

The Influence of Competence and Training on Employee Performance at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency: The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effects of competence and training on employee performance, with job satisfaction serving as a mediating variable. The research was conducted at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency using a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design. A census sampling technique was employed, involving all 115 employees as research respondents. Data were collected using a structured Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed through Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS 4 software. The findings indicate that both competence and training have positive and significant effects on employee performance and job satisfaction. In addition, job satisfaction exerts a positive and significant effect on employee performance. The mediation analysis further demonstrates that job satisfaction significantly mediates the relationships between competence and employee performance as well as between training and employee performance. These findings suggest that improving employee competence and implementing effective training programs not only enhance employees' capabilities but also strengthen job satisfaction, which subsequently leads to improved employee performance. This study highlights the importance of integrating competence development, training initiatives, and job satisfaction enhancement strategies to achieve sustainable improvements in organizational performance.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Employee performance is one of the primary determinants of organizational effectiveness in delivering high-quality public services. In the public sector, organizational success is not solely measured by the achievement of institutional objectives but also by the ability of employees to perform their duties effectively, efficiently, and professionally. As public expectations regarding service quality continue to increase, government institutions are required to strengthen their human resource

management practices to ensure sustainable organizational performance. Consequently, improving employee performance has become a strategic priority in public sector organizations because it directly influences the quality of public service delivery and organizational accountability [1], [2], [3].

Competence and training are widely recognized as fundamental human resource management practices that contribute to employee performance. Competence refers to the combination of knowledge, skills, and work-related attitudes that enable employees to perform their responsibilities effectively, whereas training represents a systematic organizational effort to enhance employees' capabilities through continuous learning and skill development. Employees who possess adequate competence and receive relevant training are generally expected to demonstrate higher work effectiveness and contribute more significantly to organizational performance [1], [4].

Despite their recognized importance, competence and training do not always produce optimal employee performance in every organizational context. At the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, several organizational issues remain evident, including differences in attendance rates between Civil Servants (PNS) and Government Employees with Work Agreements (PPPK), disparities in educational backgrounds and employment grades, unequal participation in training programs, and relatively low levels of job satisfaction reported in the preliminary survey. These conditions indicate that improvements in competence and the implementation of training programs may not automatically translate into higher employee performance unless they are accompanied by favorable psychological conditions among employees. Therefore, a more comprehensive understanding is required to explain the mechanism through which competence and training influence employee performance.

From the perspective of human resource management, job satisfaction is considered an important psychological mechanism that may explain the relationship between competence, training, and employee performance. Employees with higher competence and greater opportunities for professional development through training are more likely to experience positive perceptions of their work, leading to higher job satisfaction and ultimately better job performance. Several previous studies have reported that job satisfaction mediates the relationships between competence and employee performance as well as between training and employee performance, highlighting its strategic role in organizational performance improvement [5], [6], [7].

Previous empirical studies have generally reported positive relationships among competence, training, job satisfaction, and employee performance. However, the findings remain inconsistent. While several studies conclude that competence and training significantly improve employee performance, others report negative or statistically insignificant relationships. Similar inconsistencies are also evident in studies examining the relationships between competence and job satisfaction, training and job satisfaction, job satisfaction and employee performance, and the mediating role of job satisfaction. These inconsistent findings suggest that the relationships among these variables are not yet conclusive and may vary across organizational settings, employee characteristics, and research contexts. Consequently, further empirical investigation is required to clarify these relationships.

Based on these inconsistencies, two research gaps can be identified. First, previous studies have produced inconsistent findings regarding the direct effects of competence and training on employee performance as well as their indirect effects through job satisfaction. Second, limited studies have simultaneously examined competence, training, job satisfaction, and employee performance within a single integrated model in the context of local government organizations, particularly the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency. Addressing these gaps is expected to provide more comprehensive empirical evidence regarding the relationships among these variables in the public sector.

The novelty of this study lies in the development and empirical examination of an integrated research model that investigates the effects of competence and training on employee performance through job satisfaction as an intervening variable in a public sector organization. Unlike most previous

studies that primarily focus on direct relationships or are conducted in private-sector organizations, this study examines the mediating role of job satisfaction within a local government institution characterized by diverse employee statuses, educational backgrounds, and employment grades. Therefore, this study is expected to enrich the human resource management literature by providing a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanism through which competence and training enhance employee performance in the public sector.

Accordingly, this study aims to examine the effects of competence and training on employee performance and to investigate the mediating role of job satisfaction at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency.

2. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design to examine the influence of competence and training on employee performance through job satisfaction as an intervening variable. The research was conducted at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, South Sumatra Province, Indonesia. The research model consisted of competence and training as the independent variables, job satisfaction as the intervening variable, and employee performance as the dependent variable.

The population comprised all employees of the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, totaling 115 employees, consisting of 96 Civil Servants (*Pegawai Negeri Sipil/PNS*) and 19 Government Employees with Work Agreements (*Pegawai Pemerintah dengan Perjanjian Kerja/PPPK*). Considering the relatively small population size, this study employed a census sampling technique (*total sampling*), in which all members of the population were included as research respondents. Consequently, the number of respondents analyzed was equal to the total population, resulting in 115 valid responses.

Primary data were collected through an online questionnaire administered using Google Forms. The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). In addition, direct observation was conducted to obtain supporting information regarding the organizational environment and employees' working conditions. The measurement indicators for each construct were adopted from established instruments used in previous studies. Competence was measured using three dimensions, namely knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Training was assessed based on five dimensions, including training objectives, trainees, instructors, training methods, and training materials. Job satisfaction was measured through five dimensions: the work itself, supervision, co-worker relationships, promotion opportunities, and salary. Meanwhile, employee performance was measured using five dimensions, namely work quality, work quantity, timeliness, attendance, and teamwork.

The collected data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with the assistance of SmartPLS 4 software. The analysis consisted of two stages: measurement model (*outer model*) evaluation and structural model (*inner model*) evaluation. The measurement model was assessed by examining indicator loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability (CR), and Cronbach's Alpha to ensure the validity and reliability of the measurement instruments. Subsequently, the structural model was evaluated by assessing the coefficient of determination (R^2), path coefficients, and the significance of the hypothesized relationships using the bootstrapping procedure. Furthermore, mediation analysis was performed to examine the indirect effect of job satisfaction on the relationships between competence and employee performance as well as between training and employee performance.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

3.1.1 Structural Model Evaluation

The structural model (*inner model*) evaluation is conducted to assess the ability of the exogenous variables to explain the endogenous variables through the coefficient of determination (*R-square*). According to Hair et al. (2017), the *R-square* value indicates the extent to which the independent variables explain the variance of the dependent variables in the structural model.

Table 1. Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Endogenous Variable	R^2
Job Satisfaction	0.409
Employee Performance	0.551

Source: Processed SmartPLS 4 output (2026).

Based on the coefficient of determination (*R-square*) analysis, the *R-square* value for the Job Satisfaction construct is 0.409. This result indicates that Competence and Training explain 40.9% of the variance in employees' Job Satisfaction. The remaining 59.1% is explained by other factors outside the research model that are not included in this study. These factors may include the work environment, leadership style, organizational culture, reward systems, working conditions, and other factors that potentially influence employees' job satisfaction.

Furthermore, the *R-square* value for Employee Performance is 0.551, indicating that Competence, Training, and Job Satisfaction collectively explain 55.1% of the variance in Employee Performance. The remaining 44.9% is explained by other factors outside the research model that are not examined in this study, such as work motivation, work discipline, organizational commitment, leadership, the work environment, and other factors that may influence employee performance.

Overall, these findings indicate that the proposed research model demonstrates an adequate explanatory capability in explaining the variance of Job Satisfaction and Employee Performance. Therefore, the structural model is considered appropriate for hypothesis testing.

3.1.2 Direct Effect Analysis

The direct effect analysis is conducted to examine the relationships among the variables based on the proposed research hypotheses using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS 4. A relationship is considered statistically significant when the t-statistic exceeds 1.65 and the p-value is less than 0.05.

Table 2. Direct Effect Results

Relationship	Original Sample (β)	Standard Deviation	t-Statistics	P Values	Decision
Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0.154	0.070	2.202	0.014	Accepted
Competence → Job Satisfaction	0.487	0.068	7.162	0.000	Accepted
Competence → Employee Performance	0.542	0.075	7.268	0.000	Accepted
Training → Job Satisfaction	0.275	0.057	4.799	0.000	Accepted
Training → Employee Performance	0.188	0.084	2.236	0.013	Accepted

Source: Processed SmartPLS 4 output (2026).

The results presented in Table 2 indicate that all direct relationships in the research model have positive and statistically significant path coefficients. All t-statistic values exceed 1.65, and all p-values are below 0.05. Therefore, all hypotheses concerning the direct effects among the variables are accepted.

3.1.3 Indirect Effect Analysis

The indirect effect analysis is conducted to examine the mediating role of Job Satisfaction in the relationships between Competence and Employee Performance as well as between Training and Employee Performance. The analysis is performed using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS 4, with statistical significance determined by t-statistic > 1.65 and p-value < 0.05.

Table 3. Indirect Effect Results

Relationship	Original Sample (β)	Standard Deviation	t-Statistics	P Values	Decision
Competence → Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0.075	0.036	2.067	0.019	Accepted
Training → Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0.042	0.022	1.916	0.028	Accepted

Source: Processed SmartPLS 4 output (2026).

The results presented in Table 3 demonstrate that Job Satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between Competence and Employee Performance, as well as the relationship between Training and Employee Performance. Both indirect relationships have t-statistic values greater than 1.65 and p-values lower than 0.05. Therefore, both mediation hypotheses proposed in this study are accepted.

3.2 Discussion

3.2.1 The Effect of Competence on Employee Performance at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency

The hypothesis testing results indicate that competence has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, with a path coefficient of 0.542, a t-statistic of 7.268, and a p-value of 0.000. These findings indicate that higher employee competence leads to better performance. This result is consistent with the findings of [8], [9], and [10], confirming that competence significantly improves employee performance.

The F-square value of 0.422 indicates a large effect size, demonstrating that competence is one of the strongest determinants of employee performance. In addition, the R-square value of 0.551 shows that competence, training, and job satisfaction jointly explain 55.1% of the variance in employee performance, while the remaining 44.9% is influenced by other factors. These findings confirm that competence is the most dominant variable in the proposed research model.

Descriptive analysis shows that competence achieved an average score of 76.41% (good category). The behavioral dimension recorded the highest percentage (78.67%), reflecting strong discipline, professionalism, and responsibility, whereas the skills dimension obtained the lowest score (73.10%), indicating the need for continuous improvement in employees' technical capabilities. Employee performance achieved an average score of 77.06%, with the timeliness dimension recording the lowest percentage (73.30%). These results suggest that strengthening technical competence can further improve work effectiveness, efficiency, and timeliness.

These findings support Goal Setting Theory proposed by Locke (1968), which emphasizes that organizational goal achievement depends on employees' capabilities to accomplish predetermined objectives. Competence, reflected in knowledge, skills, and work attitudes, enables employees to perform their duties effectively and achieve organizational targets. Higher competence also strengthens self-efficacy, commitment, and sustained effort, whereas inadequate competence may hinder goal attainment and reduce work effectiveness.

Within the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, employee competence is essential because public transportation services require technical expertise, operational skills, and professional behavior. Employees who understand work procedures and possess adequate technical capabilities are more likely to complete their duties effectively and achieve organizational targets, thereby improving public service quality.

However, these findings differ from [11], which reported a negative and insignificant relationship between competence and employee performance. Similarly, [12] found a significant negative effect, while [13] concluded that competence has no significant effect on employee performance. These inconsistencies indicate that the influence of competence may vary depending on organizational characteristics, job characteristics, organizational culture, and human resource management practices. Based on these findings, competence is the most influential factor in improving employee performance at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency. Therefore, the organization should continuously strengthen employees' knowledge, technical skills, and professional work behavior through continuous training, workplace mentoring, competency certification, and regular performance evaluations to improve organizational effectiveness and public service quality.

3.2.2 The Effect of Training on Employee Performance at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency

The hypothesis testing results indicate that training has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, with a path coefficient of 0.188, a t-statistic of 2.236, and a p-value of 0.013. These findings indicate that better training leads to higher employee performance. This result is consistent with the findings of [14], [15], and [10], confirming that training improves employees' work capabilities and overall performance. The F-square value of 0.062 indicates a small effect size, suggesting that although training significantly affects employee performance, its contribution is relatively smaller than that of competence (F-square = 0.422). Therefore, training functions as a supporting factor, while competence remains the dominant determinant of employee performance in the proposed model.

Descriptive analysis shows that training achieved an average score of 66.93% (fairly good category). The trainer dimension recorded the highest percentage (71.53%), reflecting employees' positive perceptions of trainers' competence, whereas the training methods dimension obtained the lowest score (60.35%), indicating that instructional methods should be better aligned with employees' learning needs. Employee performance achieved an average score of 77.06%, although the timeliness dimension recorded the lowest percentage (73.30%). These findings suggest that improving training methods can further enhance employees' effectiveness, efficiency, and timeliness.

These findings support Goal Setting Theory proposed by Locke (1968), which emphasizes that organizational goals are more likely to be achieved when employees possess adequate capabilities and organizational support. Training serves as an important organizational resource that enhances employees' knowledge, skills, and experience, enabling them to perform their duties more effectively while reducing work errors and improving productivity.

Within the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, continuous training is essential because employees must respond to regulatory changes, technological developments, and increasing public service demands. Relevant and sustainable training programs therefore play a strategic role in improving employee capability and supporting organizational performance.

However, these findings differ from [4], which reported a negative and insignificant effect of training on employee performance. Similarly, [16] found a significant negative effect, while [17] concluded that training has no significant effect on employee performance. These inconsistencies indicate that training effectiveness depends on program quality, the relevance of training materials, instructional methods, and post-training evaluation practices within each organization.

Based on these findings, training contributes positively to employee performance, although its influence remains smaller than that of competence. Therefore, the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency should strengthen training effectiveness by improving instructional methods, applying more interactive learning approaches, aligning training materials with job requirements, and conducting regular post-training evaluations to ensure that acquired knowledge and skills are effectively implemented in the workplace.

3.2.3 The Effect of Competence on Job Satisfaction at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency

The hypothesis testing results indicate that competence has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction among employees of the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, with a path coefficient of 0.487, a t-statistic of 7.162, and a p-value of 0.000. These findings indicate that higher employee competence leads to greater job satisfaction. This result is consistent with the findings of [18], [19], [20], and [21], confirming that competence significantly enhances job satisfaction.

The F-square value of 0.349 indicates a medium-to-large effect size, showing that competence makes a substantial contribution to job satisfaction. In addition, the R-square value of 0.409 indicates that competence and training jointly explain 40.9% of the variance in job satisfaction, while the remaining 59.1% is influenced by other factors. These findings confirm that competence is one of the primary determinants of employee job satisfaction.

Descriptive analysis shows that competence achieved an average score of 76.41% (good category). The attitude dimension recorded the highest percentage (78.67%), reflecting strong professionalism, discipline, and responsibility, whereas the skills dimension obtained the lowest score (73.10%), indicating the need to strengthen employees' technical capabilities. Job satisfaction achieved an average score of 68.89%, with the relationship with co-workers dimension recording the highest percentage (77.45%) and promotion opportunities the lowest (59.65%). These findings suggest that improving competence can increase job satisfaction, although greater attention should also be given to career development and promotion opportunities.

These findings support Goal Setting Theory proposed by Locke (1968), which emphasizes that employees are more motivated and satisfied when they possess the capabilities required to achieve organizational goals. Competence, reflected in employees' knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes, strengthens self-efficacy and increases the likelihood of successfully accomplishing work objectives, which subsequently enhances job satisfaction. Conversely, inadequate competence may reduce employees' ability to perform effectively and lower their job satisfaction.

Within the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, competence is essential because employees are required to possess technical, administrative, and professional capabilities to perform their responsibilities effectively. Employees who understand work procedures and organizational expectations are more likely to complete their duties successfully and experience higher job satisfaction. However, these findings differ from [22], which reported that competence has no positive effect on job satisfaction, and from [23], which found a significant negative effect. These inconsistencies suggest that the relationship between competence and job satisfaction may vary depending on organizational characteristics, reward systems, organizational culture, and employees' perceptions of their work environment.

Based on these findings, competence is a key factor in improving employee job satisfaction at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency. Therefore, the organization should continuously strengthen employee competence through human resource development, continuous training, and professional development opportunities while improving career development systems and promotion opportunities to further enhance job satisfaction and support organizational goal achievement.

3.2.4 The Effect of Training on Job Satisfaction at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency

The hypothesis testing results indicate that training has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction among employees of the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, with a path coefficient of 0.275, a t-statistic of 4.799, and a p-value of 0.000. These findings indicate that better training programs lead to higher job satisfaction. This finding is consistent with previous studies [24], [25], [26], confirming that training enhances employees' capabilities and work experiences, thereby increasing job satisfaction.

The F-square value of 0.111 indicates a small effect size, suggesting that although training significantly affects job satisfaction, its contribution is smaller than competence (F-square = 0.349). The R-square value of 0.409 shows that competence and training jointly explain 40.9% of the variance in job satisfaction, while 59.1% is influenced by other factors. Thus, training contributes to job satisfaction but is not the dominant predictor.

Descriptive analysis shows that training achieved an average score of 66.93% (fairly good). The trainer dimension received the highest score (71.53%), while training methods recorded the lowest (60.35%), indicating the need to improve instructional approaches. Job satisfaction averaged 68.89% (good), with co-worker relationships scoring highest (77.45%) and promotion opportunities lowest (59.65%). These findings suggest that improving training methods could further enhance job satisfaction.

These findings support Goal Setting Theory proposed by Locke (1968), which emphasizes that organizational support, including training, helps employees achieve work goals and improves job satisfaction. Effective training strengthens employees' knowledge, skills, confidence, and self-efficacy while demonstrating the organization's commitment to employee development, leading to greater satisfaction.

Within the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, continuous and relevant training enables employees to adapt to regulatory changes, technological developments, and increasing public service demands. Employees who participate in such programs tend to perform their duties more confidently and experience higher job satisfaction.

However, the findings differ from [27], which reported that training has a negative and insignificant effect on job satisfaction. This discrepancy suggests that the effectiveness of training depends on factors such as program quality, training relevance, instructional methods, and organizational support for applying acquired competencies.

Overall, training has been proven to improve employees' job satisfaction. Therefore, the organization should enhance training quality, particularly training methods, by implementing more interactive and job-oriented learning approaches while continuously evaluating training outcomes to maximize benefits for both employees and the organization.

3.2.5 The Effect of Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency

The hypothesis testing results indicate that job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, with a path coefficient of 0.154, a t-statistic of 2.202, and a p-value of 0.014. These findings indicate that higher job satisfaction leads to better employee performance. This finding is consistent with previous studies [28], [29], [30], confirming that satisfied employees tend to demonstrate stronger motivation, organizational commitment, and work enthusiasm, resulting in improved performance.

The F-square value of 0.031 indicates a small effect size, suggesting that although job satisfaction significantly affects employee performance, its contribution is smaller than competence and training. The R-square value of 0.551 shows that competence, training, and job satisfaction jointly explain 55.1%

of the variance in employee performance, while the remaining 44.9% is influenced by other factors outside the model. Thus, job satisfaction contributes to employee performance but is not the dominant predictor.

Descriptive analysis shows that job satisfaction achieved an average score of 68.89% (good). The relationship with co-workers dimension received the highest score (77.45%), reflecting a supportive work environment, whereas promotion opportunities scored the lowest (59.65%), indicating limited career advancement. Employee performance averaged 77.06% (good), with attendance recording the highest score (81.13%) and timeliness the lowest (73.30%). These findings suggest that improving promotion opportunities and reward systems could further enhance employee performance.

These findings support Goal Setting Theory proposed by Locke (1968), which states that employees who are satisfied with their jobs are more committed to organizational goals and more motivated to achieve high performance. Greater job satisfaction strengthens employees' persistence, effort, and psychological attachment to the organization, whereas low satisfaction may reduce motivation and performance.

Within the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, employees who are satisfied with their work environment, colleague relationships, and organizational rewards are more motivated to provide high-quality public services. However, limited promotion opportunities and inadequate rewards may reduce motivation and overall performance.

However, these findings differ from [31] and [32], which reported negative or insignificant effects of job satisfaction on employee performance. These differences suggest that the relationship may vary depending on organizational characteristics, culture, reward systems, and working conditions.

Overall, job satisfaction has been proven to contribute positively to employee performance. Therefore, the organization should improve factors affecting job satisfaction, particularly promotion opportunities and reward systems, while continuously evaluating career development policies to sustain higher employee performance and improve public service quality.

3.2.6 The Effect of Competence on Employee Performance through Job Satisfaction at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency

The hypothesis testing results indicate that competence has a positive and significant indirect effect on employee performance through job satisfaction as an intervening variable at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, with an indirect path coefficient of 0.075, a t-statistic of 2.067, and a p-value of 0.019. These findings indicate that higher employee competence enhances job satisfaction, which subsequently improves employee performance. This result supports the findings of [6] and [5], confirming that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between competence and employee performance.

The mediation analysis further shows that the direct effect of competence on employee performance remains significant (path coefficient = 0.542; t-statistic = 7.268; p-value = 0.000), while the indirect effect through job satisfaction is also significant (0.075). Based on the mediation procedure of Hair et al. (2017), these results indicate *complementary (partial) mediation*, meaning that both direct and indirect effects are significant and positive. Thus, competence improves employee performance both directly and indirectly through increased job satisfaction.

Descriptive analysis shows that competence obtained an average score of 76.41% (good category), with the attitude dimension recording the highest percentage (78.67%) and the skill dimension the lowest (73.10%), indicating the need to strengthen employees' technical abilities. Job satisfaction achieved an average score of 68.89%, with the relationship with co-workers dimension scoring the highest (77.45%) and promotion opportunities the lowest (59.65%). Employee performance reached 77.06%, with attendance recording the highest percentage (81.13%). These findings indicate

that strengthening competence while improving job satisfaction factors can further enhance employee performance.

These findings support Goal Setting Theory proposed by Locke (1968), which states that organizational goal achievement depends on employees' capabilities and commitment. Competence, reflected in knowledge, skills, and work attitudes, enables employees to accomplish work targets effectively. Successful goal achievement also generates positive psychological outcomes, particularly job satisfaction, which strengthens commitment and ultimately improves employee performance.

Within the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, competent employees are more capable of meeting job demands and organizational targets, leading to higher job satisfaction that further reinforces their performance. Thus, competence contributes not only to employees' technical capability but also to their psychological well-being, resulting in better organizational performance.

However, these findings differ from [4], which reported that human resource competence has a negative and insignificant effect on employee performance through job satisfaction, and from [33], which found no significant effect of competence on employee performance or job satisfaction. These inconsistencies suggest that the mediating role of job satisfaction may vary depending on organizational characteristics, human resource management systems, and workplace conditions.

Based on these findings, job satisfaction serves as an intervening variable that strengthens the effect of competence on employee performance. Therefore, the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency should continuously improve employees' knowledge, technical skills, and professional attitudes while fostering a work environment that enhances job satisfaction. Such efforts are expected to improve employee capability, increase job satisfaction, and ultimately optimize organizational performance.

3.2.7 The Effect of Training on Employee Performance through Job Satisfaction at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency

The hypothesis testing results indicate that training has a positive and significant indirect effect on employee performance through job satisfaction as an intervening variable at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, with an indirect path coefficient of 0.042, a t-statistic of 1.916, and a p-value of 0.028. These findings indicate that effective training enhances job satisfaction, which subsequently improves employee performance. This finding supports the studies of [5] and [4], while [6] also confirmed that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between training and employee performance.

The mediation analysis further shows that the direct effect of training on employee performance remains significant (path coefficient = 0.188; t-statistic = 2.236; p-value = 0.013), while the indirect effect through job satisfaction is also significant (0.042). Based on the mediation procedure of Hair et al. (2017), these results indicate *complementary (partial) mediation*, meaning that both direct and indirect effects are significant and positive. Thus, training enhances employee performance not only directly but also indirectly by increasing job satisfaction.

Descriptive analysis indicates that the training variable achieved an average score of 66.93% (fairly good category). The trainer dimension recorded the highest percentage (71.53%), while the training methods dimension obtained the lowest (60.35%), suggesting that instructional methods require improvement to better meet employees' work needs. Job satisfaction achieved an average score of 68.89%, while employee performance reached 77.06%, both categorized as good. These findings indicate that improving training quality can increase job satisfaction and ultimately enhance employee performance.

These findings support Goal Setting Theory proposed by Locke (1968), which emphasizes that organizations should provide adequate support to enable employees to achieve organizational goals. Training serves as an important organizational resource that enhances employees' knowledge, skills, and

work capabilities while providing learning opportunities and recognition that increase job satisfaction. Employees who perceive continuous development opportunities tend to demonstrate stronger commitment and better performance.

Within the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, continuous and relevant training enables employees to respond effectively to regulatory changes, technological developments, and increasing public service demands. As employees improve their competencies, they also experience greater job satisfaction, which further strengthens their performance.

However, these findings differ from [34], which reported that job satisfaction does not significantly mediate the relationship between training and employee performance. These inconsistencies suggest that the effectiveness of training through job satisfaction may depend on training quality, organizational culture, and human resource management practices.

Based on these findings, job satisfaction functions as an intervening variable that strengthens the effect of training on employee performance. Therefore, the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency should continuously improve training quality, particularly training methods and the relevance of training materials to employees' job requirements. Effective training programs supported by a work environment that promotes job satisfaction are expected to continuously improve employee performance and organizational effectiveness.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the effects of competence and training on employee performance at the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency, with job satisfaction as an intervening variable. The findings indicate that competence, training, and job satisfaction each have a positive and significant effect on employee performance, while competence and training also positively and significantly affect job satisfaction. The mediation analysis confirms that job satisfaction significantly mediates the effects of competence and training on employee performance. Based on the mediation procedure of Hair et al. (2017), job satisfaction functions as *complementary (partial) mediation* because both the direct and indirect effects are significant and positive.

Among the examined variables, competence has the strongest effect on employee performance, indicating that employees' knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes are the primary drivers of performance improvement. Although training also has a significant positive effect, its contribution is relatively smaller, suggesting that training effectiveness should be enhanced, particularly regarding training methods and the relevance of training materials. Furthermore, job satisfaction strengthens the effects of both competence and training on employee performance, highlighting its strategic role in improving organizational performance.

These findings support Goal Setting Theory proposed by Locke (1968), which emphasizes that organizational goal achievement depends on employees' capabilities and adequate organizational support. Employees with higher competence who participate in effective training programs tend to experience greater job satisfaction, which subsequently leads to better performance. Therefore, competency development, continuous training, and initiatives to improve job satisfaction should be implemented as complementary strategies to enhance employee performance in public sector organizations.

From a practical perspective, the Transportation Agency of Musi Banyuasin Regency should prioritize continuous competency development through improved knowledge, technical skills, professional attitudes, competency certification, and structured career development. The organization should also strengthen training effectiveness by applying more interactive methods, aligning training materials with job requirements, and regularly evaluating training outcomes. In addition, objective promotion and reward systems should be improved to increase job satisfaction, thereby enhancing both employee performance and the quality of public services.

This study has several limitations. First, it was conducted in a single public sector institution, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, the model explains only 40.9% of the variance in job satisfaction and 55.1% of the variance in employee performance, indicating that other factors may also influence these variables. Future studies are therefore recommended to incorporate variables such as leadership, work motivation, organizational culture, work environment, organizational commitment, compensation, and employee engagement, as well as examine different organizational contexts to provide a broader understanding of employee performance.

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