motivational climates, an approach that contributes both theoretically and practically to educational leadership research. This research aims to analyse the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between situational leadership and motivation on teacher performance by examining the effect of exogenous variables on endogenous variables both directly and indirectly.

Research Method

This quantitative research was analyzed using SEM-PLS approach to examine the influence of Situational Leadership (X1) and Work Motivation (X2) on Teacher Performance (Y), with Job Satisfaction (Z) as a mediating variable. The flow of this research is illustrated in Figure 1.

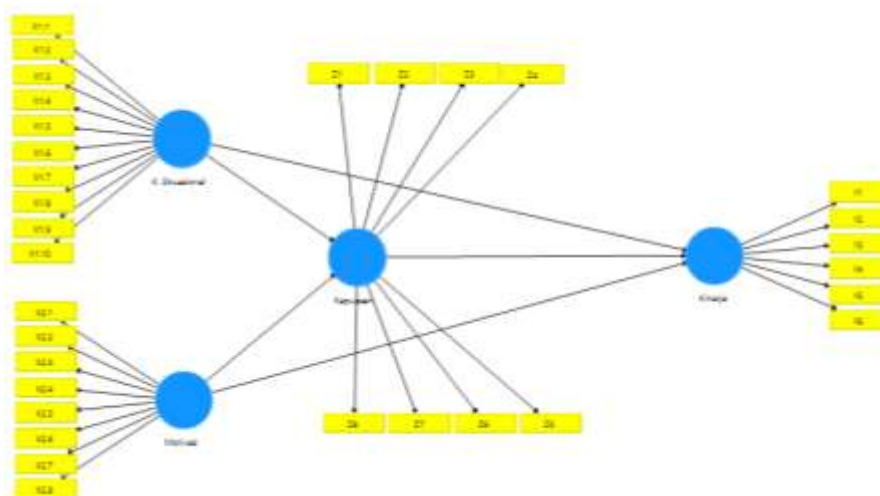


Figure 1. Research flowchart showing the direct and mediating paths

The research was conducted at Sekolah Santo Nicholas Medan with the objective of analysing all active teachers during the 2024/2025 academic year as the study population totalling 40 individuals. The researchers applied saturated sampling to include the entire population as respondents due to its manageable size. A structured questionnaire was developed as the main data collection tool in accordance with previously validated instruments and subsequently adapted to fit the school context. Following consultation with the school management, several items referring to salary were removed to maintain the secret nature of the information mentioned. To ensure content validity, the adapted questionnaire was reviewed by academic experts and school leaders, who confirmed that the retained items continued to represent the constructs of situational leadership, work motivation, job satisfaction, and teacher performance in a comprehensive and relevant manner. The researchers measured four variables, which are situational leadership (X1), work motivation (X2), job satisfaction (Z), and teacher performance (Y), with number of items employed were 10, 8, 8, and 6, respectively which is scaled with six-point Likert ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

The researchers tested the instruments for validity and reliability using outer loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Cronbach's alpha in SmartPLS 3, retaining indicators with loading values ≥ 0.70 . In this study, the AVE threshold was set at ≥ 0.50 to confirm convergent validity, while Cronbach's alpha values of ≥ 0.70 were considered acceptable for internal consistency reliability. Composite Reliability (CR) was also assessed, with values above 0.70 deemed satisfactory. The team analyzed the data through several stages, including descriptive statistics, outer model assessment for convergent and discriminant validity, and inner model testing for R-square (R^2), effect size (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2). The researchers also performed path analysis and bootstrapping to evaluate both direct and indirect effects, including the mediating influence of job satisfaction. The study took place over three months (April-June 2025), with informed consent obtained from all participants and ethical guidelines upheld throughout the research process. The researchers utilised Google Form for data collection and SmartPLS 3 software for analysis.

Results and Discussion



Several key findings were revealed in this study regarding the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the influence of situational leadership and motivation on work performance. The respondents were 6 male and 34 female teachers, which among them 45 % aged 20-30 years old, and the other 55% were 31-40. Speaking of teaching levels, 40% of the respondents are assigned to primary school, 25% teach across multiple levels to ensure the continuation of school values and culture, 12.5% each in kindergarten and junior high school, and 10% in senior high school. Regarding the teaching experience, majority of the teachers (37.5%) have been teaching there for more than 7 years, 27.5 for 1-3 years, 22.5% for 4-7 years, and 12.5% of them have less than one year of teaching experience at SNS.

The path analysis result is served in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Path Coefficient

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Situational L.-> J. Satisfaction	0.088	0.115	0.133	0.666	0.506
Situational L -> T. Performance	0.167	0.186	0.122	1.364	0.173
J. Satisfaction -> T. Performance	0.384	0.375	0.163	2.361	0.019
Motivation -> J. Satisfaction	0.624	0.627	0.112	5.588	0.000
Motivation -> T. Performance	0.334	0.329	0.150	2.227	0.026

The Table 1 above reveals the weak and statistically insignificant effect of situational leadership on job satisfaction (O = 0.088, p = 0.506) and teacher performance (O = 0.167, p = 0.173), as indicated by T-values below 1.96 and p-values greater than 0.05. On the other hand, job satisfaction shows a significant positive effect on teacher performance (O = 0.384, T = 2.361, p = 0.019) which suggests its important mediating role. Moreover, work motivation shows a strong and statistically significant effect on job satisfaction (O = 0.624, T = 5.588, p = 0.000), and has a direct, significant positive effect on teacher performance (O = 0.334, T = 2.227, p = 0.026). These results highlight that motivation plays a more central role in predicting both satisfaction and performance outcomes than situational leadership.

The R² and Adjusted R² analysis result is served in the Table 2 below.

Table 2. R Square and Adjusted R Square

	R Square	adjusted R square
J. Satisfaction	0.441	0.411
T. Performance	0.543	0.505

The coefficient of determination (R²) values indicate that job satisfaction is explained by situational leadership and motivation by 44.1%, while the remaining 55.9% is influenced by other factors. For teacher performance, 54.3% of the variance is explained by situational leadership, motivation, and job satisfaction collectively, whereas 45.7% remains unexplained by this model.

The adjusted R² values of 4.11 and 0.505 for both job satisfaction and teacher performance respectively explain that the model remains relatively stable. This finding supports the results of path coefficient analysis that motivation and job satisfaction show significant effect on teacher performance. Moreover, this implies that more than 50% of teacher performance in this research can be explained by these three factors.

The f² analysis result is shown in the Table 3 below.

Table 3. F Square

Situational L.	J. Satisfaction	T. Performance	W.
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	Motivation	
Situational L.	0.012	0.050
J. Satisfaction		0.180
T. Performance		
W. Motivation	0.585	0.129

The f^2 analysis result reveals the specific contribution of each exogenous variable to its corresponding endogenous variable in the structural model. The strongest contribution comes from work motivation which shows a major effect on job satisfaction shown by the value of f^2 by 0.585. This clearly indicates that motivation is a major determiner and driver of satisfaction. On the other hand, work motivation effect on teacher performance is small to moderate, shown by the f^2 value of 0.129. This value is far lower than its effect on job satisfaction. Even so, this value indicates that the contribution is still meaningful.

In contrast with work motivation's, the effect of situational leadership on job satisfaction is minimal, which is indicated by an f^2 value of 0.012. This value is below the threshold of 0.02, thus it is considered negligible. The effect of situational leadership on teacher performance is slightly higher than on job satisfaction at 0.05 and categorised as a small effect.

As a mediating variable, job satisfaction demonstrates a moderate effect on teacher performance with an f^2 value of 0.180. This implies that the variable plays a significant role in increasing performance.

To sum up, the f^2 analysis result reveals that work motivation is the most influential variable in this research model for both direct and indirect paths. The result also shows that job satisfaction plays a crucial role in mediating the exogenous and endogenous variables.

The predictive relevance analysis result is shown in the Table 4 below.

Table 4. Q Square

	SSO	SSE	Q ² (=1- SSE/SSO)
Situational L.	400.000	400.000	
J. Satisfaction	320.000	229.437	0.283
T. Performance	240.000	149.155	0.379
W. Motivation	320.000	320.000	

The Q^2 values indicate that both job satisfaction ($Q^2 = 0.283$) and teacher performance ($Q^2 = 0.379$) have predictive relevance, as their values are above 0, suggesting the model has sufficient predictive power for these constructs. Meanwhile, situational leadership and motivation both show Q^2 values of 0. This is because their constructs were used as predictors and not as endogenous variables in the model, hence no predictive relevance is computed for them.

The Table 5 below presents the result of hypotheses testing.

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Situational L. -> J. Satisfaction	0.088	0.115	0.133	0.666	0.506
Situational L -> T. Performance	0.167	0.186	0.122	1.364	0.173
J. Satisfaction -> T. Performance	0.384	0.375	0.163	2.361	0.019



W. Motivation -> J. Satisfaction	0.624	0.627	0.112	5.588	0.000
W. Motivation -> T. Performance	0.334	0.329	0.150	2.227	0.026
Situational L -> J. Satisfaction -> T. Performance	0.034	0.042	0.054	0.628	0.531
W. Motivation -> J. Satisfaction -> T. Performance	0.239	0.237	0.114	2.094	0.037

The path coefficient from situational leadership to job satisfaction is 0.088 with T-statistic of 0.666, and p-value of 0.506 indicate that the effect is statistically insignificant. While leaders are generally respected and their decisions are well received (X1.3 and Z4), the unclear division of tasks (X1.5) and dissatisfaction with promotion systems (Z2) indicate structural and motivational gaps. High variability in responses to leadership communication and interpersonal relationships (X1.7 and X1.1) mirrors inconsistent perceptions of recognition (Z8). In contrast, the clarity of teachers' roles (X1.6) aligns with consistent recognition of teacher contributions (Z7). These mixed perceptions suggest that, although some leadership elements support satisfaction, overall leadership practices lack the strength to significantly shape job satisfaction. This contrasts with previous studies showing significant influence of leadership. According to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, current conditions fulfil hygiene factors but lack motivators like recognition and development opportunities, which are more crucial in driving satisfaction. One plausible explanation lies in the contextual factors of SNS and the broader Medan educational landscape, where strong collegial culture, intrinsic commitment to teaching, and stable organisational norms often buffer the direct influence of leadership. Teachers may rely more on peer collaboration and intrinsic motivation than on formal leadership directives, thereby diminishing the measurable effect of leadership compared to other school settings. A more holistic approach is needed to understand satisfaction in educational settings. The finding differs from what Sufiyati et al. (2022), Rosanti & Irawan (2024), and Saputra et al. (2021) found, which reported a positive and significant influence of leadership style on job satisfaction.

Correspondingly, the direct effect of situational leadership on teacher performance is 0.167 with p-value of 0.173, showing it to be statistically insignificant. Although leadership decisions were widely respected (particularly item X1.3), and roles were structurally clear (X1.6), these did not directly enhance performance. Variations in responses, especially regarding clarity of instructions (X1.7) and leader-teacher relationships (X1.1), may stem from differing experiences with individual Heads of Department. Performance indicators such as teacher commitment (Y1, Y3) were high, but more likely driven by intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction than leadership. Compared to previous studies that found leadership significantly influenced performance, these results align more closely with findings emphasizing indirect effects via mediating variables. According to Hersey and Blanchard's theory, the lack of direct impact may result from a mismatch between leadership style and teachers' readiness levels. Therefore, SNS leaders must adopt more adaptive approaches tailored to each teacher's needs to more effectively enhance performance. This finding is contrary to what Dwiyani & Sarino (2018) and Rojikin (2022) found that situational leadership style had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance, both



partially and simultaneously. On the other hand, the results of this study align more closely with the findings of Saputra et al. (2021), who stated that leadership did not have a direct significant impact on employee performance, with the effect being stronger through an intervening variable.

Contrary, job satisfaction has a significant direct effect on teacher performance, shown by a coefficient of 0.348, T-statistic of 2.361, and p-value of 0.019. Teachers generally show high performance, particularly in their dedication (Y1), supported by a positive work environment and strong relationships with colleagues and leadership (Z4, Z5). Although Y5 (meeting quality standards) scored lowest, it reflects the teachers' self-reflective and improvement-oriented mindset, not poor performance. This commitment to continuous growth enhances long-term quality. Therefore, optimal performance stems not from pressure but from pride and satisfaction in one's work. Strategies to improve teacher performance should prioritise boosting job satisfaction through recognition (Z7, Z8), achievement (Z6), and a supportive atmosphere. These findings align with previous studies and support Locke's Goal Setting Theory, where clear, challenging goals and feedback enhance performance. Teachers at SNS demonstrate strong professional purpose, and satisfaction reinforces their motivation. Thus, enhancing performance must go hand in hand with improving satisfaction to ensure meaningful, committed engagement. These findings align with previous research by Sufiyati et al. (2022), Rosanti & Irawan (2024), and Saputra et al. (2021), all of which consistently demonstrate that job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. Therefore, in the context of education, efforts to enhance teacher performance should focus on strategies that boost job satisfaction, such as providing professional support, fostering a positive work climate, and recognising performance achievements.

Work motivation shows the strongest direct effect. Its effect to job satisfaction shows a high value of 0.624, T-statistic of 5.588, and a highly significant p-value of 0.000. The highest-rated motivation item, X2.3, reflects strong professional commitment, with teachers striving to improve performance to maintain their positions. The high mean and low deviation in X2.6 (health protection from school) show consistent satisfaction in welfare support, reflecting SNS's equitable health benefits and collaborative policies. Although X2.4 (pride in recognition by superiors) had the lowest mean, it still fell within the high category and was interpreted as reflecting humility rather than a lack of esteem needs. Motivation disparities between senior and newer teachers were also noted. In particular, newer teachers tended to rate items related to recognition (X2.4) and promotion (Z2) more critically, reflecting expectations for career development and growth. Meanwhile, senior teachers reported higher stability in welfare-related items (X2.6), suggesting that job security and consistent support matter more to them than promotion opportunities. These subgroup variations imply that leadership and policy interventions may need to be differentiated according to teacher tenure to more effectively sustain both motivation and satisfaction. Job satisfaction indicators like Z4 (satisfaction with decision-making) received high ratings, while Z2 (promotion system) scored lower due to structural limitations. These results align with prior studies and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, reinforcing the importance of addressing psychological and professional needs to enhance teacher motivation and satisfaction. This finding is like what Pratiwi & Yunianto (2020), Diantara et al. (2025), and Majidah et al. (2020) had reported that work motivation is crucial in enhancing job satisfaction among employees.

Moreover, work motivation significantly affects teacher performance directly with a coefficient of 0.334, T-statistic of 2.227, and p-value of 0.026. The strongest motivational factor was the desire to maintain one's role (X2.3), highlighting a culture of professionalism



and innovation, though varied among newer and more established teachers. The most consistent perception came from X2.6, which showed that fair health protection enhances teachers' sense of security and productivity. Conversely, X2.4 (pride from recognition) had the lowest mean, reflecting humility rather than low motivation. Indicators such as X2.5 (supportive environment) and X2.8 (responsibility matching ability) were closely linked to integrity (Y4) and commitment (Y3). These findings align with Maslow's hierarchy, where satisfied basic and safety needs enable higher motivational levels like esteem and self-actualisation. The implication is that schools must support both extrinsic and intrinsic needs to sustain teacher motivation and performance. This aligns with most of the previous research. For instance, Dwiyani & Sarino (2018), (Rojikin, 2022), Andrianto et al. (2023), Hayati et al. (2025) and Ivana et al. (2025) concluded that work motivation has a positive and significant impact on teacher performance. While some past studies found motivation impactful only when mediated by job satisfaction Rosanti & Irawan (2024) and Saputra et al. (2021) this study confirms its direct effect at SNS.

Indirectly, the effect of situational leadership on teacher performance via job satisfaction is 0.034, T-statistic of 0.628, and p-value of 0.531 which indicates an insignificant mediating effect. Both the direct influence of situational leadership on job satisfaction and on teacher performance were also non-significant, suggesting that leadership is not a primary driver of teacher satisfaction or performance in this context. While certain leadership indicators, such as respected decision-making (X1.3) and role clarity (X1.6), received high appreciation, they failed to impact key satisfaction elements like promotion systems (Z2) or team recognition (Z8). Teacher performance remained generally high, likely due to factors like work motivation or organisational culture rather than leadership. Compared to previous studies that found significant mediation, this discrepancy may reflect contextual differences in leadership implementation. The findings suggest that leadership at SNS must go beyond task adaptability and address emotional and relational needs, including recognition, growth opportunities, and a clear reward system, to enhance job satisfaction and performance. This finding is contrary to some previous research, namely the research by Sufiyati et al. (2022) and Rosanti & Irawan (2024) which reported that leadership significantly influenced job satisfaction, and that job satisfaction significantly mediated the effect of leadership on performance.

However, work motivation on teacher performance via job satisfaction shows a coefficient of 0.239, T-statistic of 2.094, and p-value of 0.037, affirming a statistically significant mediating effect. This study confirms that job satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between work motivation and teacher performance at SNS, as indicated by a p-value below 0.05. Motivation directly and indirectly enhances performance by fostering satisfaction. Key motivational indicators, such as teachers striving to maintain their position (X2.3), align with strong performance outcomes like task commitment (Y1) and responsibility (Y3), highlighting an internalized drive for professional integrity. Uniform perceptions of health protection (X2.6) also support high satisfaction levels (Z3), showing that well-being contributes to optimal work. Though pride from recognition (X2.4) scored lowest, consistent appreciation (Z7) remains vital for satisfaction. The results align with prior research and theories, Maslow's hierarchy confirms the fulfilment of safety, esteem, and self-actualization needs; Herzberg's theory underscores the role of both motivator and hygiene factors; and Goal Setting Theory supports the impact of clear targets. Thus, motivation-driven policies that also address teachers' psychological and professional needs are crucial for sustained performance improvement. This result aligns with those of Pratiwi & Yunianto



(2020) and Saputra et al. (2021), both of which demonstrated that motivation significantly influences job satisfaction and performance, and that job satisfaction effectively functions as a significant mediating variable in this relationship.

To summarise, the table shows that work motivation has strong effect on both direct and indirect paths while situational leadership does not show significant effect for both paths in this model.

Conclusion

This research showed that job satisfaction plays a significant role in mediating the relationship between motivation and teacher performance, but not between situational leadership and performance. While situational leadership alone does not directly and indirectly increase performance, motivation does for both direct and indirect path. These findings emphasise the importance of fostering motivational support and ensuring teacher well-being to sustain high performance. The result of examining these dynamics within Santo Nicholas School in Medan offers new insight to us on how adaptive leadership and internal motivation interact to support teacher effectiveness beyond traditional educational settings.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, future research should consider expanding the model by incorporating additional variables such as organisational culture, teacher competencies, psychological climate, or workload, which may have a stronger influence on job satisfaction and performance. Using a qualitative or mixed-methods approach is also recommended to explore underlying factors and contextual nuances that quantitative data alone may not capture. Researchers should include participants from different educational levels and types of schools (public and private) to improve generalisability and identify institution-specific patterns. Objective performance measurement tools, such as classroom observations or principal evaluations, should complement self-reported data for more balanced insights. However, potential barriers may include limited access to diverse school types, time constraints in conducting in-depth qualitative studies, and challenges in obtaining reliable objective performance data due to institutional policies or administrative limitations. Practically, school leaders are encouraged to adopt adaptive leadership training, provide differentiated motivational support for teachers at various career stages, and promote participatory decision-making alongside well-being initiatives to sustain satisfaction and performance.

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