

REWARD AND PUNISHMENT EFFECTS ON WORK MOTIVATION: JOB SATISFACTION AS MEDIATOR AMONG BANK MANDIRI PRODUCTIVE GENERALIST SALES EMPLOYEES

Muhammad Aisyar Mata¹, Syamsul Ridjal², Salma Abdullah³, Yana Fajriah⁴

¹⁻⁴) Master of Management, Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Makassar, Makassar, Indonesia

E-mail: ¹ aisyarmata2508@gmail.com, ² syamsul.ridjal@stiem-bongaya.ac.id,

³ salma.abdullah@stiem-bongaya.ac.id, ⁴ yana.fajriah@stiem-bongaya.ac.id

Submitted:

14 Sept 2026

Revised:

28 Sept 2026

Accepted:

02 Oct 2026

Abstract

This study examines the effects of reward and punishment on work motivation and the mediating role of job satisfaction among productive generalist sales employees of PT Bank Mandiri (Persero) Tbk, Gowa Pallangga Cluster. A quantitative causal design was applied to the entire population of 35 active sales employees using saturated sampling. Data were collected with a five-point Likert questionnaire and analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS 4 with 10,000 bootstrap subsamples. The measurement model satisfied convergent validity, discriminant validity, and internal consistency criteria. Reward did not significantly affect work motivation ($\beta = 0.202$, $p = 0.284$), and punishment did not significantly affect work motivation ($\beta = 0.092$, $p = 0.552$). Reward positively affected job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.400$, $p = 0.013$), whereas punishment did not ($\beta = 0.140$, $p = 0.486$). Job satisfaction positively affected work motivation ($\beta = 0.517$, $p = 0.002$). Neither indirect effect through job satisfaction was significant. The findings indicate that job satisfaction is a more immediate driver of work motivation than reward or punishment in this sales context.

Keywords: Job satisfaction; Punishment; Reward; Sales employees; Work motivation

1. INTRODUCTION

Work motivation is a central concern in target-intensive sales environments because employees are required to sustain effort, persistence, and goal-directed behavior under continuous performance pressure. In such settings, motivation concerns not merely willingness to work but the ability to maintain consistent energy and commitment while facing demanding targets and repeated evaluations. Contemporary self-determination research emphasizes that motivation is shaped not only by external incentives but also by the meaning employees attach to those incentives and by whether work supports autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Employees may therefore respond differently to the same incentive system depending on whether they perceive it as supportive or controlling. In sales settings, performance incentives may stimulate effort under certain conditions but can also generate heterogeneous responses when employees interpret

incentives primarily as instruments of control (Kuvaas et al., 2016). This issue is particularly relevant for banking sales employees whose work is closely linked to measurable targets and performance evaluation.

Reward and punishment are two organizational mechanisms commonly used to influence employee behavior. Reward refers to financial and nonfinancial recognition provided in response to achievement or contribution, including bonuses, incentives, recognition, and promotion opportunities. Punishment, in contrast, functions as a corrective consequence for noncompliance with organizational rules or failure to meet established standards. In principle, reward encourages employees to repeat successful behavior, whereas punishment discourages actions inconsistent with organizational expectations. However, their effectiveness is not necessarily uniform across employees or work contexts. Recent Indonesian evidence remains mixed. Kurnia et al. (2022) reported positive effects of reward and punishment on work motivation. In contrast, Amalia et al. (2023), in a banking context, found that reward did not significantly affect work discipline or employee performance, whereas punishment demonstrated stronger effects. These differences suggest that the motivational consequences of reward and punishment are contextual rather than automatic.

One explanation for these mixed findings is that employees evaluate whether organizational consequences are fair, transparent, and relevant to their work. A reward may not improve motivation when employees perceive unclear criteria, inequitable distribution, or a mismatch between effort and recognition. Similarly, punishment may not strengthen motivation when it is viewed as excessive, inconsistent, or unrelated to actual performance.

Job satisfaction provides a plausible psychological mechanism for explaining these relationships. It reflects an employee's evaluative and affective response to work and remains one of the most established job attitudes in organizational research (Judge et al., 2017). Employees who are satisfied with their jobs tend to evaluate compensation, supervision, co-workers, advancement opportunities, and organizational policies more positively. Such evaluations may encourage enthusiasm, persistence, and willingness to contribute toward organizational goals. Conversely, dissatisfaction may weaken effort even when formal incentives are available. Perceptions of fairness are especially important because employees assess whether organizational outcomes and procedures are equitable. Yalcin and Yalcin (2022) found a substantial positive relationship between organizational justice and job satisfaction, indicating that fair treatment is strongly associated with favorable employee attitudes.

Accordingly, rewards that are transparent, proportionate, and meaningful may first strengthen job satisfaction before influencing work motivation. Employees who perceive rewards as fair recognition of their contribution are more likely to feel valued by the organization. This perception can enhance satisfaction and strengthen motivation to achieve future targets. Punishment may operate differently. When corrective actions are applied consistently, proportionately, and with clear justification, employees may accept them as

legitimate performance management. However, when punishment is perceived as unfair or overly controlling, it may fail to generate positive attitudes and can reduce satisfaction.

Recent empirical studies reinforce this mechanism. Alkandi et al. (2023) found that incentives and rewards had an insignificant direct effect on employee performance but significantly influenced job satisfaction, which subsequently carried an indirect effect. In commercial banking, Pham et al. (2024) showed that several reward dimensions influenced talented employee performance through job satisfaction, underscoring the importance of satisfaction in financial-service settings. Rahadi et al. (2024) similarly reported that fair rewards had a positive effect on job satisfaction, whereas punishment did not demonstrate a significant direct effect on satisfaction. Together, these studies indicate that reward and punishment may operate through different psychological routes and that job satisfaction can be an important explanatory mechanism. However, the strength of mediation may depend on work setting, employee characteristics, incentive design, and the outcome examined.

The present study focuses on Productive Generalist Sales employees of PT Bank Mandiri (Persero) Tbk, Gowa Pallangga Cluster. Internal booking data show pronounced monthly fluctuation in blended credit booking. Total booking reached 12,134 in December 2025, increased to 25,124 in January 2026 and 25,641 in February, before declining to 20,932 in March and 18,511 in April, followed by an increase to 20,046 in May. The March figure represented an 18.36% decline from February. These fluctuations occurred even though reward and punishment mechanisms were linked to target achievement, operational authority, employee grade, and incentive multipliers. The inconsistency suggests that formal performance consequences alone may not be sufficient to sustain stable work motivation.

This empirical pattern creates an important research problem. Reward is expected to encourage employees to pursue and exceed targets, while punishment is expected to strengthen discipline and accountability. Yet fluctuating performance indicates that employees may respond differently to these mechanisms. It is therefore necessary to examine whether job satisfaction helps explain why reward or punishment does, or does not, translate into stronger work motivation.

This study analyzes the direct effects of reward and punishment on work motivation, their effects on job satisfaction, the effect of job satisfaction on work motivation, and the indirect effects of reward and punishment on work motivation through job satisfaction. It contributes evidence from a high-target banking sales context and tests whether job satisfaction functions as the expected intervening mechanism. Seven hypotheses are examined: H1 reward affects work motivation; H2 punishment affects work motivation; H3 reward affects job satisfaction; H4 punishment affects job satisfaction; H5 job satisfaction affects work motivation; H6 job satisfaction mediates the effect of reward on work motivation; and H7 job satisfaction mediates the effect of punishment on work motivation.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research used a quantitative causal survey design. The population comprised all 35 active Productive Generalist Sales employees of PT Bank Mandiri (Persero) Tbk, Gowa Pallangga Cluster. Because the population was limited and fully accessible, saturated sampling was applied, so all 35 employees were included as respondents. Data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire with five response categories ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), supplemented by organizational documentation used to describe the research context.

Four reflective constructs were examined. Reward was represented by 10 items covering pay, benefits, incentives, interpersonal recognition, and promotion. Punishment was represented by 10 items reflecting error prevention, escalation for repeated violations, explanation of sanctions, immediacy, and corrective enforcement. Job satisfaction was measured by 10 items covering the work itself, pay, promotion opportunities, supervision, and coworkers. Work motivation was measured by 10 items representing physiological, security, social, esteem, and self-actualization needs. These operational indicators follow the measurement specification used in the study and were retained consistently throughout the empirical analysis.

Data were analyzed with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 4. PLS-SEM is appropriate for simultaneously estimating measurement and structural relationships, including mediation, and is commonly applied when the research emphasizes explanation and prediction with relatively small samples (Hair et al., 2019; Hair et al., 2022). Reflective measurement quality was assessed through indicator loadings, Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT), and collinearity diagnostics. In line with contemporary PLS-SEM guidance, reliability values above 0.70 and AVE above 0.50 were treated as satisfactory, while discriminant validity and VIF diagnostics were evaluated alongside the loading pattern (Hair et al., 2020; Hair et al., 2022).

The structural model was assessed using R-squared, effect size (f-squared), and Q-squared_predict. Predictive assessment was included because PLS-SEM should not rely exclusively on in-sample explanatory measures (Shmueli et al., 2019). Hypotheses were tested using a two-tailed bootstrap procedure with 10,000 subsamples and a 5% significance level; paths were considered statistically significant at $t > 1.96$ and $p < 0.05$. Bootstrapping is the standard inferential procedure for PLS-SEM direct and indirect effects because it does not require normality of the sampling distribution (Streukens & Leroi-Werelds, 2016).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Respondent Profile and Descriptive Results

The respondent profile indicates a workforce dominated by men, employees aged 25-35 years, bachelor's degree holders, and personnel with more than five years of tenure. This

profile is relevant because a relatively experienced sales workforce may have well-established expectations regarding incentives, sanctions, promotion, and supervisory practices.

Table 1 Respondent Characteristics

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	29	82.86
	Female	6	17.14
Age	< 25 years	2	5.71
	25-35 years	24	68.57
	> 35 years	9	25.71
Education	Junior high school	1	2.86
	Diploma	3	8.57
	Bachelor	31	88.57
Tenure	< 1 year	1	2.86
	1-3 years	14	40.00
	3-5 years	3	8.57
	> 5 years	17	48.57

Source: Primary data processed by the author, 2026.

The mean scores were 3.88 for Reward, 4.30 for Punishment, 3.97 for Job Satisfaction, and 4.10 for Work Motivation. Thus, respondents generally perceived all four constructs positively, with punishment receiving the highest average score. However, a high descriptive mean does not imply a statistically significant structural effect; significance depends on whether between-respondent variation in one construct systematically corresponds with variation in another construct.

3.2 Measurement and Structural Model Evaluation

All reflective constructs met the measurement criteria. Indicator loadings ranged from 0.773-0.836 for Reward, 0.733-0.857 for Punishment, 0.782-0.847 for Job Satisfaction, and 0.765-0.821 for Work Motivation. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were above 0.70 and all AVE values exceeded 0.50. The highest HTMT value was 0.650, and indicator VIF values ranged from 2.261 to 3.106, indicating no critical measurement-level collinearity. These results support the reliability and convergent and discriminant validity of the measurement model.

Table 2 Reflective Measurement Model

Construct	Loading range	Alpha	rho_A	CR	AVE
Reward	0.773-0.836	0.939	0.951	0.948	0.645
Punishment	0.733-0.857	0.940	0.972	0.948	0.645
Job Satisfaction	0.782-0.847	0.939	0.943	0.948	0.644
Work Motivation	0.765-0.821	0.936	0.945	0.945	0.632

CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted. Source: SmartPLS 4 output, 2026.

For the structural model, inner VIF values ranged from 1.201 to 1.408, so predictor collinearity was not problematic. Reward and Punishment explained 22.6% of the variance in Job Satisfaction (R-squared = 0.226), while Reward, Punishment, and Job Satisfaction explained 45.6% of the variance in Work Motivation (R-squared = 0.456). The Q-squared_predict values for both endogenous constructs were positive, indicating predictive relevance beyond a simple mean benchmark at the construct level.

Table 3 Explanatory and Predictive Power of the Structural Model

Endogenous construct	R-squared	Adj. R-squared	Q2_predict	Interpretation
Job Satisfaction	0.226	0.178	0.076	Relatively weak; predictive relevance
Work Motivation	0.456	0.404	0.110	Moderate; predictive relevance

Source: SmartPLS 4 output, 2026.

3.3 Hypothesis Testing

Bootstrapping results indicate that only two of the seven proposed hypotheses were supported at the 5% significance level, namely H3 and H5. The findings show that Reward has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction, indicating that employees who perceive the reward system more favorably tend to experience higher levels of satisfaction with their jobs. This result suggests that rewards may function more effectively as an antecedent of positive job attitudes than as a direct driver of work motivation. In addition, Job Satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on Work Motivation. Employees who are more satisfied with their work are therefore more likely to demonstrate stronger motivation in carrying out their responsibilities and pursuing organizational targets.

In contrast, Reward does not have a statistically significant direct effect on Work Motivation, indicating that the presence of rewards alone may not be sufficient to strengthen employees' motivational levels. Punishment also does not significantly affect Work Motivation, suggesting that corrective or disciplinary consequences do not automatically translate into greater motivation. Furthermore, Punishment does not significantly influence

Job Satisfaction, implying that differences in employees' perceptions of punishment are not consistently associated with differences in their level of satisfaction.

The mediation analysis also shows that neither indirect effect reaches statistical significance. Job Satisfaction does not significantly mediate the relationship between Reward and Work Motivation, nor does it mediate the relationship between Punishment and Work Motivation. Overall, the results emphasize the stronger role of Job Satisfaction as a direct predictor of Work Motivation compared with Reward and Punishment.

Table 4 Direct and Indirect Effects

H	Path	Beta	t	p	Decision
H1	Reward -> Work Motivation	0.202	1.071	0.284	Rejected
H2	Punishment -> Work Motivation	0.092	0.595	0.552	Rejected
H3	Reward -> Job Satisfaction	0.400	2.491	0.013	Accepted
H4	Punishment -> Job Satisfaction	0.140	0.697	0.486	Rejected
H5	Job Satisfaction -> Work Motivation	0.517	3.109	0.002	Accepted
H6	Reward -> Job Satisfaction -> Work Motivation	0.207	1.746	0.081	Rejected
H7	Punishment -> Job Satisfaction -> Work Motivation	0.073	0.639	0.523	Rejected

Source: Two-tailed test, 10,000 bootstrap subsamples, alpha = 0.05. Source: SmartPLS 4 output, 2026.

Discussion

First, Reward had a positive but nonsignificant direct effect on Work Motivation ($\beta = 0.202$, $p = 0.284$), leading to the rejection of H1. Although the direction of the relationship was positive, the effect was not sufficiently strong to demonstrate that higher perceptions of reward consistently translated into stronger work motivation among Productive Generalist Sales employees of PT Bank Mandiri (Persero) Tbk, Gowa Pallangga Cluster. This finding differs from Kurnia et al. (2022), who reported that reward had a significant positive relationship with work motivation. The difference suggests that the motivational impact of reward is highly dependent on organizational context, employee expectations, and the way reward mechanisms are embedded in daily work practices. In a target-oriented sales environment, rewards such as incentives, bonuses, recognition, and performance-related benefits may already be perceived as expected components of the employment relationship rather than additional motivational stimuli. When rewards become institutionalized and predictable, their capacity to generate incremental motivational effects may decrease.

This interpretation is consistent with Kuvaas et al. (2016), who showed that sales incentives and pay-for-performance arrangements do not necessarily affect all employees in the same way. Incentive systems can support motivation when they are perceived as recognition of competence and achievement, but they may also be experienced as controlling

mechanisms when rewards are closely tied to demanding performance targets. In such circumstances, employees may work toward incentives without necessarily experiencing stronger underlying motivation. The present result therefore indicates that reward cannot be assumed to directly create sustained motivation merely because it is available or financially attractive. For experienced banking sales employees, the motivational meaning of reward may depend more on fairness, transparency, attainability, and recognition than on the existence of the reward itself. This finding is particularly relevant in high-pressure sales settings in which performance incentives are a routine part of organizational control.

Second, Punishment also had a positive but nonsignificant effect on Work Motivation ($\beta = 0.092$, $p = 0.552$), resulting in the rejection of H2. The coefficient was very small, indicating that variation in employees' perceptions of punishment was only weakly associated with variation in their work motivation. This differs from Kurnia et al. (2022), who found that punishment significantly predicted employee motivation. In the present study, Punishment recorded the highest descriptive mean of 4.30, suggesting that respondents generally recognized the existence, clarity, or implementation of disciplinary consequences. However, the structural effect remained very small, with an f^2 value of 0.013. This combination is important because it indicates that a highly visible or consistently applied punishment system does not necessarily function as a strong motivational mechanism.

One plausible explanation is that punishment primarily serves a regulatory and compliance function. In banking sales operations, sanctions may be viewed as part of normal performance governance, particularly when they relate to target achievement, procedural compliance, or operational authority. If punishment is applied relatively consistently across employees, it may reduce undesirable behavior without creating meaningful differences in positive work motivation. This interpretation is compatible with Ryan and Deci (2020), who emphasize that controlling external contingencies do not automatically strengthen autonomous motivation. Employees may comply with expectations to avoid negative consequences, but compliance is conceptually different from genuine motivation. Thus, punishment may encourage employees to meet minimum standards or avoid errors without necessarily increasing enthusiasm, persistence, or internal commitment to organizational goals.

Third, Reward had a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.400$, $p = 0.013$), supporting H3. This result is one of the central findings of the study because it suggests that reward is more strongly related to how employees evaluate their work experience than to their motivation directly. Employees who perceived the reward system more positively also tended to report higher job satisfaction. The finding is consistent with Alkandi et al. (2023), who found that incentives and rewards were significantly associated with job satisfaction even when their direct influence on employee performance was insignificant. It also aligns with Pham et al. (2024), whose evidence from commercial

banking indicates that reward-related practices can improve employee outcomes through job satisfaction.

The result may be understood through employees' perceptions of organizational fairness and recognition. Rewards communicate how the organization values employee contribution. When employees believe that incentives, recognition, and promotion opportunities are distributed according to clear and reasonable criteria, they are more likely to evaluate their employment experience positively. This interpretation is consistent with Yalcin and Yalcin (2022), whose meta-analytic evidence indicates a substantial positive relationship between organizational justice and job satisfaction. Therefore, the motivational value of reward may not depend only on financial magnitude. Its psychological value can also arise from the message conveyed by the reward: that employee effort is noticed, valued, and compensated fairly.

In the context of Productive Generalist Sales employees, this result implies that reward practices should be examined not simply as financial transactions but as components of the broader employment experience. A bonus that is objectively large may still fail to strengthen satisfaction if employees regard its allocation as unclear, inconsistent, or unattainable. Conversely, transparent recognition, appropriate incentives, and credible promotion opportunities can strengthen satisfaction by reinforcing employees' perceptions that the organization values their contribution. The significant H3 result therefore points to reward as a meaningful antecedent of job satisfaction, even though its direct effect on work motivation was not significant.

Fourth, Punishment did not significantly affect Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.140$, $p = 0.486$), resulting in the rejection of H4. Although the coefficient was positive, the relationship was statistically weak. This finding is consistent with Rahadi et al. (2024), who similarly reported that punishment did not significantly influence job satisfaction, whereas fair reward showed a positive effect. The present result suggests that differences in employees' perceptions of punishment were not associated with systematic differences in their level of job satisfaction.

This may indicate that sanctions in the Gowa Pallangga Cluster are perceived as a routine component of performance management rather than as a major determinant of how employees evaluate their jobs. Employees working in a highly regulated and target-based environment may already expect corrective consequences when performance or procedural standards are not met. Consequently, punishment may be accepted as part of the organizational system without substantially improving or reducing overall satisfaction. However, this nonsignificant result should not be interpreted to mean that punishment is unimportant or that organizations can apply sanctions arbitrarily. Yalcin and Yalcin (2022) emphasize the importance of fairness in shaping job attitudes. Therefore, punishment still needs to be administered objectively, proportionately, consistently, and with adequate

explanation. Unfair sanctions may have consequences not fully captured by the direct statistical relationship examined in this study.

Fifth, Job Satisfaction had the strongest direct effect on Work Motivation ($\beta = 0.517$, $p = 0.002$), supporting H5. Its f^2 value of 0.381 also indicates a large effect relative to the other predictors included in the model. This finding positions Job Satisfaction as the most important explanatory variable for Work Motivation in the present study. It supports the long-established role of job satisfaction as a central employee attitude in organizational research (Judge et al., 2017) and is also consistent with contemporary motivation theory, which emphasizes that supportive work conditions facilitate sustained motivation and internalization (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

For banking sales employees, job satisfaction may represent a broad evaluation of several work-related conditions, including compensation, supervisory support, coworker relationships, promotion opportunities, recognition, and the work itself. These conditions can become particularly important in a target-intensive environment. Employees who experience high satisfaction may be more willing to maintain effort, cope with performance pressure, pursue targets, and continue performing demanding sales activities over time. In contrast, employees who are dissatisfied may find it more difficult to sustain motivation even when formal reward and punishment systems are present.

The large effect of Job Satisfaction also helps explain why Reward and Punishment were not significant direct predictors of Work Motivation. Motivation may be influenced less by isolated administrative mechanisms and more by employees' overall experience of the work environment. In other words, employees may not respond to reward or punishment in isolation. Instead, they evaluate these mechanisms as part of a larger set of organizational experiences. This finding implies that management should treat job satisfaction as a substantive managerial objective rather than merely an employee attitude that follows automatically from incentive policies.

Sixth, Job Satisfaction did not significantly mediate the effect of Reward on Work Motivation, with an indirect coefficient of $\beta = 0.207$ and $p = 0.081$. Therefore, H6 was rejected. This finding is particularly noteworthy because the individual component paths were directionally supportive. Reward significantly influenced Job Satisfaction, and Job Satisfaction significantly influenced Work Motivation. Nevertheless, the combined indirect effect did not reach the conventional 5% level of statistical significance.

This result differs from Alkandi et al. (2023) and Pham et al. (2024), where job satisfaction served as an important transmission mechanism between reward-related practices and employee outcomes. Several contextual considerations may explain the discrepancy. First, the present study examined Work Motivation as the final outcome, whereas previous studies may have focused on performance or other organizational outcomes. The relationship between satisfaction and motivation may operate differently from the relationship between satisfaction and observable performance. Second, the study

involved a relatively small census population of 35 employees, which may limit statistical power for detecting indirect effects. Third, rewards in the present banking sales context may be highly institutionalized, meaning that employees perceive them as standard elements of the job rather than distinctive organizational resources capable of generating a strong mediation process.

The p-value of 0.081 also deserves careful interpretation. Although it exceeds the 0.05 threshold and therefore does not support mediation statistically, the direction of the indirect effect remains positive. This suggests that the proposed mechanism is not entirely inconsistent with the data, but the evidence is insufficient to establish it conclusively in this sample. Therefore, it would be inappropriate to claim that Job Satisfaction mediates the Reward–Work Motivation relationship based on the present results. Future research with larger samples may provide a more precise estimate of this indirect pathway.

Seventh, Job Satisfaction did not mediate the effect of Punishment on Work Motivation (indirect $\beta = 0.073$, $p = 0.523$), leading to the rejection of H7. This result is consistent with the nonsignificant Punishment–Job Satisfaction relationship. Because punishment was only weakly related to satisfaction, there was little empirical basis for satisfaction to function as a meaningful transmission mechanism. In practical terms, employees' perceptions of disciplinary consequences did not appear to substantially shape their satisfaction, and therefore punishment did not influence motivation through this route.

Taken together, the rejection of H6 and H7 provides an important conceptual clarification. Job Satisfaction was highly important as a direct predictor of Work Motivation, but it was not established as an intervening mechanism linking Reward and Punishment to Work Motivation. This distinction is theoretically important because a variable can be strongly associated with an outcome without mediating the effect of other predictors. In this case, satisfaction appears to operate as an independent motivational condition rather than as the psychological channel through which reward and punishment exert their influence.

From a managerial perspective, the findings suggest that the Gowa Pallangga Cluster should not rely exclusively on Reward and Punishment to sustain employee motivation. Reward remains important because of its significant contribution to Job Satisfaction, but management should focus on the perceived quality of the reward system, including fairness, transparency, recognition, and accessibility. The descriptive findings strengthen this recommendation. The lowest reward item was related to promotion-based reward, with a mean of 3.57, while the lowest Job Satisfaction item concerned promotion opportunities, with a mean of 3.54. These parallel results suggest that career advancement is an area requiring particular managerial attention.

Management should therefore consider whether employees perceive promotion criteria as understandable, achievable, and consistently applied. Clearer career pathways, more transparent advancement criteria, stronger recognition of performance, and developmental

opportunities may improve satisfaction more effectively than simply increasing short-term incentives. Supervisory support and communication should also be strengthened because employees' broader work experience appears to be more consequential for motivation than formal sanctions alone.

Punishment, meanwhile, should remain a corrective and governance mechanism rather than being treated as a primary motivational tool. Sanctions should be based on transparent standards, supported by clear explanations, and applied proportionately. A punishment system that is predictable and fair may support discipline without undermining employee attitudes, but the present findings provide little evidence that stronger punishment will produce stronger motivation.

Finally, the model explains 45.6% of the variance in Work Motivation, leaving 54.4% unexplained. This substantial remaining proportion indicates that other determinants should be considered in future managerial evaluation and research. Potential factors include leadership support, target pressure, career development, work environment, job security, coworker relationships, and the balance between job demands and compensation. The overall findings therefore suggest that sustained motivation among banking sales employees is more likely to emerge from a broader system of supportive work conditions than from reward and punishment mechanisms considered in isolation.

4. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that reward and punishment do not directly produce significant differences in work motivation among Productive Generalist Sales employees of PT Bank Mandiri (Persero) Tbk, Gowa Pallangga Cluster. Reward significantly improves job satisfaction, whereas punishment does not significantly affect job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is the strongest direct predictor of work motivation, but it does not significantly mediate either the reward-work motivation or punishment-work motivation relationship at the 5% level. These findings imply that management should treat job satisfaction as a primary managerial lever, particularly through fair and transparent rewards, meaningful recognition, promotion opportunities, supportive supervision, and a constructive work environment, while using punishment consistently and proportionally as a corrective mechanism. The study is limited by its single-cluster setting, small census sample of 35 respondents, cross-sectional self-report design, and the exclusion of other potential antecedents of motivation. Future research should test broader multi-cluster samples and incorporate leadership, target pressure, career development, work environment, and perceived organizational justice to improve explanatory and predictive coverage.

REFERENCES

- Alkandi, I. G., Khan, M. A., Fallatah, M., Alabdulhadi, A., Alanizan, S., & Alharbi, J. (2023). The impact of incentive and reward systems on employee performance in the Saudi primary, secondary, and tertiary industrial sectors: A mediating influence of employee job satisfaction. *Sustainability*, 15(4), 3415. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15043415>
- Amalia, A. R. A., Maupa, H., & Jusni. (2023). The effect of reward and punishment on employee performance with work discipline as intervening variable at PT BPRS Niaga Madani. *Economics and Business Journal (ECBIS)*, 1(5), 661-672. <https://doi.org/10.47353/ecbis.v1i5.78>
- Hair, J. F., Howard, M. C., & Nitzl, C. (2020). Assessing measurement model quality in PLS-SEM using confirmatory composite analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 109, 101-110. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.11.069>
- Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2022). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)* (3rd ed.). SAGE.
- Hair, J. F., Risher, J. J., Sarstedt, M., & Ringle, C. M. (2019). When to use and how to report the results of PLS-SEM. *European Business Review*, 31(1), 2-24. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EBR-11-2018-0203>
- Judge, T. A., Weiss, H. M., Kammeyer-Mueller, J. D., & Hulin, C. L. (2017). Job attitudes, job satisfaction, and job affect: A century of continuity and of change. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 102(3), 356-374. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000181>
- Kurnia, N. N., Husnaiti, R., & Tristiarto, Y. (2022). Pengaruh reward dan punishment terhadap motivasi kerja karyawan pada PT Deraya. *Jurnal Sosial dan Sains*, 2(5), 596-605. <https://doi.org/10.59188/jurnalsosains.v2i5.394>
- Kuvaas, B., Buch, R., Gagné, M., Dysvik, A., & Forest, J. (2016). Do you get what you pay for? Sales incentives and implications for motivation and changes in turnover intention and work effort. *Motivation and Emotion*, 40, 667-680. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-016-9574-6>
- Pham, H. M., Le, T. T. H., Dang, L. H., & Nguyen, L. T. (2024). The impact of reward system on talented employees' performance in Vietnamese commercial banks: Mediating role of job satisfaction. *Journal of Financial Services Marketing*, 29(3), 1099-1114. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41264-023-00261-5>
- Rahadi, D. R., Prastiani, E. D., Fajri, F. M., & Alfinandita, I. M. Z. (2024). The effect of compensation and rewards on job satisfaction through punishment as an intervening variable. *EKOMABIS: Jurnal Ekonomi Manajemen Bisnis*, 5(1), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.37366/ekomabis.v5i01.1070>
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2020). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation from a self-determination theory perspective: Definitions, theory, practices, and future

- directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 61, 101860. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2020.101860>
- Shmueli, G., Sarstedt, M., Hair, J. F., Cheah, J.-H., Ting, H., Vaithilingam, S., & Ringle, C. M. (2019). Predictive model assessment in PLS-SEM: Guidelines for using PLSpredict. *European Journal of Marketing*, 53(11), 2322-2347. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-02-2019-0189>
- Streukens, S., & Leroi-Werelds, S. (2016). Bootstrapping and PLS-SEM: A step-by-step guide to get more out of your bootstrap results. *European Management Journal*, 34(6), 618-632. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2016.06.003>
- Yalçın, H., & Yalçın, Y. (2022). A meta analysis of the relationship between organizational justice and job satisfaction: The case of Turkey. *Istanbul Business Research*, 51(2), 417-432. <https://doi.org/10.26650/ibr.2022.51.894298>