



Empowering Civil Servants: Exploring How Job Satisfaction, Recognition, Career Development, and Work Environment Influence Motivation

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Abstract. This study explores the factors influencing work motivation among civil servants (PNS) in Makassar, specifically focusing on job satisfaction, recognition and reward, career development, and work environment. The research findings show that all four factors significantly contribute to enhancing work motivation. Statistical analysis revealed that job satisfaction had a positive effect on work motivation ($\beta = 0.556$, $p = 0.000$), recognition and reward also showed a significant effect ($\beta = 0.264$, $p = 0.000$), career development had a strong positive impact ($\beta = 0.443$, $p = 0.000$), and work environment similarly had a positive effect on work motivation ($\beta = 0.424$, $p = 0.000$). These results emphasize the critical role of fostering a supportive work environment and providing career development opportunities to enhance the motivation of civil servants. This study contributes to the existing literature by offering valuable insights into the factors that drive work motivation in the public sector and provides practical recommendations for improving public service delivery.

Keywords: Work Motivation, Civil Servants, Job Satisfaction, Recognition and Reward, Career Development, Work Environment, Public Sector.

1 Introduction

The performance of civil servants (CS) is a crucial factor in achieving government objectives and ensuring efficient public service delivery [1, 2, 3]. As an integral part of the government structure, civil servants are not only responsible for administrative tasks but also for implementing policies designed to improve societal welfare. [1, 2, 4] Given their substantial role in maintaining national stability and providing services in a timely and high-quality manner, the performance of civil servants serves as a key indicator of government success. Therefore, it is essential to explore the factors that influence motivation because improving motivation directly enhances public service quality and overall government performance.

Despite their relatively higher job stability compared to the private sector, civil servants face significant challenges related to work motivation [2, 3, 6]. Low motivation can have a direct negative impact on productivity, service quality, and organizational achievement. Consequently, understanding the factors that influence civil servants' motivation is vital, particularly at the local government level. This understanding can help to develop strategies to improve public service delivery and

performance. Previous studies have shown that several factors influence work motivation in organizations, including job satisfaction, recognition and rewards, career development, and the work environment. These factors significantly affect motivation and performance in both public and private sectors. However, there is limited research specifically addressing how these factors affect the work motivation of civil servants, especially in local government contexts such as Makassar.

Job satisfaction is one of the most critical factors that motivates civil servants to perform well. Civil servants who are satisfied with their jobs whether they are in the tasks they perform, relationships with colleagues and superiors, or available resources are more likely to demonstrate higher performance levels [3, 4, 7]. However, dissatisfaction with certain aspects of the job can lead to demotivation, decreased productivity, and lower service quality. Therefore, job satisfaction is a key element that requires serious attention to enhance civil servants' motivation.

Recognition and rewards for good performance also play important roles in fostering motivation. An effective reward system, both financial and non-financial, can increase civil servants' sense of value and drive them to achieve better results [3, 4, 8]. Recognition by superiors or institutions can reinforce commitment and inspire civil servants to perform at higher levels. Conversely, lack of recognition or an unfair reward system may lead to frustration and decreased enthusiasm for work.

Career development is also a significant factor for improving motivation. Civil servants who have opportunities for personal and professional development through training, education, or promotions are more likely to remain motivated and engaged in their work [3, 4, 9]. A clear career path provides a sense of security and hope, encouraging civil servants to work harder and to improve service quality. However, the absence of career development opportunities may lead to stagnation, resulting in lower motivation and performance.

In addition, a supportive work environment plays a substantial role in shaping motivation. A positive work environment, encompassing both physical (such as adequate facilities) and psychological aspects (such as harmonious relationships between superiors, subordinates, and colleagues), can increase the level of engagement and job satisfaction among civil servants [4, 5, 10]. Civil servants who work in supportive environments are more likely to feel motivated and involved in their tasks. In contrast, a stressful or conflict-ridden environment can diminish enthusiasm and negatively affect performance.

While many studies have explored the factors influencing employee performance in the private sector, there is limited research on how job satisfaction, recognition and rewards, career development, and the work environment interact to affect the work motivation of civil servants, especially in local government contexts. Given the crucial role of civil servants in public administration and service delivery, understanding what drives their motivation is vital for enhancing the quality of public services and organizational performance.

This study seeks to fill this gap by investigating how factors such as job satisfaction, recognition and rewards, career development, and the work environment collectively impact the work motivation of civil servants in Makassar. Through an empirical data-driven approach, the research aims to provide fresh insights into the factors affecting civil servants' motivation and offer policy recommendations to boost their performance.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Two-Factor Theory

The Two-Factor Theory, proposed by Frederick Herzberg in 1959, is one of the most well-known theories in industrial psychology and human resource management, explaining the two types of factors that affect job satisfaction and employee motivation. Herzberg identified that the factors influencing job satisfaction are not the same as those that cause dissatisfaction. Based on his research, Herzberg divided these factors into two broad categories: motivators and hygiene.

[5, 6, 12] Motivators are factors directly related to the quality of the work itself, and can enhance job satisfaction while driving employees to work harder. These factors are more intrinsic or psychological in nature and relate to personal achievement and career development. Examples of motivators include the recognition of achievements, responsibility, opportunities for growth, and personal accomplishments. When these factors are present in a job, employees feel valued and are more motivated to perform better. In other words, these motivators play a direct role in increasing intrinsic motivation.

On the other hand, hygiene factors are extrinsic factors related to the work environment, and, while necessary to prevent dissatisfaction, they do not directly motivate employees to perform better [6, 7, 13]. These factors include salary, physical working conditions, relationships with superiors and colleagues, and organizational policies. Although these factors do not increase motivation, their absence or inadequacy can lead to significant dissatisfaction. For example, if the working environment is uncomfortable or salary is insufficient, employees feel frustrated and demotivated. Therefore, while hygiene factors help reduce dissatisfaction, they are not sufficient to boost motivation significantly.

According to Herzberg, motivators and hygiene factors work independently, meaning that they do not rely on one another. In other words, having good hygiene factors (such as a fair salary or comfortable working conditions) will reduce dissatisfaction, but it will not create job satisfaction or intrinsic motivation [8, 9, 15]. Conversely, motivators such as career development opportunities and recognition of achievements encourage employees to work harder, even if their hygiene factors are not perfect. Therefore, organizations must ensure that both of these factors are met adequately to foster motivated and productive employees.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory has significant implications for human resource management, particularly in the context of improving employee performance and motivation. For example, to enhance the performance of civil servants, the government should ensure that working conditions (hygiene factors), such as good facilities, harmonious relationships, and fair policies, are adequate. Beyond this, motivators such as recognition of performance, career development opportunities, and job challenges must be improved to encourage employees to reach their full potential. By understanding the differences between motivators and hygiene factors, organizations can design policies and strategies more effectively to increase both job satisfaction and employee motivation.

2.2 Work Motivation

Work motivation refers to the internal drive that pushes an individual to perform tasks and responsibilities through dedication and commitment. Work motivation significantly impacts an individual's job performance and productivity [8, 9, 16]. In the context of civil servants, work motivation reflects the extent to which CS is driven to make maximum contributions to the organization and public service. Motivated civil servants are more likely to be enthusiastic about achieving organizational goals and improving service quality to the public [7]. Therefore, studying work motivation among civil servants is essential to enhance government efficiency and effectiveness.

According to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, work motivation is influenced by two key factors: motivators and hygiene. Motivator factors are directly related to the nature of the work itself and include aspects that motivate individuals to perform better, such as the recognition of achievements, responsibility, and career development opportunities. When these motivator factors are present in a job, individuals feel valued and are more motivated to achieve their best performance. By contrast, if these motivator factors are absent, although the work may still be carried out, individuals are less likely to be driven to perform at higher levels.

On the other hand, hygiene factors involve elements necessary to prevent job dissatisfaction, but these factors alone are not sufficient to directly boost motivation. These factors include working conditions, salary, relationships with colleagues, and organizational policies. While these factors are important for creating a comfortable work environment and reducing dissatisfaction, they do not directly enhance work motivation. Therefore, although hygiene factors are essential for avoiding dissatisfaction and reducing demotivation, higher levels of motivation can only be achieved when motivator factors are in place.

2.3 Recognition and Reward

Recognition and rewards are crucial factors that influence the work motivation of civil servants. Recognition refers to acknowledging the achievements, efforts, and contributions of individuals, whereas rewards refer to the benefits received in exchange for their performance [6, 20]. These factors play a significant role in boosting civil servants' morale and motivating them to continue performing at high levels. In the context of civil servants, recognition and rewards serve as both extrinsic and intrinsic motivators that influence their work attitude and overall performance.

According to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, recognition and rewards fall under the category of motivator factors, which directly contribute to job satisfaction and work motivation. Motivator factors are intrinsic to the job and relate to personal achievement and career growth. Recognition, whether in the form of praise from superiors, acknowledgment of achievements, or recognition in formal settings, can significantly enhance intrinsic motivation. This sense of being valued and acknowledged for their work deepens their connection with the job itself, leading to improved performance and greater commitment to organizational goals.

On the other hand, rewards, such as performance allowances or other incentives provided based on civil servants' contributions, fall under extrinsic motivators. While these external rewards are important for maintaining basic motivation, Herzberg argued

that although hygiene factors such as salary and allowances are necessary to prevent dissatisfaction, they are not sufficient to create high motivation. Offering performance allowances proportional to the work done boosts satisfaction and provides a strong incentive to continue performing well.

2.4 Career Development

Career development is a crucial factor that influences civil servants' motivation and job satisfaction. Career development refers to the opportunities and resources available to employees to enhance their skills, grow professionally, and advance within the organization [8]. This includes opportunities for training, promotion, and increased responsibilities, which allow employees to expand their capabilities and take on new challenges. In the context of CS, career development plays a critical role in improving motivation, engagement, and overall job performance as it provides a clear pathway for advancement and growth within the public sector.

According to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, career development aligns with motivator factors that are intrinsic to the job and directly contribute to job satisfaction and work motivation. Motivator factors such as opportunities for personal growth, professional development, and advancement within the organization are essential for enhancing intrinsic motivation. When civil servants have access to career development programs, training, and clear career progression opportunities, they are more likely to feel motivated to perform well and contribute more effectively to the organization's goals. These development opportunities foster a sense of achievement, responsibility, and personal growth, which in turn boosts work motivation.

On the other hand, a lack of career development opportunities can lead to stagnation and demotivation among CS. Without the ability to grow professionally or advance in their careers, employees may feel undervalued and disengaged, which negatively affects their work performance. Herzberg's theory suggests that while hygiene factors are necessary to prevent dissatisfaction, they are not sufficient on their own to sustain high levels of motivation [9, 10, 17]. Career development serves as a critical motivator for addressing employees' aspirations for growth and self-improvement.

Providing career development opportunities is crucial for sustaining a motivated and dedicated workforce, especially for civil servants in Indonesia. By supporting the professional growth of civil servants through training, mentoring, and career advancement programs, the government can improve job satisfaction and performance, resulting in a more efficient and committed public service workforce. Career development not only helps individual employees but also plays a key role in ensuring the long-term success and stability of the public sector.

2.5 Work Environment

Work environment is a critical factor that influences work motivation and job satisfaction among civil servants. The work environment includes both physical and social conditions in the workplace that affect employees' comfort and productivity [9, 10, 18]. A supportive and positive work environment can enhance civil servants' morale and motivation, whereas a poor work environment can lead to dissatisfaction and decreased performance. In the context of CS, a supportive work environment creates a

positive and conducive atmosphere, which is essential for improving the quality of public service.

According to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, the work environment falls under the category of hygiene factors, which serve to prevent dissatisfaction but are not sufficient to directly increase work motivation. Hygiene factors involve elements necessary for creating basic comfort at the workplace, such as working conditions, relationships with colleagues and superiors, and fair organizational policies. Although these factors do not directly enhance motivation, they are crucial for avoiding dissatisfaction. For example, if the work environment is uncomfortable, filled with conflicts, or lacks adequate facilities, civil servants will feel undervalued and demotivated, which will ultimately impact their performance.

However, when the work environment fosters comfort and support, it can reduce dissatisfaction and help civil servants to remain motivated. A positive environment facilitates smooth communication, harmonious interpersonal relationships, and the support of superiors. Additionally, adequate workplace facilities and safe environments provide civil servants with the comfort they need to perform their duties well. Therefore, although the work environment is not the primary motivator for directly enhancing motivation, it plays a critical role in providing a foundation for sustained motivation.

2.6 Hypothesis Development

Job Satisfaction on Work Motivation. Job satisfaction is a key factor influencing work motivation. Civil servants who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to have higher levels of motivation to perform tasks and responsibilities [22, 23]. Job satisfaction encompasses various aspects such as satisfaction with the type of work, relationships with colleagues and superiors, and facilities available in the workplace. Civil servants who are satisfied with their working conditions, both physically and psychologically, are more motivated to perform better and committed to achieving organizational goals.

According to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, job satisfaction is related to hygiene factors, which include the basic aspects necessary to prevent dissatisfaction, such as comfortable working conditions and good interpersonal relationships at work. However, beyond hygiene factors, motivator factors, such as recognition of achievements and opportunities for career development, also play a significant role in enhancing work motivation. In this context, job satisfaction can be viewed as an element that reduces dissatisfaction and creates the foundation needed to increase work motivation.

Civil servants who are satisfied with their jobs, such as a supportive work environment, fair recognition, and opportunities for growth, are more likely to be motivated to give their best performance. Conversely, dissatisfaction with any aspect of the job can lead to decreased motivation, as CS may feel undervalued or disengaged in their work. Therefore, it is important to understand how job satisfaction influences the overall work motivation.

Based on this discussion, the first hypothesis is proposed as follows.

H1: Job satisfaction positively affects motivation to work.

Recognition and Reward on Work Motivation. Recognition and rewards are critical factors that significantly influence employees' motivation to work. In the context of civil servants), recognition involves acknowledging their achievements and contributions, while rewards refer to tangible benefits, such as allowances or other incentives provided based on performance [10, 11, 20]. When civil servants feel appreciated for their work, they are more likely to feel motivated and committed to their duties. A well-established recognition and reward system can improve job satisfaction, enhance motivation, and encourage high performance.

According to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, recognition and rewards are classified as motivator factors that directly contribute to job satisfaction and motivation. Motivator factors, such as recognition of achievements, career advancement opportunities, and rewards for performance, enhance intrinsic motivation. When civil servants receive recognition of their work and rewards that align with their efforts, they strengthen their intrinsic desire to perform well and contribute to their overall motivation.

Lack of recognition and reward can lead to feelings of being undervalued, which can reduce motivation and negatively impact job performance. Therefore, an appropriate recognition and reward system is essential for maintaining high levels of motivation, as it satisfies the need for appreciation and acknowledgment. In contrast, a lack of recognition or inadequate rewards may lead to disengagement and lack of enthusiasm for work.

Based on this discussion, the second hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H2: Recognition and rewards have positive effects on work motivation.

Career Development on Work Motivation. Career development is a crucial factor that influences work motivation. For civil servants, career development includes opportunities for training, skill enhancement, promotion, and career advancement [10, 20]. When CS see opportunities for growth and progression in their careers, they are more likely to feel motivated to perform at their best and engage in their work. Career development not only provides civil servants with the necessary skills to perform their roles more effectively but also instills a sense of value and purpose within the organization.

According to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, career development can be categorized as a motivator factor that plays a direct role in enhancing job satisfaction and motivation. Motivator factors, such as opportunities for personal growth, career advancement, and skill development, increase intrinsic motivation by satisfying employees' aspirations for achievement and self-improvement. When civil servants have access to career development programs, they are more likely to be motivated to excel in their duties and contribute to the organization's goals. Without career development opportunities, civil servants may feel stagnant about their roles, leading to demotivation and disengagement.

H3: Career development positively affects work motivation.

Work Environment on Work Motivation. The work environment plays a crucial role in influencing work motivation. The work environment encompasses both physical conditions, such as workspace, facilities, and safety, and social factors, such as relationships with colleagues and superiors and organizational culture [15]. A positive

and supportive work environment can significantly enhance the motivation of civil servants, whereas a poor or stressful environment can lead to demotivation and dissatisfaction. Civil servants are more likely to be motivated to perform their tasks effectively when they feel comfortable, supported, and valued in their working environment.

According to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, the work environment is classified as a hygiene factor, which is essential for preventing dissatisfaction but does not directly increase motivation. Hygiene factors, such as good working conditions, a safe and comfortable workplace, and positive interpersonal relationships, contribute to the basic well-being of employees. Although these factors are necessary to avoid dissatisfaction, they do not directly contribute to higher levels of motivation [22]. However, a well-structured and positive work environment reduces dissatisfaction, creating conditions necessary for higher motivation levels.

A work environment that fosters positive relationships, effective communication, and mutual support between colleagues and superiors can lead to increased engagement and enthusiasm for work. Civil servants who work in supportive and respectful environments are more likely to feel motivated to make their best efforts. However, an environment that is hostile, lacks resources, or is filled with conflict can lead to disengagement and lower motivation levels.

Based on the above discussion, the fourth hypothesis is proposed as follows.

H4: The work environment has a positive effect on work motivation.

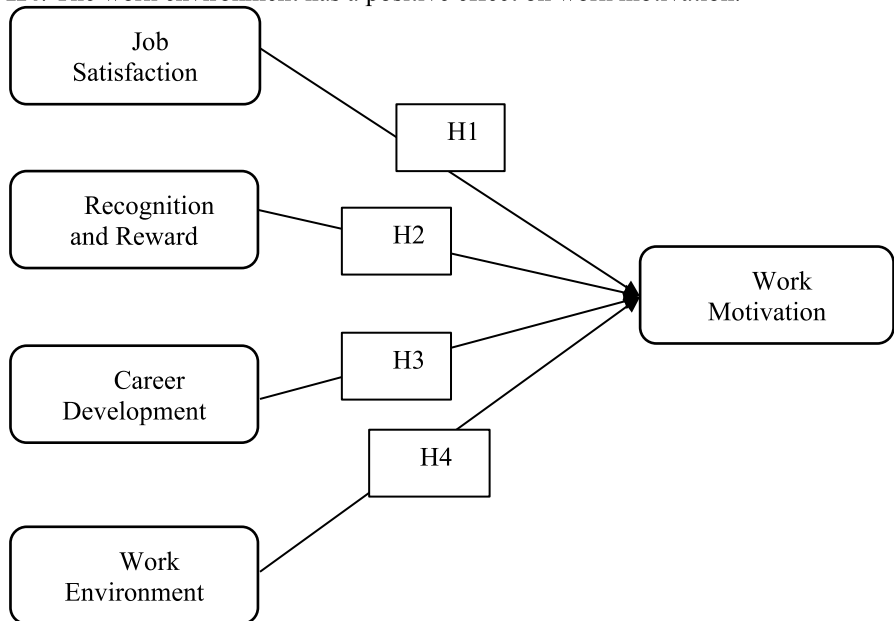


Fig. 1. Research Framework

3 Methodology

This research adopts a quantitative approach with a survey design to assess the influence of various factors on work motivation among civil servants in Makassar City. Data were gathered through a questionnaire that evaluated respondents' perceptions across different aspects using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The questionnaire covered topics such as job satisfaction, recognition and rewards, career development, work environment, and work motivation. A total of 200 respondents, selected via simple random sampling from civil servants working in various government agencies in Makassar City, participated in the study. Before data collection, the validity and reliability of the research instrument were tested using Cronbach's alpha to ensure data consistency and dependability. The collected data will be analyzed using SMART Partial Least Squares (PLS), a structural equation modeling method suited for testing complex relationships between variables and measuring latent constructs. SMART PLS will be utilized to assess the influence of the factors on work motivation and evaluate the strength of the relationships between the variables.

4 Results

4.1 Data

Data for this study were successfully collected from 200 civil servants working across various government agencies in Makassar. The respondents were selected using a purposive sampling method, focusing on individuals who had experience working in government environments and who were familiar with the organizational culture that embraces transformational leadership, career development opportunities, and a positive work environment. The survey was distributed through a structured questionnaire using Google Forms that included questions designed to measure the following key variables: work environment, leadership style, career development, and work motivation. With 200 completed and valid questionnaires returned, this sample size was deemed sufficient for performing statistical analysis, specifically using structural equation Modeling (SEM), to evaluate the relationships between the variables under study. This sample allowed for diverse representation of civil servants from various government agencies, ensuring the reliability and validity of the study's findings.

4.2 Instrument Testing Results

Outer Model Analysis.

Table 1. Outer Loading

	JS	RR	CD	WE	WM
JS_1	0.726				
JS_2	0.794				
JS_3	0.773				
JS_4	0.768				

JS_5	0.787		
RR_1		0.803	
RR_2		0.770	
RR_3		0.863	
RR_4		0.769	
RR_5		0.763	
CD _1			0.749
CD _2			0.785
CD _3			0.876
CD _4			0.834
CD _5			0.789
WE_1			0.738
WE_2			0.846
WE_3			0.757
WE_4			0.724
WE_5			0.733
WM _1			0.868
WM _2			0.766
WM _3			0.827
WM _4			0.759
WM _5			0.747

Source: Primary Data (2025)

Table 1 presents the outer loadings for the various indicators related to the constructs of Job Satisfaction (JS), Recognition and Reward (RR), Career Development (CD), Work Environment (WE), and Work Motivation (WM). These values indicate the strength of the relationship between each indicator and its corresponding latent variable. Generally, the outer loadings are acceptable as they are above the commonly used threshold of 0.7, indicating that the indicators have a strong and significant relationship with their respective constructs. For example, indicators for Recognition and Reward (RR) and Work Motivation (WM) showed loadings consistently above 0.7, with the highest loading being 0.863 for RR_3, suggesting a strong contribution to their respective constructs. Similarly, the loadings for Work Environment (WE), although slightly lower, are still acceptable, ranging between 0.724 and 0.846, further validating the relevance of these indicators for the constructs being measured.

Construct Reability and Validity.

Table 2. Construct Reability and Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted
JS	0.855	0.857	0.865	0.624
RR	0.878	0.864	0.878	0.636
CD	0.847	0.856	0.945	0.643
WE	0.836	0.887	0.898	0.665

WM	0.854	0.834	0.824	0.678
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Source: Primary Data (2025)

Table 2 displays the reliability and validity indicators for the constructs examined in the study: Work Environment (WE), Leadership Style (LS), Career Development (CE), and Employee Performance (EP). The Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs exceeded the recommended 0.7 threshold, indicating strong internal consistency. The Composite Reliability values also support the reliability of the constructs, with the majority surpassing the 0.7 threshold, suggesting that the constructs are highly reliable. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs were above the acceptable 0.5 threshold, confirming adequate convergent validity. These findings ensure that the constructs used in the model are both reliable and valid, making them suitable for further analysis.

4.3 Hypotheses Test

Direct Test.

Table 3. T-statistics and P-values of Hypotheses

	Sampl e	Sample mean	Standard deviation	T statistics	P values
JS -> WM	0.556	0.565	48	90.75	0.000
RR -> WM	0.264	0.235	43	70.453	0.000
CD -> WM	0.443	0.443	65	100.857	0.000
WE -> WM	0.424	0.454	65	100.831	0.000

Table 3 presents the T-statistics and P-values for testing the hypotheses about the relationships between the independent variables (JS, RR, CD, WE) and the dependent variable (WM). Job Satisfaction showed a strong positive impact on Work Motivation, with a high T-statistic of 90.075 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating a statistically significant connection. Similarly, recognition and rewards positively influenced Work Motivation, with a T-statistic of 70.453 and a p-value of 0.000, suggesting that such incentives contribute to employee motivation. Career Development demonstrated a highly significant positive effect on Work Motivation, with a T-statistic of 100.857 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating that career development opportunities are crucial drivers of Work Motivation. Additionally, Work Environment had a positive influence on Work Motivation, with a T-statistic of 100.831 and a p-value of 0.000, suggesting that a supportive work environment is almost as important as career development in motivating employees. All relationships were statistically significant, with P-values of 0.000, confirming that job satisfaction, recognition and rewards, career development, and work environment all significantly enhance Work Motivation. The T-statistics for all variables were well above the standard threshold, further validating the research results.

5 Discussion

5.1 Summary of key findings and robustness of the measures

This study examined work motivation among civil servants (PNS) in Makassar by testing the effects of job satisfaction (JS), recognition and reward (RR), career development (CD), and work environment (WE). The structural results indicate that all four predictors significantly and positively influence work motivation (WM), with JS showing the largest effect ($\beta = 0.556$), followed by CD ($\beta = 0.443$), WE ($\beta = 0.424$), and RR ($\beta = 0.264$), all at $p = 0.000$.

This pattern suggests that motivation in the local public sector is explained by both “day-to-day experience” factors (satisfaction and environment) and “development and recognition” factors (career growth and rewards), consistent with prior arguments that civil servants’ motivation is central to service quality and government performance [1–4].

Interpretation of the structural paths is strengthened by the quality of the measurement model. The instrument demonstrates strong internal consistency and convergent validity, with Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability above the 0.70 threshold, and AVE above 0.50 across constructs.

This indicates that the estimated relationships are unlikely to be artefacts of weak construct operationalisation.

5.2 Theoretical interpretation using Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory

The findings provide supportive evidence for applying Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory in a public-sector setting, aligning with work that questions and tests the theory’s applicability among public managers [9]. In Herzberg’s framing, “hygiene” factors reduce dissatisfaction (for example, work conditions and policies), while “motivators” (recognition, growth, achievement) directly enhance motivation.

The significant effects of WE (a typical hygiene factor) and CD/RR (typical motivators) suggest that both categories matter concurrently for PNS motivation in Makassar, reinforcing the practical message that organisations should not treat hygiene improvements and motivator enhancements as substitutes. Notably, the literature review also highlights Herzberg’s proposition that motivators and hygiene factors can operate independently [8, 9, 15].

In this study, the simultaneous significance of both types of factors is consistent with an “additive” view: improving basic work conditions can stabilise motivation while career growth and recognition further elevate it.

5.3 Job satisfaction as the strongest driver of motivation

Job satisfaction shows the strongest direct effect on work motivation ($\beta = 0.556$; $p = 0.000$).

This result is consistent with the paper’s premise that satisfied civil servants are more likely to demonstrate better performance and service outcomes [3, 4, 7], and it aligns with broader public administration evidence linking employee–work environment interactions to satisfaction outcomes [24].

In the Makassar context, job satisfaction likely functions as a “proximal” motivational trigger because it reflects the cumulative evaluation of task fit, interpersonal relations, and resource adequacy. When satisfaction is high, civil servants may be more willing to exert discretionary effort and align their behaviour with public service objectives, which is important given the central role of civil servants in public service delivery [1, 2, 3].

5.4 Recognition and reward: meaningful but comparatively smaller effect

Recognition and reward positively affect work motivation ($\beta = 0.264$; $p = 0.000$).

This supports the argument that acknowledgement and incentives increase employees’ sense of being valued and strengthen commitment [3, 4, 8], and is compatible with evidence on how salary, promotion, and recognition can influence motivation in government-related employment settings [2].

The smaller coefficient (relative to job satisfaction, career development, and work environment) may indicate that recognition/reward systems in the studied agencies operate as an important reinforcement mechanism, but not the primary motivational anchor. In bureaucratic settings, recognition may also be perceived as less frequent, less differentiated, or less transparent, which can reduce its marginal motivational impact even when statistically significant. This provides a clear managerial signal: improving the *credibility, fairness, and visibility* of recognition practices may increase the motivational return from reward systems.

5.5 Career development as a major motivator in the public sector

Career development has a strong positive effect on work motivation ($\beta = 0.443$; $p = 0.000$).

This finding directly supports the manuscript’s position that training, education, and promotion opportunities reduce stagnation and stimulate engagement, consistent with the view that career development is a key intrinsic motivator in Herzberg’s model [8, 9, 15].

Substantively, the strength of CD suggests that PNS employees place high motivational value on a clear growth pathway and competence-building, aligning with prior public-sector evidence on career development and performance in Indonesia [20]. From a policy perspective, this result is also compatible with broader public administration work indicating that improved internal capability and institutional support can enhance service delivery capacity [21]. The implication is that structured development programmes (competency-based training, merit-based promotion clarity, rotation opportunities) may be among the most effective levers for sustaining motivation over time.

5.6 Work environment as a foundation for sustained motivation

Work environment also shows a strong positive effect on work motivation ($\beta = 0.424$; $p = 0.000$).

This supports earlier arguments that supportive physical and psychosocial environments enhance morale, satisfaction, and engagement [4, 5, 10], and is consistent with research on inclusive work environments and employee satisfaction/commitment in public-sector-related contexts [8]. The manuscript's hypothesis logic also emphasises that respectful relationships, effective communication, and mutual support can raise enthusiasm, whereas conflictual environments erode engagement.

In practical terms, WE appears to operate as a "hygiene-plus" factor in this setting: while Herzberg classifies work conditions as hygiene, a highly supportive environment may also indirectly elevate intrinsic motivation by improving psychological safety and enabling civil servants to focus on achievement and contribution.

5.7 Practical implications for Makassar civil service management

The coefficient pattern suggests a prioritisation strategy for HR and organisational reform within Makassar's government agencies. First, interventions that directly raise job satisfaction (work design clarity, resource adequacy, supervisory support, manageable workload) should be prioritised due to the largest observed effect.

Second, career development systems should be strengthened through structured training pathways and transparent progression, given their strong impact and alignment with motivator theory and public-sector evidence [9, 20]. Third, agencies should continue investing in the work environment (facilities, safety, conflict management, collegial culture) as a foundational condition that supports sustained motivation.

Finally, recognition and reward should be refined to ensure perceived fairness and consistent acknowledgement, reducing frustration and reinforcing performance-based norms [2, 16]. Collectively, these steps are aligned with the paper's broader premise that improving motivation can enhance the quality of public service delivery [1, 2, 3].

5.8 Limitations and future research directions

Two limitations constrain inference. First, the data were collected only from PNS in Makassar, limiting generalisability to other regions in Indonesia. Second, the cross-sectional design restricts causal interpretation of the relationships among variables.

Future research should expand coverage across multiple provinces and adopt longitudinal designs to test whether improvements in satisfaction, development, recognition, and environment lead to sustained changes in motivation over time.

In addition, the manuscript already recommends exploring other explanatory variables such as leadership style, organisational culture, and external conditions (for example, economic factors) to build a more complete model of public-sector motivation.

6 Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the factors affecting work motivation among civil servants (PNS) in Makassar, focusing on the influence of job satisfaction, recognition and rewards, career development, and work environment. The results show that all four factors play a significant role in enhancing work motivation, with career development

and work environment having particularly strong effects. These findings highlight the importance of fostering a supportive and development-focused work environment to increase PNS motivation and performance. Statistical analysis confirmed that these factors collectively influence the motivation levels of civil servants, which, in turn, can enhance the quality of public service delivery.

However, there are several limitations to this study. Firstly, the data was collected from PNS in Makassar, which may not be fully representative of the wider civil service population in Indonesia. This limits the generalizability of the results. Additionally, the use of a cross-sectional survey design restricts the ability to draw causal conclusions about the relationships between variables. Future research could overcome these limitations by including civil servants from various regions and using longitudinal data to examine how these factors impact work motivation over time. Furthermore, exploring other variables such as leadership style, organizational culture, and external influences like economic conditions could offer a more comprehensive understanding of work motivation in the public sector.

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