

The Influence of Job Expertise on Operational Employees Performance with Job Satisfaction as an Intervening Variable at Sub Holding Pelindo Multi Terminal Branch Belawan

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Abstract

This study aims to examine and analyze the influence of job expertise on the performance of operational employees, with job satisfaction as an intervening variable at Sub Holding Pelindo Multi Terminal Branch Belawan. The research population consists of 186 employees, with a sample of 127 respondents determined using Slovin's formula. The sampling technique applied was saturated sampling. This study employed primary quantitative data collected through questionnaires and processed using SmartPLS software. The research was conducted in 2025, and data analysis was performed using the path analysis model. The findings indicate that job expertise (X2) has a positive influence on job satisfaction (Z), with a path coefficient of 0.438 and a p-value of 0.00. Job expertise (X2) also has a positive and significant effect on performance (Y), with a path coefficient of 0.456 and a p-value of 0.00. Furthermore, job satisfaction (Z) positively affects performance (Y), with a path coefficient of 0.507 and a p-value of 0.003. Job satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between job expertise (X2) and performance (Y), with a path coefficient of 0.230 and a p-value of 0.036. Additionally, performance (Y) is significantly mediated through job satisfaction, with a path coefficient of 0.222 and a p-value of 0.038. The results highlight the essential role of job expertise in improving employee performance, both directly and indirectly, through the mediating effect of job satisfaction.

Keywords: Job Expertise, Job Satisfaction, Employee Performance

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Introduction

Human resources play a vital and strategic role within an organization, as people are essentially the primary component in carrying out various organizational activities to achieve predetermined objectives. Thus, the operational success of a company or institution largely depends on the quality and active involvement of its human resources (Cen, 2022).

Superior human resources are reflected through optimal work performance. Every organization requires employees who possess adequate knowledge and skills, as well as the ability to contribute effectively to organizational management in order to enhance work productivity. Performance is defined as the outcome of individual work, both in terms of quantity and quality, as demonstrated by their ability to complete tasks in accordance with assigned responsibilities. Moreover, performance can also be interpreted as the tangible result of efforts made by an individual or by an organization (Sakban et al., 2019). Therefore, performance becomes a key indicator of employee success. Employee performance is reflected in measurable outputs of work based on quality and quantity, aligned with their assigned responsibilities. According to Dwivedi et al. (2020), companies as business entities have the primary objective of improving productivity and performance to ensure sustainability and competitiveness in an increasingly globalized market. To achieve this objective, employee performance must be a critical focus, as employees are the company's main assets that play an essential role in ensuring operational continuity, achieving organizational goals, and supporting overall growth and development.

In addition, job expertise is another crucial factor. This capability is the result of task execution influenced by skills, experience, commitment, and effective utilization of working time. When these factors are well-managed, employees tend to experience job satisfaction because they feel their work aligns with expectations and organizational regulations. This condition not only generates positive impacts for individual employees but also provides significant contributions to organizational advancement (Fiona, 2021).

Febryansah et al. (2020) emphasized that job satisfaction is one of the primary drivers encouraging employees to work with enthusiasm. Job satisfaction is often associated with individual attitudes and perceptions toward their work. Generally, job satisfaction represents a form of reaction reflected in employee behavior, shaped by their perspectives on various aspects of the work environment. Each individual entering an organization carries expectations, needs, and personal experiences that influence their perceptions of work. Job satisfaction is achieved when there is alignment between these expectations and the workplace reality. Once satisfaction is met, organizational goals are more easily accomplished, and all stakeholders involved benefit. Among the most influential factors affecting job satisfaction is job expertise.

Sub Holding Pelindo Multi Terminal Branch Belawan employs 186 operational staff and operates under Pelindo Group, a state-owned enterprise (BUMN) engaged in port management and port-related services in Indonesia. This branch operates in the Belawan area, North Sumatra, with the primary responsibility of providing port services. In practice, several performance-related issues remain, such as employees leaving the office during working hours for personal matters. This phenomenon indicates weaknesses in employee capabilities, as reflected in suboptimal routine reporting and other shortcomings. Some employees are unable to complete tasks within the designated time frame, while others lack mastery of their job descriptions. Therefore, enhancing employee expertise is highly expected to support the achievement of the organization's vision, mission, and objectives more effectively. Both job expertise and job satisfaction have a significant impact on employee performance. Developing employees' competencies can positively contribute to overall organizational performance and facilitate the achievement of predetermined and planned objectives (Sipahutar, 2018).

Based on these observations, this study aims to analyze the influence of job expertise on employee performance, with job satisfaction as an intervening variable, at Sub Holding Pelindo Multi Terminal Branch Belawan. It is expected that the findings of this study will provide valuable insights for formulating strategies to enhance employee performance through the effective development of expertise and job satisfaction.

Literature Review

2.1 Work Performance

Work performance can be understood as the level of achievement of an individual in completing assigned tasks within a specific period, measured based on predetermined standards, targets, or criteria. Performance evaluation, on the other hand, is the process of assessing personal aspects, work behavior, and results achieved by an employee, whether a regular worker or a manager. Such evaluations are considered to have an impact on employee performance and serve as the basis for decision-making in employment-related matters (Cen, 2022).

Employee performance can also be defined as the extent to which an individual is able to meet or even exceed the targets set by the organization with a high degree of effectiveness and efficiency (Cherryryan, 2023).

2.2 Factors Influencing Work Performance

Employee performance refers to the execution of tasks and responsibilities assigned to individuals in accordance with established procedures. Several factors influence employee performance, including:

1. **Organizational Factors:** According to Cherryryan (2023), organizational factors influence performance through the company's structure and internal dynamics, including individual commitment, managerial support, work systems, level of pressure, and environmental changes.
2. **Individual Factors:** These refer to personal characteristics that contribute to performance, such as skills, competencies, motivation, drive, and peer support (Cherryryan, 2023).
3. **Training:** Effective training, including mentoring, plays a crucial role in improving performance by developing the necessary skills and knowledge.
4. **Work Facilities:** Adequate facilities, such as proper equipment and a conducive working environment, support employees in carrying out their tasks efficiently.
5. **Job Stress and Workload:** Septiana and Widjaja (2023) highlight that work stress can negatively affect performance. Excessive workload often increases stress, whereas balanced workload may improve performance.
6. **Work Environment:** A positive work environment, including good coworker relationships and supportive physical conditions, contributes to higher performance.
7. **Compensation:** Fair and competitive compensation enhances employee motivation and performance, while inadequate compensation reduces morale.
8. **Individual Character and Motivation:** Personal traits such as work ethic and integrity, along with intrinsic motivation, play a significant role in performance outcomes.
9. **Leadership:** Effective leadership influences performance by providing clear direction and adequate support for organizational goal achievement.
10. **Organizational Culture:** A strong and positive culture fosters a supportive work environment, thereby improving employee performance.

2.3 Indicators of Work Performance

According to Cherryryan (2023), the indicators of employee performance include

1. Work Quality: Accuracy, neatness, and outputs that meet organizational standards.
2. Work Quantity: The volume of tasks completed within a given timeframe.
3. Timeliness: The speed and efficiency in completing tasks by deadlines.
4. Effectiveness: Optimal utilization of resources to achieve maximum results.
5. Attendance: Consistency and presence in the workplace as scheduled.
6. Teamwork Ability: The capability to collaborate and communicate effectively with colleagues.
7. Responsibility: A sense of ownership of assigned tasks and commitment to completing them properly.

2.4 Work Expertise

According to Basir and Saputri (2023), expertise refers to the ability or talent possessed by individuals that enables them to complete tasks effectively and produce optimal results. Expertise can be acquired through both formal and non-formal education and must be continuously developed. One way to enhance expertise is through fieldwork experience.

Sharma (2023) states that job expertise encompasses various soft skills, which are non-technical skills related to interpersonal and intrapersonal capabilities. These soft skills are essential in the workplace as they support effectiveness and adaptability in professional contexts.

2.5 Factors Influencing Work Expertise

Darmawan (2013) identifies several factors influencing individual expertise, including:

1. Formal Education: Knowledge and basic skills gained through formal institutions such as schools and universities.
2. Training: Training programs designed to improve skills or provide new knowledge relevant to the job.
3. Work Experience: Practical experiences acquired in the workplace that enhance skills and competence in specific fields.

2.6 Indicators of Work Expertise

Sharma (2023), as cited by Deswarta, identifies the following soft-skill indicators of job expertise:

1. Communication Skills: The ability to convey information clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing.
2. Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving: The ability to analyze situations and develop appropriate solutions.
3. Ethics: Adherence to moral principles and professional values.
4. Leadership Skills: The ability to lead, guide, and make effective decisions within a team.
5. Emotional Intelligence: The ability to recognize, manage, and utilize emotions productively in interpersonal interactions.

2.7 Job Satisfaction

According to Putri and Agustin (2024), job satisfaction reflects the psychological state of employees regarding their work. It can be understood as a general attitude arising from the gap between the rewards received and the rewards expected. Employees typically evaluate aspects such as compensation systems, promotion opportunities, career progression, job placement, relationships among colleagues, and organizational policies. Personal factors such as age, health, skills, and educational background also play a role in shaping job satisfaction.

2.8 Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction

Hasibuan (2020) outlines several factors affecting job satisfaction, including:

1. Fair and Adequate Compensation: Rewards aligned with contributions and responsibilities.
2. Proper Job Placement: Assigning employees to positions that match their skills and competencies.
3. Workload: Balanced workloads appropriate to employees' capabilities.
4. Work Environment: A supportive and conflict-free environment enhances satisfaction.
5. Work Facilities: Adequate tools and resources that facilitate task execution.
6. Leadership Attitude: Fair, wise, and supportive leadership fosters employee satisfaction.
7. Job Variety: Challenging and diverse tasks are more fulfilling, while monotonous work reduces satisfaction.

2.9 Indicators of Job Satisfaction

According to Putri and Agustin (2024), job satisfaction can be measured through the following indicators:

1. Job-Person Fit: Alignment between job roles and personal interests or abilities.
2. Compensation Satisfaction: Perceptions of fairness and adequacy of pay relative to workload and colleagues.
3. Supervisor Relations: Constructive guidance and motivation provided by managers.
4. Coworker Relations: Supportive teamwork and solidarity among colleagues.
5. Promotion Opportunities: Career advancement prospects that foster motivation and fulfillment.

Research Methodology

3.1 Type of Research

with job satisfaction serving as an intervening variable, at Sub Holding Pelindo Multi Terminal Branch Belawan. This study employs a quantitative research design. According to Sugiyono (2022), quantitative research is a method based on the philosophy of positivism, which is used to investigate specific populations or samples. Sampling techniques are generally determined using Slovin's formula. Data are collected through research instruments and analyzed quantitatively or statistically, with the main objective of testing the established hypotheses. The purpose of this study is to analyze the effect of job expertise on employee performance Terminal Branch Belawan.

3.2 Research Location and Period

The research was conducted at Sub Holding Pelindo Multi Terminal Branch Belawan, located on Jl. Kapten Raden Sulian, Medan Belawan, Medan City, North Sumatra. The research was carried out over a period of three months, from May to July 2025.

3.3 Population and Sample

According to Sugiyono (2022), a population is a generalization area consisting of objects or subjects with certain characteristics determined by the researcher to be studied and from which conclusions are drawn. The population of this study consisted of 186 operational employees. The sample was determined using Slovin's formula, resulting in 127 respondents.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{186}{1 + 186(0,05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{186}{1,465} = 126,96 \text{ (127)}$$

Results

Table 1. Validity Testing Based on Factor Loadings

	Job Expertise (X2)	Job Satisfaction (Z)	Performance (Y)
X2.1	0.794		
X2.2	0.888		
X2.3	0.875		
X2.4	0.891		
X2.5	0.924		
Y1			0.852
Y2			0.897
Y3			0.857
Y4			0.885
Y5			0.879
Y6			0.823
Y7			0.905
Z1		0.913	
Z2		0.85	
Z3		0.929	
Z4		0.897	
Z5		0.871	

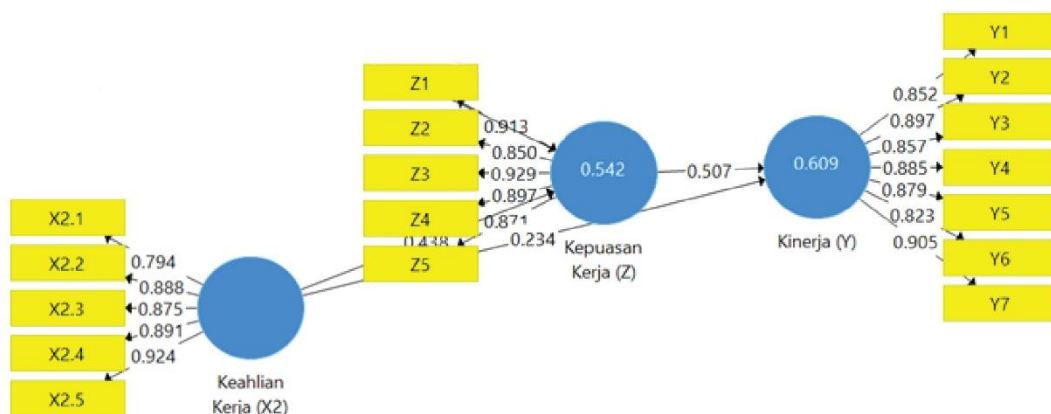


Figure 1. Validity Testing Based on Factor Loadings

Based on the validity testing using factor loadings in Table 1. and Figure 1, it was found that all loading values were greater than 0.70, which indicates that the requirements for validity based on factor loadings were met. Subsequently, validity testing was carried out using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values.

Table 2. Validity Testing Based on Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Job Expertise (X2)	0.766
Job Satisfaction (Z)	0.797
Performance (Y)	0.76

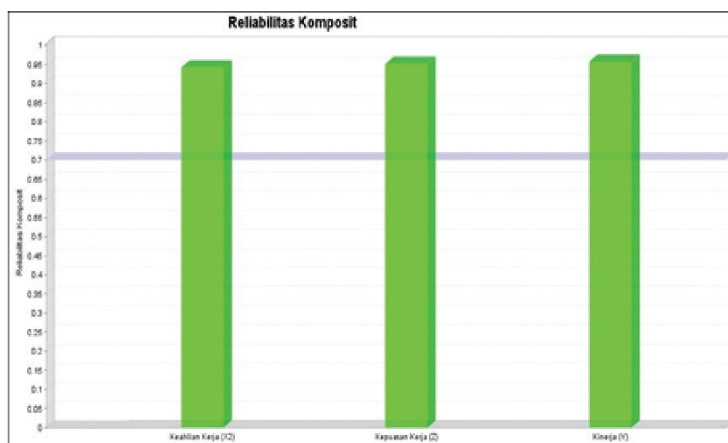


Figure 2. Validity Testing Based on Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

The recommended AVE value is above 0.50 (Mahfud & Ratmono, 2013). The results show that all AVE values are greater than 0.50, indicating that the validity requirements based on AVE have been met. Subsequently, reliability testing was conducted using the Composite Reliability (CR) values.

Table 3. Reliability Testing Based on Composite Reliability (CR)

	Composite Reliability
Job Expertise (X2)	0.942
Job Satisfaction (Z)	0.951
Performance (Y)	0.957

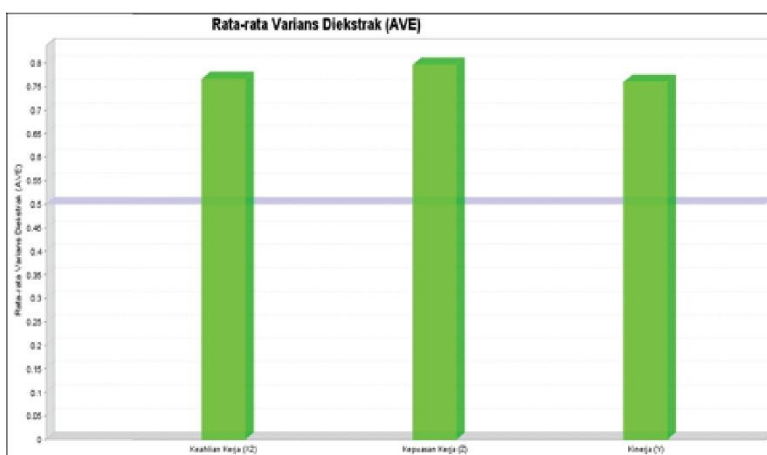


Figure 3. Validity Testing Based on Composite Reliability (CR)

The recommended CR value is above 0.70 (Mahfud & Ratmono, 2013). The results show that all CR values are greater than 0.70, indicating that the reliability requirements based on CR have been met. Subsequently, reliability testing was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha (CA) values.

Table 4. Reliability Testing Based on Cronbach's Alpha (CA)

	Cronb ach's Alpha
Job Expertise (X2)	0.923
Job Satisfaction (Z)	0.936
Performance (Y)	0.947

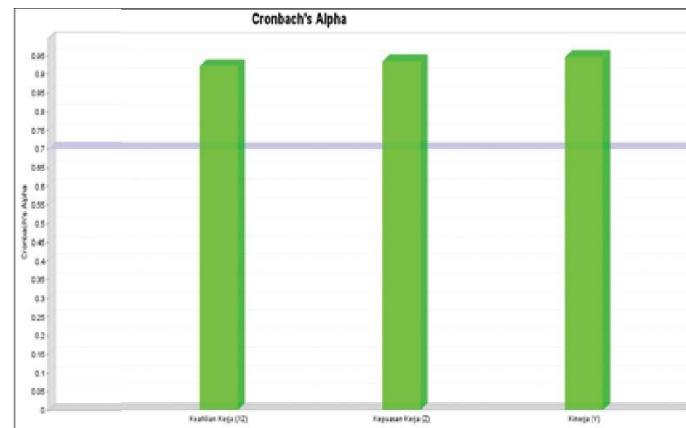


Figure 4. Validity Testing Based on Cronbach's Alpha (CA)

The recommended CA value is above 0.70 (Mahfud & Ratmono, 2013). The results show that all CA values are greater than 0.70, indicating that the reliability requirements based on Cronbach's Alpha have been met. Subsequently, discriminant validity testing was conducted using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. Table 4 presents the results of the discriminant validity testing.

Table 5. Discriminant Validity Testing

	Job Expertise (X2)	Job Satisfaction (Z)	Performance (Y)
Job Expertise (X2)	$\sqrt{AVE_{X2}} = 0.875$		
Job Satisfaction (Z)	0.603	$\sqrt{AVE_Z} = 0.893$	
Performance (Y)	0.598	0.747	$\sqrt{AVE_Y} = 0.872$

In the discriminant validity testing, the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each latent variable is compared with the correlation values between that latent variable and other latent variables. The results indicate that the square root of the AVE for each latent variable is greater than the correlations with other latent variables. Therefore, it can be concluded that the model has satisfied the requirements of discriminant validity.

Table 6. Significance Testing of Effects (Bootstrapping) (Hypothesis Testing) (Inner Model)

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Average (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Job Expertise (X2) -> Job Satisfaction (Z)	0.438	0.441	0.116	3.767	0.000
Job Expertise (X2) -> Performance (Y)	0.456	0.456	0.123	3.717	0.000
Job Satisfaction (Z) -> Performance (Y)	0.507	0.515	0.17	2.982	0.003

Based on the results presented in Table 6, the findings are as follows:

1. Work Expertise (X2) has a positive effect on Job Satisfaction (Z), with a path coefficient (Original Sample) of 0.438 and a p-value = 0.000.
2. Work Expertise (X2) has a positive effect on Employee Performance (Y), with a path coefficient (Original Sample) of 0.456, and the effect is significant with a p-value = 0.000.
3. Job Satisfaction (Z) has a positive effect on Employee Performance (Y), with a path coefficient (Original Sample) of 0.507 and a p-value = 0.003.

Table 7. Effects of Mediation Testing

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Average (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Work Skills (X2) -> Job Satisfaction (Z) -Performance > (Y)	0.222	0.232	0.107	2.076	0.038

Based on the mediation test results presented in Table 7:

1. Employee Performance (Y) significantly mediates the relationship through Job Satisfaction (Z), with a path coefficient (Original Sample) of 0.230, and the effect is significant with a p-value = 0.036.
2. Employee Performance (Y) significantly mediates the relationship between Work Expertise (X2) and Job Satisfaction (Z), with a path coefficient (Original Sample) of 0.222, and the effect is significant with a p-value = 0.038.

Table 8. R-Square & Adjusted R Square

	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Job Satisfaction (Z)	0.542	0.535
Performance (Y)	0.609	0.6

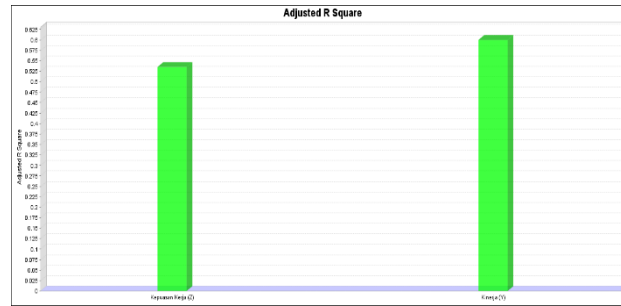


Figure 5. Adjusted R Square

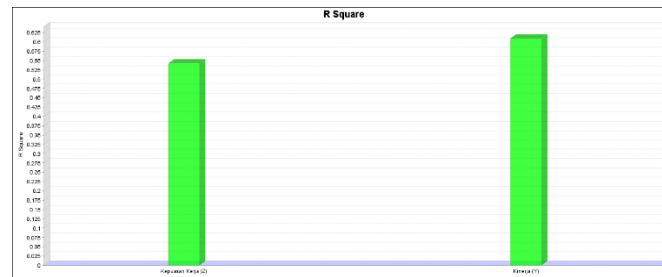


Figure 6. R Square

The R-Square value of Employee Performance (Y) is 0.609, which indicates that Work Expertise (X2) is able to influence Employee Performance (Y) by 60.9%. The R-Square value of Job Satisfaction (Z) is 0.542, which indicates that Work Expertise (X2) is able to influence Job Satisfaction (Z) by 54.2%.

The Adjusted R-Square value for Employee Performance (Y) is 0.600. Since Adjusted R-Square = 0.600 > 0, it can be concluded that Work Expertise (X2) and Job Satisfaction (Z) have predictive relevance for Employee Performance (Y).

The Adjusted R-Square value for Job Satisfaction (Z) is 0.535. Since Adjusted R-Square = 0.535 > 0, it can be concluded that Work Expertise (X2) and Employee Performance (Y) have predictive relevance for Job Satisfaction (Z).

Table 9. Goodness of Fit (GoF) Model Testing

	Estimation Model
SRMR	0.083

It is known that based on the results of the SRMR goodness of fit test, the SRMR value = 0.083 < 0.1, it is concluded that the model has FIT.

4.1 Hypothesis Testing Results

1. The Effect of Job Skills (H1) on Job Performance Hypothesis

H1 proposed in this study states that job skills have a positive and significant effect on job performance at Sub Holding Pelindo Multi Terminal Branch Medan. Based on the results of the analysis, it was found that the variable job skills (X2) has a p-value of 0.00, which indicates that job skills positively affect job performance. This means that an increase in job skills will improve performance, while a decrease in job skills will reduce employee performance. This finding is consistent with the previous study entitled *"The Role of Workload and Job Skills on Employee Performance at PT Agrofarm Nusa Raya Ponorogo"* by Umi Farida and Beti Melinda (2019).

2. The Effect of Job Skills (H2) on Job Satisfaction

Hypothesis H2 proposed in this study states that job skills have a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction at Sub Holding Pelindo Multi Terminal Branch Medan. The analysis results show that the job skills variable (X2) has a p-value of 0.00, which indicates that job skills positively influence job satisfaction. Thus, the increase in job skills will lead to higher job satisfaction, while the decrease in job skills will reduce job satisfaction. This result is supported by the previous study entitled *“The Effect of Motivation, Job Insecurity, and Job Skills on Employee Performance with Job Satisfaction as an Intervening Variable at PT Telkom Akses Gorontalo”* by Wiwin Husin (2021).

3. The Effect of Job Satisfaction (H3) on Job Performance

Hypothesis H3 states that job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on job performance at Sub Holding Pelindo Multi Terminal Branch Medan. Based on the analysis, it was found that the variable job satisfaction (Z) has a p-value of 0.003, indicating a significant positive effect of job satisfaction on job performance. This finding is in line with the previous study entitled *“The Effect of Competence, Job Satisfaction, and Work Discipline on the Performance of Employees at the Regional Financial, Revenue, and Asset Management Agency of Nias Barat Regency”* by Kirimani Manao (2020).

4. The Effect of Job Skills on Job Performance through Job Satisfaction (H4)

Hypothesis H4 proposed in this study states that job skills have a positive and significant effect on job performance through job satisfaction as a mediating variable at Sub Holding Pelindo Multi Terminal Branch Medan. The analysis shows that the job skills variable (X2) has a p-value of 0.038, which indicates that job skills positively influence job performance through job satisfaction. In other words, job satisfaction significantly mediates the effect of job skills on employee performance. This result is reinforced by the previous study entitled *“The Effect of Work Discipline and Work Motivation on Employee Performance with Job Satisfaction as an Intervening Variable at BRI Manukan Surabaya Branch Office”* by Rafika Rachmaniah (2022).

Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion in this study, it can be concluded that:

1. Work Skills (X2) have a positive effect on Job Satisfaction (Z), with a path coefficient value (Original Sample) of 0.438 and a P-Value = 0.00.
2. Work Skills (X2) have a positive and significant effect on Performance (Y), with a path coefficient value (Original Sample) of 0.456 and a P-Value = 0.00.
3. Job Satisfaction (Z) has a positive effect on Performance (Y), with a path coefficient value (Original Sample) of 0.507 and a P-Value = 0.003.
4. Job Satisfaction (Z) significantly mediates the relationship with Performance (Y), with a path coefficient value (Original Sample) of 0.23 and a P-Value = 0.036.
5. Performance (Y) is significantly mediated by Job Satisfaction (Z) in the relationship between Work Skills (X2) and Performance, with a path coefficient value (Original Sample) of 0.222 and a P-Value = 0.038.

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