

## The Influence of Interpersonal Competence and Organizational Climate on Employee Performance with Motivation as an Intervening Variable at UPT PLN Malang

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Interpersonal Competence,  
Organizational Climate,  
Employee Performance,  
Motivation

### ***Abstract***

*This study aims to analyze the influence of interpersonal competence and organizational climate on employee performance with motivation as an intervening variable at UPT PLN Malang. The method used is a quantitative approach with an explanatory design, and uses Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to test the relationship between variables. The results of the study indicate that interpersonal competence and organizational climate have a positive and significant influence on employee motivation. Furthermore, motivation is proven to play a role as an intervening variable that strengthens the relationship between interpersonal competence and organizational climate with employee performance. These findings emphasize the importance of developing interpersonal competence and creating a conducive organizational climate to increase motivation, which ultimately has a positive impact on improving employee performance at UPT PLN Malang*

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## INTRODUCTION

Employee performance is one of the crucial indicators in the success of an agency, as reflected by the fluctuation of performance assessments at PT. PLN UP3 Metro (Lestiana & Suryadi, 2022). This problem indicates a gap between the set targets and actual achievements, one of which can be sourced from the less than optimal placement of employees according to job analysis (Setyowati et al., 2023). In addition, the high interpersonal competence of employees is often not aligned with the capability of effective collaboration within the team, so that innovative ideas are sometimes not optimally realized (Djaya, 2021). This condition is exacerbated by an organizational climate that is not fully conducive, where the level of appreciation and internal communication still needs to be improved to stimulate employee work motivation (Lalu, 2026). In fact, work motivation has a significant influence on employee performance, with a positive organizational climate and adequate competence potentially increasing that motivation (Viorenchea et al., 2022). Therefore, this study focuses on an in-depth analysis of the role of interpersonal competence and organizational climate in influencing employee performance, with work motivation as an intervening variable (Fitria & Riski, 2025; Wiratama & Muryati, 2025). Previous research indicates that organizational climate partially has a positive influence on work motivation, although its impact on employee performance is not always significant (Fitria et al., 2024). This shows the complexity of the relationship between these variables, considering that work motivation itself has been shown to directly

correlate positively and significantly with increased employee performance (Prayetno & Darmilisani, 2024; Sanjaya et al., 2025). However, there is also research that shows that intrinsic motivation does not always have a significant direct effect on employee performance, but can be mediated by work engagement (Nugroho, 2026). Similarly, some studies show that organizational climate is not always directly correlated with performance, but has a substantial impact on motivation, which then influences performance indirectly (Thamrin et al., 2024). In line with this, employee competence has been shown to have a positive and significant effect on employee performance (Kapero et al., 2023), and has a similar positive impact on motivation (Masrurroh & Fatimah, 2023). Other studies also confirm that work motivation mediates the relationship between employee competence and performance (Nur & Prakoso, 2025). However, inconsistent findings regarding the relationship between competence, motivation, and performance, as shown by studies that find that work motivation does not always strengthen the competence-performance relationship or is not even significantly correlated with performance, indicate a research gap that needs further exploration (Riyanto & Anto, 2022; Suratman et al., 2025). This phenomenon, known as the research gap, requires further investigation to identify other moderating or mediating factors that might explain the inconsistency (Samudra et al., 2023). Therefore, this study attempts to address this research gap by investigating the mediating role of motivation in the relationship between interpersonal competence and organizational climate on employee performance, specifically in the context of UPT PLN Malang. Several previous studies also show varying findings regarding the influence of work motivation on employee performance; some studies indicate a significant and positive impact, while others show that work motivation does not always have a significant influence (Rulianti et al., 2021; Saptalia et al., 2022). This indicates the need for more comprehensive research to clarify the direction and form of the relationship between these variables, especially in the specific context of UPT PLN Malang, given the differences in the results of previous studies (Andi, 2024; Handriyani et al., 2024). Therefore, this study aims to empirically test how interpersonal competence and organizational climate, with motivation as a mediating variable, specifically influence employee performance at UPT PLN Malang, while also contributing to the literature on human resource management.

Based on this background, the author can formulate the problem as follows:

1. How does interpersonal competence influence employee performance at UPT PLN Malang?
2. How does organizational climate influence employee performance at UPT PLN Malang?
3. How does motivation influence employee performance at UPT PLN Malang?
4. How does interpersonal competence influence employee motivation at UPT PLN Malang?
5. How does organizational climate influence employee motivation at UPT PLN Malang?
6. Does motivation mediate the relationship between interpersonal competence and employee performance at UPT PLN Malang?
7. Does motivation mediate the relationship between organizational climate and employee performance at UPT PLN Malang?

## METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory design because it is able to explain the mechanism of influence in depth, especially through the role of motivation as an intervening variable. The study population includes all employees of UPT PLN Malang, with sampling using the census method of 111 respondents. The census method was chosen because the population size is relatively small, so that the data collected can comprehensively represent the overall characteristics. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire based on a Likert scale specifically designed to measure four main variables: interpersonal competence, organizational climate, motivation, and employee performance with a Likert scale that allows respondents to express their level of agreement from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". The data were then analyzed using Partial Least Square–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), a method that is very appropriate for research with complex causal relationships, latent variables, and mediation models. The analysis process includes evaluation of the measurement model (outer model), including construct validity, item reliability, internal consistency, Average Variance Extracted, and discriminant validity (Ritonga & Bahri, 2022), as well as evaluation of the structural model (inner model) through determining path coefficients, hypothesis significance through *bootstrapping*, and an overall assessment of *goodness of fit* (Jufrizen & Hamdani, 2023).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Outer Model

- a. The measurement model (outer model) focuses on the relationship between latent variables and the indicators used to measure them. The primary objective of testing the outer model is to ensure that the research instrument used has high validity and strong reliability in describing the intended construct. There are three main tests in this process: **convergent validity**, which assesses the extent to which indicators correlate strongly with the reference latent variable; **discriminant validity**, which ensures that the latent variable differs significantly from other variables; and **construct reliability**, which measures the consistency and reliability of measurement results. These three tests are important to ensure that the data collected is accurate, consistent, and able to accurately reflect theoretical constructs. The results form the basis for confidence in the structural model that will be analyzed further. Convergent Validity

Convergent validity has two value criteria that can be evaluated, namely using the loading factor value or the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value.

#### 1) Loading Factor Value

The outer loading estimation results are measured based on the correlation between the indicator score (measurement instrument) and the construct (latent variable) it represents. An indicator is considered valid if it has a correlation value with the construct of at least 0.70; however, a value of 0.60 is still considered acceptable in quantitative research. If an indicator does not meet this

criterion, it should be removed from the model to maintain measurement quality. The results of convergent validity in the first stage of the study can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. *Outer Loading Results of Convergent Validity Test Stage 1*

	Interpersonal Competence	Organizational Climate	Employee performance	Work motivation	Information
X2.1	0.799				Valid
X2.2	0.831				Valid
X2.3	0.825				Valid
X2.4	0.792				Valid
X2.5	0.836				Valid
X3.1		0.872			Valid
X3.2		0.837			Valid
X3.3		0.888			Valid
X3.4		0.910			Valid
X3.5		0.869			Valid
Y1.1			0.786		Valid
Y1.2			0.854		Valid
Y1.3			0.845		Valid
Y1.4			0.837		Valid
Y1.5			0.820		Valid
Z1.1				0.836	Valid
Z1.2				0.811	Valid
Z1.3				0.821	Valid
Z1.4				0.774	Valid
Z1.5				0.851	Valid

Data Source Processed SEM-PLS 4.0, 2026

Based on the factor loading values above, it can be concluded that all indicators have strong convergent validity because they meet the outer loading criteria  $> 0.7$ , indicating that each indicator significantly contributes to explaining the variance in their respective latent constructs (Sugiono et al., 2024). Furthermore, convergent validity is also evaluated through the Average Variance Extracted value which must exceed 0.5, indicating that more than 50% of the indicator variance is explained by the construct. (Neldawaty & Hernando, 2021)

## 2) Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

The output of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) results can be seen in the table below. A variable is considered valid if its AVE value is  $> 0.5$ .

Table 2: Average variance extracted (AVE)

Variables	Average variance extracted (AVE)	Information
Organizational Climate	0.766	Valid
Employee performance	0.687	Valid
Interpersonal Competence	0.667	Valid
Work motivation	0.671	Valid

Data Source Processed SEM-PLS 4.0, 2026

The AVE value of each of the variables above is all greater than  $\geq 0.5$ , meaning that the variables above are categorized as valid.

## Construct Reliability and Composite reliability

Construct reliability can be assessed through two main approaches: calculating Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability. These two metrics serve as indicators to evaluate the level of consistency and reliability of all indicators used to measure a latent variable. Both approaches help ensure that research instruments produce stable and consistent results and accurately reflect the construct. High values for both indicate that the indicators within a construct are strongly interrelated and provide solid measurement, thus increasing confidence in the overall analysis results. Cronbach's Alpha

Table 3: Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability Values

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Information
Organizational Climate	0.925	0.946	0.942	Reliable

Employee performance	0.886	0.887	0.916	Reliable
Interpersonal Competence	0.875	0.877	0.909	Reliable
Work motivation	0.877	0.878	0.910	Reliable

Data Source Processed SEM-PLS 4.0, 2026

The table above shows that the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values for the constructs/variables listed in the table above are all  $\geq 0.70$  so that all variables have good reliability.

## 2. Inner Model

The structural model (inner model) in PLS-SEM describes the relationships between latent variables and is evaluated to determine the strength and significance of these relationships. Evaluation of the inner model encompasses three main aspects: testing the significance of the relationship or hypothesis, the R-square value, which indicates the ability of the independent variables to explain the dependent variable, and the effect size, which measures the magnitude of each relationship. These three aspects are crucial to ensuring that the structural model constructed is valid and can provide a deep understanding of the dynamics of the relationships between the variables in the study.

### a. R Square ( $R^2$ )

The R-square value in PLS-SEM describes the extent to which the latent independent variables are able to explain the variation (variance) of the latent dependent variable. This indicator reflects the overall predictive power of the constructed model.  $R^2$  values range from 0 to 1, with higher  $R^2$  values indicating a better model in explaining variation in the dependent variable. The results of the R-square values in this research analysis are as follows:

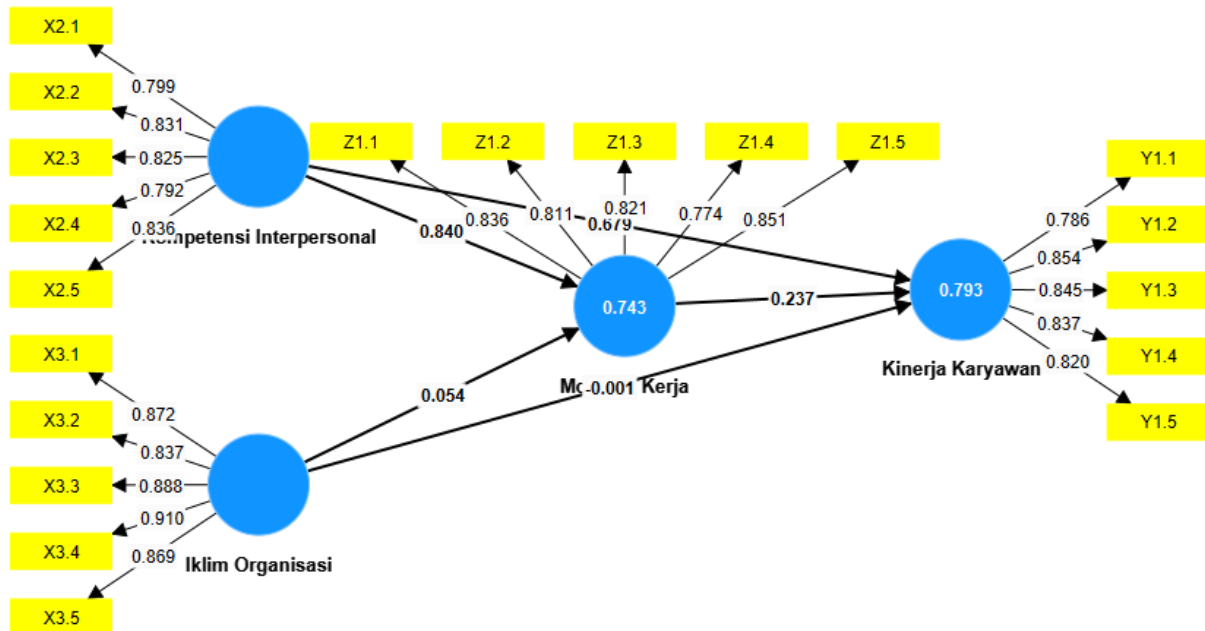
Table 4: R Square ( $R^2$ ) Test Results

Variables	R-square	R-square adjusted
Employee performance	0.793	0.793
Work motivation	0.743	0.742

Data Source Processed SEM-PLS 4.0, 2026

Based on this R-square value, it can be interpreted that the structural model has strong predictive ability, where the independent and intervening variables significantly explain the variability in the dependent variable. Specifically, the R-square value for Employee Performance of 0.793 indicates that 79.3% of the variance in Employee Performance can be explained by the model, while the remainder is explained by other factors outside the model. Meanwhile, the R-square value of 0.743 for Work Motivation indicates that 74.3% of the variance in Work Motivation can be explained

by exogenous constructs in the model, leaving 25.7% influenced by external variables not included in this study.



PLS SEM Alogarithm Model Output Image

b. Significance (Hypothesis Testing)

The significance test for relationships in PLS-SEM aims to determine whether the relationship between latent variables is statistically significant. This process uses a bootstrapping technique, which involves resampling data to calculate path coefficients and their standard errors. Test results are presented as t-statistics or p-values, where a relationship is considered significant if the p-value is less than 0.05. A significant path coefficient indicates strong statistical evidence, thus accepting the hypothesis. The following are the bootstrapping results for the direct and indirect effects in the model.

1) Direct Effect bootstrapping results

The results of bootstrapping the direct effect can be seen in the following table:

Table 5: Results of Path Coefficient Bootstrapping Direct Effect

Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values
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Organizational Climate -> Employee Performance	-0.001	-0.001	0.012	0.124	0.451
Organizational Climate -> Work Motivation	0.054	0.054	0.012	4,507	0,000
Interpersonal Competence -> Employee Performance	0.679	0.679	0.017	39,584	0,000
Interpersonal Competence -> Work Motivation	0.840	0.840	0.008	102,915	0,000
Work Motivation -> Employee Performance	0.237	0.237	0.019	12,779	0,000

Data Source Processed SEM-PLS 4.0, 2026

Based on the above data, we can analyze in more detail the direct influence of each independent variable on the dependent and intervening variables, as well as the statistical significance of each hypothesized relationship. Specifically, on the path "Organizational Climate -> Employee Performance", the T-statistic value of 0.124 with a P-value of 0.451 indicates that there is no significant direct influence between organizational climate and employee performance. However, it should be noted that the influence of organizational climate on work motivation shows a strong significance (T-statistic = 4.507, P-value = 0.000), indicating the crucial role of motivation as a potential mediator. In contrast, the relationship between "Interpersonal Competence -> Employee Performance" with a T-statistic value of 39.584 and a P-value of 0.000 indicates a highly significant direct influence (Wazdy et al., 2024). Similarly, the path "Interpersonal Competence -> Work Motivation" with T statistic 102.915 and P-value 0.000 and the path "Work Motivation -> Employee Performance" with T statistic 12.779 and P-value 0.000, both show a positive and highly significant influence. (Lalu, 2026)

## 2) Bootstrapping results of indirect effects (Indirect Effect)

The results of bootstrapping the indirect effect can be seen in the table below:

Table 6: Bootstrapping results of indirect effects

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values
Organizational Climate -> Work Motivation -> Employee Performance	0.013	0.013	0.003	4,129	0,000
Interpersonal Competence -> Work Motivation -> Employee Performance	0.199	0.199	0.016	12,751	0,000

Data Source Processed SEM-PLS 4.0, 2026

Based on the bootstrapping results, the indirect mediation effect of Work Motivation on the relationship between Organizational Climate on Employee Performance (Original Sample = 0.013, T Statistics = 4.129, P Values = 0.000) and between Interpersonal Competence on Employee Performance is proven to be statistically significant (Lalu, 2026). This indicates that work motivation significantly plays a role as an intervening variable in the transmission of the influence of independent variables on employee performance (Efendi & Hardiyanto, 2021; Mochklas et al., 2023). Specifically, the high T statistics values for both mediation paths (4.129 and 12.751) with a p-value of 0.000 confirm that the mediating role of work motivation is valid and substantial (Setyowati et al., 2023). This finding is in line with previous studies showing that work motivation significantly mediates the influence of various factors on performance (Ramadhan & Wahyuni, 2021).

## DISCUSSION

### The Influence of Interpersonal Competence on Work Motivation

The results of this study indicate that interpersonal competence has a positive and highly significant influence on employee work motivation. This indicates that the higher the level of interpersonal competence possessed by employees, the greater their intrinsic and extrinsic drive to excel in their work. The implication of this finding is that developing interpersonal competence can be a key strategy for increasing employee work motivation (Desyantoro & Widhiastuti, 2021). This approach has the potential to improve overall organizational efficiency and productivity, given the crucial role of motivation in individual performance (Mardiana et al., 2021). Furthermore, employees' ability to interact effectively and build collaborative relationships is directly correlated with increased motivation, which in turn can lead to the achievement of higher performance targets (Masrurroh & Fatimah, 2023). This influence also emphasizes the importance of investing in training programs that focus on developing interpersonal skills to create a more dynamic work environment that is responsive to task demands (Nelly & Erdiansyah, 2022). This finding is also supported by other studies that highlight that competence, including interpersonal competence, has a positive and significant influence on individual motivation (Sihombing & Mulyandi, 2022).

Empirically, strong interpersonal competence enables individuals to navigate social dynamics in the workplace, reduce conflict, and enhance collaboration, all of which contribute to increased work motivation (Fitria & Riski, 2025). Previous studies have also confirmed that work motivation has a positive and significant impact on employee performance (Liana & Denjayanti, 2022), and that competency simultaneously and partially also significantly influences performance (Khansa et al., 2024; Milisani et al., 2024). Competency factors, including individual skills, knowledge, and behavior, have been shown to substantially influence employee performance through the mediating role of work motivation (Rahmadani & Efendi, 2024; Rudiansyah et al., 2024). In particular, interpersonal competence facilitates effective communication and the formation of positive working relationships, which are important precursors to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Ningrum & Flowerina, 2025; Ramadhan, 2024).

#### The Influence of Organizational Climate on Work Motivation

The analysis results show that organizational climate has a positive and significant influence on employee work motivation, underscoring that a supportive work environment can substantially enhance employees' internal drive to perform (Virangga et al., 2025). A conducive work environment, such as role clarity, management support, and fair rewards, creates an atmosphere that encourages employees to feel motivated and engaged in their tasks (Wiratama & Muryati, 2025). This is in line with research showing that a positive organizational climate will significantly influence employee work motivation (Nur & Prakoso, 2025). Other research also supports this finding by showing that organizational climate is a crucial factor that can influence employee motivation, which in turn has a positive impact on performance (Wulandari & Aprianti, 2023). Therefore, a work environment designed to foster motivation can contribute to improving overall employee performance (Hutagalung, 2022). In line with this, a conducive work atmosphere has been shown to be significantly positively correlated with increased employee effectiveness (Nasrul et al., 2021). Thus, organizations need to seriously consider the design and maintenance of a supportive organizational climate as a strategy to optimize employee motivation and effectiveness. Attention to work environment factors, such as leadership and compensation, is also very important because these elements synergistically influence employee motivation and performance (Shobirin & Siharis, 2022). Previous studies have also found that organizational climate, employee competence, and work motivation simultaneously have a positive effect on performance, although the partial effect of organizational climate on work motivation can vary (Fitria et al., 2024). Factors such as effective communication and leadership support in a positive work environment can significantly increase employee motivation, encourage engagement, and strengthen commitment to organizational goals (Putra, 2023; Randi, 2023; Sinaga et al., 2025). In addition, an adequate work environment, including technological advancements and constructive feedback from superiors, has also been shown to increase work motivation (Fajriyanti et al., 2023).

#### The Influence of Interpersonal Competence on Employee Performance

These findings underscore that the ability to interact and collaborate effectively in the workplace contributes directly to improved individual performance (Muzaki et al., 2023). More profoundly, these competencies facilitate better team coordination, efficient conflict resolution, and adaptation to changing organizational dynamics, all of which are essential for optimal productivity. Previous research also supports these findings, showing that overall work competencies, including interpersonal competencies, have a significant influence on employee performance (Suratman et al., 2025). This suggests that employees who are able to build good relationships, communicate effectively, and work collaboratively in teams tend to achieve superior

work outcomes compared to those with low interpersonal competencies. The synergy between interpersonal competencies and work motivation will create a positive, self-perpetuating cycle, where improving one aspect will significantly drive improvements in the other, resulting in higher organizational performance. Similarly, external factors such as compensation and the work environment also shape employee performance levels, in addition to individual motivation and competencies (Hantrisna, 2023). Therefore, developing a comprehensive program to improve employee interpersonal competencies, accompanied by efforts to increase motivation through fair recognition and rewards, is an important strategy in achieving optimal organizational performance (Andriyani et al., 2022). In addition, adaptive and supportive leadership plays a crucial role in creating a positive organizational climate, which in turn will boost intrinsic motivation and employee performance (Putri & Mani, 2023).

#### The Influence of Work Motivation on Employee Performance

High work motivation has consistently been shown to be a strong predictor of improved employee performance, as this internal drive spurs individuals to invest extra effort and demonstrate greater dedication in completing their tasks (Aditya & Guridno, 2021; Djaya, 2021). This is in line with research findings indicating that motivation is a key catalyst in enhancing representative capabilities and producing optimal work quality (Shafira et al., 2024). The presence of strong motivation encourages employees to overcome challenges, innovate, and continuously improve their skills, thus directly contributing to the achievement of organizational goals (Natalia & Ali, 2024). In line with this, studies also show that motivation has a direct and significant impact on employee performance (Hanggono, 2024; Widodo & Yandi, 2022), confirming that when employees feel motivated, they tend to demonstrate higher productivity and higher quality work results (Kurdi & Abrar, 2022). The importance of motivation in driving optimal performance is also reinforced by the finding that highly motivated employees tend to be happier and more satisfied in carrying out their work, encouraging them to strive for the best results (Haan et al., 2022). Adequate compensation, both financial and non-financial, has been shown to be one of the significant extrinsic factors in fostering work motivation, thereby driving improved employee performance (Aji & Ahmadi, 2024; Asniwati, 2022). In addition, continuous training and development also play a vital role in enhancing employees' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, which in turn will positively impact their performance (Qonita et al., 2023). Furthermore, motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, is a key factor driving employees to achieve optimal performance (Febriantina et al., 2025). Therefore, organizations need to identify and implement effective strategies to enhance work motivation, given its direct and significant impact on achieving productivity and company goals (Ardhani, 2025).

Employee motivation can be increased in various ways, one of which is by providing encouragement both from within and outside the employee so that they have high enthusiasm and a sense of responsibility towards their work (Putri & Astuti, 2022).

#### The Influence of Organizational Climate on Employee Performance

A conducive organizational climate, characterized by a positive and supportive work environment, directly impacts employee performance by creating an atmosphere that encourages collaboration, trust, and efficiency (Susilo et al., 2023). Such a work environment motivates employees to work harder and more enthusiastically, thus achieving optimal work results (Mulyadi & Pancasasti, 2021; Pricilia & Julianti, 2024). The success of an organization depends heavily on the performance of individual employees, where a positive organizational climate will foster a strong desire for employees to work optimally and achieve company goals (Rismawati et al., 2021).

Factors such as the quality of interpersonal interactions, management support, and career development opportunities within the organizational climate contribute to increased employee motivation and performance (Rulianti & Nurpribadi, 2023). Thus, this supportive organizational climate not only increases job satisfaction but also directly correlates with increased productivity and the quality of output produced (Nurhalizah & Oktiani, 2024). For example, a comfortable work atmosphere and appreciation for work done are part of the organizational climate that can trigger extrinsic motivation, which then has a positive impact on performance (Hairudin & Oktaria, 2022). The creation of a positive and conducive work environment through a supportive organizational climate is an essential prerequisite for encouraging village officials to significantly improve their performance (Palupi & Zulfa, 2024). The importance of a positive organizational climate is also demonstrated by the fact that when employees enjoy their work, high levels of productivity can be achieved (Sinambela, 2021). Based on the data in the table above, it is known that organizational climate has a positive and significant influence on employee performance, confirming that a supportive work environment is essential for optimizing individual performance (Woru et al., 2021). Moreover, a constructive and positive organizational climate can influence employee motivation, high work responsibility, commitment, employee engagement, job satisfaction, and work discipline, which will ultimately increase productivity (Basyir et al., 2023).

Literature studies also confirm that work climate, which includes managerial support, role clarity, and harmonious interpersonal relationships, is positively and significantly correlated with improved work performance in various sectors (Nurwanto & Soeling, 2026).

Motivation mediates the influence of digital competence on employee performance.

This is because motivation is a key variable capable of bridging the positive impact of digital competence on improving individual performance within an organization. This shows that even though employees have adequate digital skills, their motivation is what drives the effective application and utilization of these competencies to achieve higher performance goals. Therefore, organizations must strategically integrate digital competence development programs with motivational enhancement initiatives to maximize employee potential and operational effectiveness. Thus, a deep understanding of the dynamics of the interaction between digital competence and motivation is crucial in designing effective organizational interventions to optimize employee performance. The importance of motivation in bridging the influence of organizational climate on employee performance cannot be ignored (Antony & Hariyanto, 2021), because a supportive organizational climate can foster job satisfaction, which is a driver of increased employee performance (Risambessy et al., 2022). This is reinforced by several studies indicating that work motivation has a positive and significant influence on employee performance (Nurjaya, 2021; Vinda et al., 2023).

Other studies also support this finding, confirming that motivation is an important mediator in the relationship between organizational climate and employee performance (Suntari, 2023).

The Influence of Organizational Climate on Employee Performance with Motivation as a Mediating Variable

In other words, a supportive organizational climate indirectly improves employee performance through increased motivation (Andi, 2024). Based on the data above, it can be concluded that organizational climate positively and significantly influences employee performance, where motivation acts as a partial mediating variable that strengthens the relationship (Putra & Surya, 2023). Previous research also shows that motivation has a positive and significant direct influence on employee performance, as well as mediating the impact of leadership,

organizational culture, and work environment on performance (Fatiria & Nawawi, 2021). This is in line with the finding that work motivation has a significant and positive influence on employee performance, making it a dominant factor in improving work performance (Elisnawati et al., 2023). Motivation also acts as a primary driving force that encourages individuals to achieve their goals, supported by existing encouragement and support (Septa & Erdiansyah, 2024). Thus, strong motivation, both originating from internal and external factors, is very important in directing employee behavior towards achieving optimal performance and organizational goals (Fitriani et al., 2022). Therefore, organizations need to pay close attention to how organizational climate can be optimized to trigger employee intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, which in turn will significantly improve performance (Hermawan et al., 2026). Previous research also found that job satisfaction mediated by motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance (Syahputra & Sugiono, 2022). Other research emphasizes that job satisfaction and work motivation can increase or decrease employee performance (Wahono & Kaharudin, 2024). However, it is important to note that the mediating role of motivation in the relationship between organizational climate and performance may vary depending on the organizational context and individual employee characteristics (Sanjaya et al., 2025; Sholihin & Arida, 2021). Nevertheless, in general, consistent research findings indicate that a work environment that fosters motivation has a substantial impact on achieving optimal performance (Dan, 2023). A supportive and conducive work environment, as shaped by organizational climate, significantly contributes to increased motivation, which then has implications for improving employee performance holistically (Widyastuti et al., 2026). This sustained performance improvement can be achieved through high job satisfaction, where employees with optimal motivation and satisfaction tend to demonstrate superior performance within the organization (Artana & Mujiati, 2022). The importance of motivation in improving job satisfaction has also been documented, as motivated employees tend to be more satisfied with their jobs (Fenny & Setyawan, 2024). This aspect emphasizes that organizations need to invest in strategies that not only increase motivation but also ensure job satisfaction to encourage higher employee performance on a sustainable basis (Maulidya et al., 2025). Thus, efforts to improve employee motivation and job satisfaction not only improve individual performance but also contribute to the long-term sustainability and sustainability of the company (Sutedjo & Setiawan, 2024).

## CONCLUSION

Based on a comprehensive analysis, it can be concluded that interpersonal competence and organizational climate have a significant influence on employee performance, with motivation acting as a crucial intervening variable. Specifically, a conducive organizational climate can increase job satisfaction, which in turn mediates the improvement of overall employee performance (Alfiyah et al., 2023). This is supported by findings showing that job satisfaction mediates the positive relationship between the work environment and employee performance (Syahril, 2025), as well as research confirming the significant positive influence of job satisfaction variables on employee performance variables (Suriyana, 2021). A comfortable and professional work environment also plays an important role in shaping job satisfaction, which ultimately contributes to increased productivity (Jahroni & Darmawan, 2022). Therefore, human resource management strategies must focus on creating a supportive organizational climate, in order to increase motivation and job satisfaction that lead to optimal employee

performance (Rada et al., 2024). In addition, career development and adequate facilities also contribute significantly to job satisfaction, which indirectly impacts the improvement of employee motivation and overall performance (Fadillah & Rizky, 2024). Further research also emphasizes that work motivation, job satisfaction, and employee competence partially and simultaneously contribute significantly to employee performance (Muliadi, 2025).

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