

Integrity as A Strategic Human Resource: the Mediating Role Of Job Satisfaction in Police Officer Performance

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ABSTRACT: *This study examines whether integrity improves police officer performance directly and indirectly through job satisfaction. A cross-sectional quantitative survey was conducted among 161 active officers at the Kotabaru District Police, South Kalimantan, Indonesia. Respondents were selected purposively from a population of 269 officers and had at least one year of service. Data were analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling in SmartPLS 4. Integrity had a strong positive effect on performance ($\beta = 0.818, p < 0.001$) and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.943, p < 0.001$). Job satisfaction also positively affected performance ($\beta = 0.175, p < 0.001$). The indirect effect of integrity on performance through job satisfaction was significant (β approximately 0.165, $p < 0.001$), indicating complementary partial mediation. The model explained 89.0% of the variance in job satisfaction and 96.9% of the variance in performance. The findings position integrity as both an ethical requirement and a strategic human resource in law enforcement. Police leaders should combine integrity-based recruitment, ethical leadership, transparent career systems, employee recognition, and welfare support. The study is limited by its cross-sectional, single-organization, and self-report design.*

KEYWORDS - integrity, job performance, job satisfaction, police officers, PLS-SEM

I. Introduction

Police organizations occupy a distinctive position in public administration because officers exercise legal authority, enforce laws, provide public services, and represent the legitimacy of the state in everyday encounters with citizens. Police performance therefore cannot be evaluated solely through operational outputs. It also depends on whether officers exercise discretion lawfully, consistently, responsibly, and in ways that preserve public confidence. Public-sector integrity is central to both institutional legitimacy and organizational effectiveness [1].

Integrity refers to consistency between moral values, communicated commitments, and observable conduct. Palanski and Yammarino define integrity through coherence between words and actions [2], whereas Becker emphasizes commitment to defensible moral principles even when compliance creates personal costs [3]. In police work, such consistency is essential because decisions are frequently made under uncertainty, time pressure, occupational risk, and incomplete direct supervision.

From a strategic human resource perspective, integrity may be treated as an intangible organizational resource rather than merely a compliance requirement. The resource-based view proposes that superior outcomes arise when organizations develop valuable, rare, difficult-to-imitate, and organizationally embedded resources [4], [5].

Ethical judgment, professional credibility, and trustworthy conduct are valuable in policing because they reduce opportunism, improve coordination, and sustain public legitimacy.

Job satisfaction is another important determinant of behavior in demanding public-service occupations. It represents a positive emotional evaluation of the job and work experience [6] and includes employee perceptions of supervision, rewards, colleagues, working conditions, communication, and the nature of work [7]. Police officers frequently face hierarchical control, irregular schedules, heavy workloads, occupational hazards, and intense public scrutiny. These conditions may affect motivation, persistence, cooperation, and service quality.

The relationship between job satisfaction and performance is well established, although its magnitude varies across occupations and settings [8]. Satisfaction may support police performance by encouraging commitment, persistence, teamwork, and discretionary effort. Nevertheless, satisfaction alone cannot guarantee responsible performance when ethical standards are weak. In work involving legal authority and public trust, the ethical quality of behavior remains essential.

Prior research has often investigated ethical leadership, ethical culture, job satisfaction, and performance as separate relationships. Ethical leadership shapes employee conduct through moral role modeling and reinforcement [9], while ethical culture influences behavior through clarity, congruence, transparency, and credible sanctions [10]. Less attention has been given to the integrated pathway from individual integrity to job satisfaction and performance in district-level police organizations, particularly in developing-country and geographically dispersed settings.

The Kotabaru District Police is a relevant context because it serves mainland and island territories with dispersed communities and economic activities involving fisheries, mining, maritime industries, and regional trade. Officers must deliver law-enforcement and public-service functions across a challenging geographical area. These conditions heighten the importance of dependable conduct, internal cooperation, and sustained motivation.

This study contributes by conceptualizing integrity as a strategic human resource in public law enforcement, testing job satisfaction as a mediator, and providing evidence from an Indonesian district police institution. The study examines whether integrity affects performance, whether integrity affects job satisfaction, whether job satisfaction affects performance, and whether job satisfaction mediates the integrity-performance relationship.

II. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Resource-Based View in a Public-Sector Context

The resource-based view argues that organizational performance is influenced by internal resources and capabilities that are valuable, scarce, difficult to imitate, and supported by organizational systems [4], [5]. Human resources become strategically important when employee knowledge, skills, motivation, and behavior are integrated with organizational processes [11].

In public organizations, advantage should not be interpreted only in financial or competitive terms. It may refer to superior service quality, reliability, adaptability, accountability, legitimacy, and stakeholder trust. Police organizations depend heavily on professional judgment, ethical consistency, institutional knowledge, teamwork, and the capacity to make sound decisions under pressure.

Integrity satisfies the strategic logic of the resource-based view because it reduces misconduct, supports procedural compliance, improves trust, and strengthens decision reliability. It is also difficult to imitate because it develops through long-term socialization, leadership, culture, professional identity, repeated experience, and credible accountability systems.

2.2 Integrity and Police Officer Performance

Job performance is multidimensional. It includes goal-relevant behavior [12], task accomplishment and contextual contributions [13], and the avoidance of counterproductive work behavior [14]. In police organizations, performance includes law-enforcement task accomplishment, service responsiveness, discipline, professional competence, and teamwork.

Integrity supports these dimensions because honest reporting improves investigations and administrative decisions, behavioral consistency increases reliability, moral responsibility promotes accountability, and

compliance with ethical standards reduces abuse of authority. Integrity also strengthens trust among colleagues and supervisors, which is critical when operational tasks require coordination and reliance on others under risk.

H1. Integrity has a positive effect on police officer performance.

2.3 Integrity and Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction reflects an employee's evaluation of the job and its various facets [6], [7]. Satisfaction is influenced by tangible rewards as well as meaningful work, supportive relationships, fairness, recognition, and congruence between personal values and organizational practices.

Integrity may contribute to satisfaction through value congruence and psychological consistency. Officers who perform duties in accordance with internalized moral standards may experience less value conflict and greater professional meaning. Integrity can also improve the relational climate by increasing predictability, trustworthiness, and mutual respect.

Ethical organizational conditions provide clarity about acceptable behavior and protect employees who act responsibly. Ethical clarity, leadership congruence, transparency, discussability, feasibility, supportability, and credible sanctions strengthen such conditions [10]. High-integrity officers are therefore more likely to perceive the workplace as legitimate and supportive.

H2. Integrity has a positive effect on police officers' job satisfaction.

2.4 Job Satisfaction and Police Officer Performance

Satisfied employees are more likely to invest effort, persist when difficulties arise, cooperate with others, and engage in discretionary behavior that supports organizational functioning. The positive association between satisfaction and performance is supported by meta-analytic evidence [8].

Herzberg's two-factor perspective distinguishes motivators, including achievement, recognition, responsibility, and growth, from hygiene factors such as supervision, pay, policies, and working conditions [15]. Both categories are relevant in policing. Fair policies and adequate working conditions can prevent dissatisfaction, while meaningful responsibility and development opportunities can strengthen motivation.

Because police work is performed under stress and public scrutiny, satisfaction may help officers sustain attention, emotional regulation, teamwork, and service orientation. Officers who are satisfied with supervision, colleagues, development opportunities, and the nature of their work are expected to perform more effectively.

H3. Job satisfaction has a positive effect on police officer performance.

2.5 Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction

Integrity can improve performance directly through internalized standards, responsibility, and self-regulation. It can also influence how officers experience their work. Alignment between professional conduct and personal values may produce meaning, trust, psychological coherence, and professional pride.

These positive experiences may increase job satisfaction, which then supports motivation, persistence, cooperation, and service quality. The indirect pathway does not eliminate the direct behavioral contribution of integrity. Instead, satisfaction is expected to complement it by adding an attitudinal and motivational mechanism.

From a resource-based perspective, integrity provides ethical capability, while satisfaction helps activate and sustain the behavioral expression of that capability. Complementary partial mediation is therefore expected.

H4. Job satisfaction mediates the positive effect of integrity on police officer performance.

III. Methods

3.1 Research Design and Context

The study used a quantitative, explanatory, cross-sectional survey design. It was conducted at the Kotabaru District Police in South Kalimantan, Indonesia. The organization serves geographically dispersed mainland and island communities and includes investigative, intelligence, traffic, community-policing, public-order, maritime, administrative, and sector-police units.

3.2 Population, Sampling, and Data Collection

The target population consisted of 269 active police personnel distributed across the district and 18 sector-police units. Purposive sampling was applied because participants had to satisfy substantive inclusion criteria relevant to the research questions [16]. Eligible respondents were active full-time officers, had at least one year of service, and performed operational, law-enforcement, public-service, or administrative duties. A total of 161 usable questionnaires were analyzed.

3.3 Measurement of Constructs

All variables were measured using adapted multi-item Likert-type scales. Integrity was operationalized through honesty, consistency between values and actions, moral responsibility, compliance with ethical standards, transparency, and accountability, reflecting established integrity concepts [1]-[3].

Job satisfaction was measured through satisfaction with the work itself, supervision, remuneration, colleagues, and career or personal development [7], [15]. Performance was measured through law-enforcement task accomplishment, public service, discipline, professional competence, and teamwork, reflecting task and contextual performance perspectives [12]-[14].

The final measurement model contained 20 integrity indicators, 16 job-satisfaction indicators, and 20 performance indicators. The questionnaire was reviewed for content relevance and pilot tested before the main survey. Participation was voluntary, responses were confidential, and the analysis was reported in aggregate form.

3.4 Data Analysis

Partial least squares structural equation modeling was performed using SmartPLS 4. PLS-SEM is appropriate for predictive structural models, mediation testing, and simultaneous assessment of measurement and structural relationships [17].

The measurement model was evaluated using indicator loadings, average variance extracted, composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha, and discriminant validity. Convergent validity is generally supported when average variance extracted exceeds 0.50, while reliability values above 0.70 are acceptable [17], [18].

The structural model was assessed using collinearity diagnostics, path coefficients, bootstrapped t statistics and p values, coefficient of determination, effect size, predictive relevance, and standardized root mean square residual. Mediation was evaluated using the significance and direction of direct and indirect effects.

IV. Results

4.1 Respondent Characteristics

Table 1. Respondent characteristics

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	148	91.9
	Female	13	8.1
Age	< 30 years	25	15.5
	30-39 years	68	42.2
	40-49 years	48	29.8
	≥ 50 years	20	12.4

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Education	Upper secondary	36	22.4
	Diploma	27	16.8
	Bachelor's degree	86	53.4
	Master's degree	12	7.5
Tenure	< 5 years	18	11.2
	5-10 years	42	26.1
	11-20 years	63	39.1
	> 20 years	38	23.6
Rank	Bripda-Bripka	92	57.1
	Ipda-Iptu	41	25.5
	AKP-Kompol	28	17.4

The sample was predominantly male and operationally experienced. More than half held a bachelor's degree, and 62.7% had served for more than ten years. Most respondents therefore had sufficient organizational experience to assess integrity, satisfaction, and performance practices.

4.2 Measurement Model

Table 2. Measurement model assessment

Construct	Items	Loading range	AVE	CR	Alpha
Integrity	20	0.815-0.885	0.732	0.982	0.981
Job satisfaction	16	0.588-0.700	0.619	0.920	0.907
Performance	20	0.796-0.887	0.744	0.983	0.982

All constructs exceeded the recommended thresholds for average variance extracted and internal consistency. Integrity and performance indicators had strong loadings. Several job-satisfaction loadings were below 0.70 but remained above approximately 0.59; they were retained because construct-level validity and reliability were satisfactory. Discriminant validity was acceptable under the Fornell-Larcker and cross-loading criteria [18].

4.3 Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

Table 3. Structural relationships and hypothesis decisions

Path	β	t	p	f ²	Decision
H1: Integrity → Performance	0.818	17.360	<0.001	0.563	Supported
H2: Integrity → Job satisfaction	0.943	104.755	<0.001	0.515	Supported
H3: Job satisfaction → Performance	0.175	3.603	<0.001	0.112	Supported
H4: Integrity → Job satisfaction → Performance	≈0.165	3.597	<0.001	-	Supported

Integrity had a strong positive direct effect on performance and an exceptionally strong effect on job satisfaction. Job satisfaction had a smaller but statistically significant positive effect on performance. The indirect effect was approximately 0.165, obtained from the product of the component paths, and was statistically significant. Because the direct and indirect effects were positive and significant, job satisfaction provided complementary partial mediation. The approximate total effect of integrity on performance was 0.983, with the indirect mechanism accounting for approximately 16.8% of the total effect.

Table 4. Explanatory power, predictive relevance, and model fit

Indicator	Value	Interpretation
R ² Job satisfaction	0.890	Substantial explained variance
R ² Performance	0.969	Substantial explained variance

Indicator	Value	Interpretation
Q ² Job satisfaction	0.220	Predictive relevance
Q ² Performance	0.310	Predictive relevance
SRMR	0.039	Acceptable approximate fit

The model explained 89.0% of the variance in job satisfaction and 96.9% of the variance in performance. Predictive relevance values were above zero, and the standardized root mean square residual indicated acceptable approximate fit. The unusually high explanatory power nevertheless requires cautious interpretation and replication using independent data sources.

V. Discussion

The first finding demonstrates that integrity is the dominant predictor of police officer performance. In police work, following procedures, reporting accurately, exercising authority responsibly, and accepting accountability are simultaneously ethical and performance-related behaviors. The result supports the view that integrity is central to the effectiveness and legitimacy of public institutions [1].

The strong integrity-performance relationship also supports the resource-based view. Integrity creates value because it improves reliability, reduces opportunistic conduct, and supports public trust. It is difficult to imitate because it develops through socialization, ethical leadership, repeated practice, peer norms, and accountability systems [4], [11].

The second finding shows that integrity strongly affects job satisfaction. Ethical consistency appears to have psychological and relational consequences. Officers whose professional conduct aligns with personal values may experience greater meaning and pride. Integrity may also improve trust and predictability within units, thereby increasing satisfaction with colleagues, supervisors, and the work environment.

This interpretation is compatible with ethical leadership and ethical culture research. Moral role modeling and consistent reinforcement shape employee conduct [9], while ethical clarity, congruence, transparency, and credible sanctions strengthen the work environment [10]. When these conditions support responsible officers, integrity is more likely to translate into positive work experiences.

The third finding indicates that job satisfaction has a significant but comparatively small effect on performance. This pattern is consistent with evidence that satisfaction is positively related to performance but varies across contexts [8]. Satisfaction may facilitate motivation, persistence, teamwork, and service orientation, but it does not replace integrity in a profession centered on legal authority and ethical discretion.

The mediation result provides a more nuanced explanation. Integrity primarily improves performance directly through disciplined, responsible, and ethically consistent conduct. A smaller portion of its influence occurs through job satisfaction. This complementary partial mediation indicates that satisfaction reinforces, rather than substitutes for, the direct contribution of integrity.

The result also extends the two-factor perspective. Fair supervision, policies, and working conditions may prevent dissatisfaction, whereas recognition, meaningful responsibility, achievement, and growth can strengthen motivation [15]. Integrity increases the credibility of these practices because employees are more likely to value organizational systems that are perceived as morally consistent.

The extremely high R² values and path coefficients should not be interpreted uncritically. They may reflect a cohesive organizational setting, but they may also be influenced by common-source measurement, conceptual overlap, social-desirability bias, or respondents' caution when evaluating integrity and performance in a hierarchical institution. The results provide strong within-sample evidence but require external replication.

VI. Theoretical Implications

The study extends the resource-based view to district-level law enforcement by showing that integrity can function as a valuable and organizationally embedded human resource. Its value is expressed through reliability, accountability, service quality, and legitimacy rather than through financial advantage.

The study also integrates ethical and attitudinal explanations of performance. Integrity influences performance directly and shapes job satisfaction, which subsequently reinforces performance. The mediation model therefore connects moral resources, employee attitudes, and behavioral outcomes.

The comparatively smaller satisfaction-performance coefficient indicates that predictor importance is occupationally contingent. In a profession involving legal discretion and public authority, integrity is more proximal to performance than general satisfaction, although satisfaction remains an important supporting mechanism.

VII. Practical Implications

Police organizations should incorporate integrity into recruitment, placement, promotion, and leadership selection. Evaluation should include behavioral evidence of honesty, accountability, consistency, and responsible decision making rather than relying only on technical competence and tenure.

Commanders and supervisors should demonstrate transparent decisions, consistent rule application, and willingness to accept accountability. Ethical messages lose credibility when leadership conduct contradicts formal codes [9].

Ethics development should use realistic scenarios involving conflicts of interest, evidence handling, public complaints, discretionary authority, gratuities, and reporting of misconduct. Repeated practice can strengthen judgment under pressure.

Job satisfaction should be improved through fair workload distribution, transparent promotion, recognition, developmental feedback, adequate equipment, and access to training. These practices address both hygiene and motivational factors [15].

Performance appraisal should combine task outcomes with procedural compliance, service quality, teamwork, ethical behavior, and externally verifiable indicators. Confidential reporting channels and protection from retaliation should also support early detection and organizational learning.

VIII. Limitations and Future Research

The cross-sectional design does not permit strong causal conclusions. Longitudinal or time-lagged studies are needed to establish temporal ordering. All constructs were measured through self-reports from the same respondents, creating potential common-method and social-desirability bias. Future research should combine officer surveys with supervisor assessments, disciplinary records, citizen evaluations, complaint data, and service response indicators.

The study focused on one district police organization and used purposive sampling, limiting generalization. Multi-site research involving urban, rural, border, and island police organizations would clarify whether the relationships are stable across contexts. Several job-satisfaction indicators had moderate loadings, and the exceptionally strong structural relationships require replication with refined measures.

Future studies may examine organizational commitment, work engagement, psychological safety, public service motivation, or moral identity as alternative mediators. Ethical leadership, workload, organizational justice, rank, tenure, and occupational unit may also be tested as moderators.

IX. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that integrity is strongly associated with police officer performance and job satisfaction, while job satisfaction provides an additional pathway to performance. The results support complementary partial mediation: integrity improves performance directly and indirectly through satisfaction.

Integrity should therefore be understood not only as a moral expectation but also as a strategic organizational resource. Sustainable police performance requires the integration of ethical capability, leadership credibility, employee welfare, transparent human resource systems, and balanced performance evaluation. The model offers practical value for district police organizations but should be replicated using longitudinal, multi-source, and multi-organization designs.

Acknowledgements

The authors acknowledge the leadership and participating officers of the Kotabaru District Police and the academic support provided during the doctoral research. The authors declare that no external funding was reported and that there are no competing interests.

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