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Supervisor Recognition, Healthy Interpersonal Relationships and Work–Life Balance as Determinants of Work Motivation among Police Personnel

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Abstract: This study examines whether supervisor recognition, healthy interpersonal relationships, and work–life balance affect work motivation among personnel of the Directorate of Special Criminal Investigation of the West Sumatra Regional Police. The study used a quantitative explanatory design with a cross-sectional survey approach. The population consisted of 146 personnel, and 82 respondents were obtained through accidental sampling. Data were collected using a five-point Likert questionnaire and analyzed with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling through SmartPLS 4. The measurement model met the required validity and reliability criteria after one work–life balance indicator was removed. The structural model shows that supervisor recognition has a positive and significant effect on work motivation ($\beta = 0.360$; $t = 4.395$; $p < 0.001$), healthy interpersonal relationships also have a positive and significant effect and emerge as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.411$; $t = 5.382$; $p < 0.001$), and work–life balance has a positive and significant effect ($\beta = 0.219$; $t = 2.082$; $p = 0.037$). The model explains 44.0 percent of the variance in work motivation. These findings indicate that work motivation in police organizations is strengthened when recognition, social support, and role balance are managed in an integrated manner.

Keywords: Supervisor Recognition, Interpersonal Relationships, Work–Life Balance, Work Motivation, Police Personnel.

INTRODUCTION

Public sector organizations are under increasing pressure to improve accountability, responsiveness, and service quality. In behavioral terms, organizational performance is not sustained only by rules, structure, and material resources, but also by the psychological energy that encourages employees to work with persistence and commitment. For this reason, work motivation remains a strategic construct because it shapes the direction, intensity, and continuity of employee effort. Contemporary studies show that supportive work conditions, positive relational climates, and work–life balance are closely associated with intrinsic motivation, well-being, thriving at work, and other positive work outcomes (Ardin, 2020; Hasan et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2021; Medina-Garrido et al., 2023).

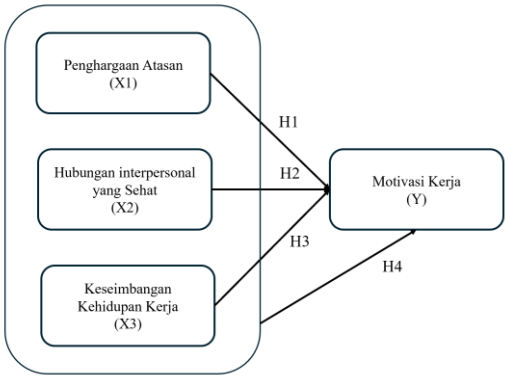
The issue becomes even more central in police organizations. Personnel in criminal investigation units operate under time pressure, legal responsibility, high public scrutiny, and intensive interdependence. In such settings, weak motivation may reduce persistence, care, and initiative, whereas strong motivation can sustain professionalism, accuracy, and responsible task execution. The Directorate of Special Criminal Investigation of the West Sumatra Regional Police represents a relevant context because its personnel face demanding investigative work while being expected to maintain operational reliability and institutional credibility.

This study focuses on three organizational determinants of work motivation. Supervisor recognition represents the recognition dimension of work experience. Positive feedback and recognition communicate that employee contributions are valued, which can strengthen attachment to work and encourage reciprocal effort. Prior evidence indicates that reward and recognition improve employee engagement and work behavior, suggesting that supervisor recognition may function as an important motivational mechanism (Goller & Späth, 2023; Lestari et al., 2021; Shadiq et al., 2022).

Healthy interpersonal relationships represent the social climate dimension. Employees rarely work in isolation; rather, they perform within networks of communication, trust, respect, and cooperation. Relational quality therefore matters not only for coordination, but also for psychological safety and positive energy at work. Research shows that workplace friendship, organizational trust, and interpersonal quality are associated with work engagement, employee well-being, and job satisfaction (Czerw et al., 2025; Hasnita et al., 2023; Herminayani & Nurbaiti, 2020; Putri et al., 2022; Yan et al., 2021).

Work–life balance represents the role-balance dimension between work and personal life. In high-pressure institutions, prolonged imbalance may create fatigue, stress, and reduced enthusiasm for work. Conversely, better balance can support recovery, emotional stability, and intrinsic motivation. Previous studies indicate that work–life balance is associated with subjective well-being, job satisfaction, motivation, and performance, while work–life conflict tends to lower performance through deteriorating well-being (Hasnita et al., 2023; Huo & Jiang, 2023; Medina-Garrido et al., 2023; Putri et al., 2022; Wulandari, 2024).

The research gap arises from two conditions. First, many prior studies place engagement, well-being, satisfaction, or performance as dependent variables, while direct evidence on work motivation remains more limited. Second, previous evidence is dominated by corporate, tourism, hospitality, health, and general public administration settings. Empirical testing in formal, hierarchical, and high-pressure law-enforcement organizations is still limited. This study therefore contributes by testing supervisor recognition, healthy interpersonal relationships, and work–life balance simultaneously as determinants of work motivation in a police investigation unit. Based on the theoretical and empirical background, the study examines whether each predictor has a positive effect on work motivation and whether the three predictors jointly provide meaningful explanatory power.



Source: Developed by the authors, 2026

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework positions supervisor recognition, healthy interpersonal relationships, and work–life balance as exogenous constructs that directly predict work motivation. This configuration reflects the recognition, social, and psychological balance dimensions of the work experience discussed in the theoretical section.

This study extends the literature in three ways. First, it places work motivation, rather than engagement or well-being, as the main dependent variable. Second, it examines the model in a formal, hierarchical, and high-pressure law-enforcement setting, which remains underrepresented in prior studies. Third, it tests supervisor recognition, healthy interpersonal relationships, and work–life balance simultaneously in a single explanatory framework. These contributions are expected to enrich organizational behavior research and provide practical implications for motivation management in police institutions.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative explanatory design with a cross-sectional survey approach. The research was conducted at the Directorate of Special Criminal Investigation of the West Sumatra Regional Police during February and March 2026. The population consisted of 146 personnel. Because respondent access depended on operational availability and field conditions within the police institution, this study applied accidental sampling as a nonprobability technique and obtained 82 respondents. Accordingly, the findings should be interpreted as explanatory evidence within the studied setting rather than as a basis for full statistical generalization to all police personnel (Sugiyono, 2021).

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire measured on a five-point Likert scale (Septiano & Sari, 2021). Supervisor recognition was initially represented by 27 indicators, healthy interpersonal relationships by 24 indicators, work–life balance by 24 indicators, and work motivation by 9 indicators. The instrument was designed to capture perceptions of recognition, relational climate, balance between work and personal roles, and motivational energy in performing duties.

The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling with SmartPLS 4. The evaluation of the outer model included convergent validity and construct reliability. One work–life balance indicator (X3_2) was eliminated because its initial outer loading was below the minimum threshold. After re-estimation, all retained indicators had loadings above 0.70. The structural model was then assessed through path coefficients, t statistics, probability values, coefficient of determination, predictive relevance, and effect size.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Respondent Profile

Category	Group	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	68	83%
	Female	14	17%
Age	21–30 years	22	27%
	31–40 years	41	50%
	41–50 years	16	20%
	51–60 years	3	4%
Education	Senior high school	38	46%
	Diploma	0	0%
	Bachelor	37	45%
	Master	7	9%

Source: Primary data processed, 2026

The respondents were dominated by personnel aged 31–40 years, male officers, and individuals with senior high school or bachelor-level educational backgrounds. This pattern

indicates that the sample mostly represented operationally active and professionally mature personnel, which is relevant because the constructs under study concern perceived recognition, relational climate, role balance, and work motivation in a demanding police work environment.

Table 2. Descriptive and Measurement Model Summary

Construct	Final items	TCR (%)	Loading range	CR	AVE
Supervisor recognition	27	59.90	0.735–0.876	0.981	0.658
Healthy interpersonal relationships	24	59.42	0.721–0.871	0.978	0.647
Work–life balance	23	58.85	0.709–0.825	0.972	0.602
Work motivation	9	60.76	0.744–0.873	0.942	0.644

Source: SmartPLS output and primary data processed, 2026

The descriptive results indicate that all constructs were perceived at a less than optimal level, with TCR values below 61 percent. This pattern is substantively important because it suggests that work motivation does not develop in a fully supportive organizational environment. Recognition from supervisors, the quality of interpersonal relationships, and work–life balance are all present, but they have not yet reached a level that can be considered strong or fully institutionalized. This condition helps explain why variation in work motivation still exists across personnel and why organizational improvement remains necessary despite the significance of all three predictors.

Table 3. Structural Model Results

Path	Beta	t	p	f^2	Decision
Supervisor recognition → Work motivation	0.360	4.395	0.000	0.222	Supported
Healthy interpersonal relationships → Work motivation	0.411	5.382	0.000	0.284	Supported
Work–life balance → Work motivation	0.219	2.082	0.037	0.084	Supported

Source: SmartPLS output, 2026.

The inner model produced an R-square of 0.440 and an adjusted R-square of 0.418 for work motivation, which indicates moderate explanatory power. The predictive relevance value was 0.263, suggesting that the model has adequate predictive usefulness. Among the three predictors, healthy interpersonal relationships had the largest effect size, followed by supervisor recognition and work–life balance. This means that the social climate of work was the most influential explanatory factor in the present setting.

Supervisor recognition and work motivation

Supervisor recognition had a positive and significant effect on work motivation. This result indicates that recognition, appreciation, and constructive feedback from supervisors can reinforce the sense that work contributions are visible and valued. In a formal police organization, supervisory recognition carries symbolic weight because supervisors are perceived as representatives of the institution. The finding is consistent with Herzberg's motivation logic and with Social Exchange Theory, since positive treatment from supervisors may trigger reciprocal effort and stronger psychological attachment to work. It also aligns with Shadiq et al. (2022), who found that reward and recognition increase employee engagement, and with Goller and Späth (2023), who emphasized the performance value of positive feedback.

In the context of a police investigation unit, recognition from supervisors is especially meaningful because it carries both psychological and institutional value. Personnel do not only interpret recognition as appreciation for effort, but also as confirmation that their work is aligned with organizational expectations and professional standards. This makes supervisor

recognition a mechanism that reinforces discipline, confidence, and persistence in task execution.

Healthy interpersonal relationships and work motivation

Healthy interpersonal relationships emerged as the strongest predictor of work motivation. This finding suggests that communication quality, trust, cooperation, mutual respect, and social support are especially important in investigative police work, where coordination and interdependence are unavoidable. When personnel feel supported and safe in their interactions, they are more likely to sustain effort and remain psychologically engaged with their tasks. The result is in line with Yan et al. (2021), who showed that workplace friendship functions as a job resource, and with Czerw et al. (2025), who highlighted the mediating role of trust for employee well-being. In substantive terms, the present study shows that motivation in a high-pressure police unit is not merely an individual attribute; it is strongly embedded in the quality of everyday social relations at work.

The fact that healthy interpersonal relationships emerged as the strongest predictor suggests that motivation in this setting is deeply social in nature. Investigative police work depends on information sharing, coordination, mutual trust, and rapid problem solving across personnel. Under such conditions, strained interpersonal relations can easily weaken work energy, while healthy relations can sustain motivation even when formal pressures remain high. This finding indicates that the social environment of work is not merely supportive, but constitutive of motivation itself in a police organization.

Work–life balance and work motivation

Work–life balance also had a positive and significant effect, although its contribution was smaller than the other two predictors. This still matters because police personnel often face unpredictable schedules, intense workloads, and pressures that can spill over into personal and family life. Better role balance helps maintain emotional stability, recovery, and sustained motivational energy. This finding is consistent with Hasan et al. (2020), Huo and Jiang (2023), and Medina-Garrido et al. (2023), all of whom indicate that balance between work and personal life is related to well-being, intrinsic motivation, or performance. The descriptive results additionally show that role balance remains relatively weak among respondents, which suggests that even modest organizational improvements in workload management and flexibility could produce motivational gains.

Although work–life balance showed the smallest effect among the three predictors, its significance should not be underestimated. In police organizations, work schedules, sudden operational demands, and role spillover are common. Under these conditions, even a modest improvement in role balance may have an important cumulative effect on motivation by reducing emotional fatigue and preserving psychological readiness. This suggests that work–life balance may function less as an immediate driver of motivation and more as a stabilizing condition that protects motivation over time.

Integrated interpretation

Taken together, the findings support the view that work motivation among police personnel is shaped by an interaction of recognition, relational climate, and role balance. The pattern fits the Job Demands–Resources perspective because the three predictors function as work resources that help personnel cope with demanding duties. The results also strengthen the study's contribution to the literature by showing that direct work motivation, rather than engagement or well-being alone, can be meaningfully explained in a law-enforcement setting. For management practice, the evidence indicates that improving interpersonal climate should be treated as the first priority, while recognition systems and work–life support should be strengthened as complementary mechanisms.

The findings imply that motivation management in police institutions should not rely only on formal command structures. First, supervisors need to provide recognition in a more visible, fair, and consistent manner. Second, interpersonal climate should be treated as a

strategic resource by strengthening communication quality, mutual trust, and supportive coordination. Third, workload and scheduling practices should be managed more carefully so that personnel can maintain healthier balance between work and personal responsibilities. Together, these interventions may improve motivational conditions in a more sustainable way.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that supervisor recognition, healthy interpersonal relationships, and work–life balance all have positive and significant effects on the work motivation of personnel at the Directorate of Special Criminal Investigation of the West Sumatra Regional Police. Healthy interpersonal relationships are the most influential determinant, which means that motivation in this setting depends heavily on trust, communication, cooperation, and social support. Supervisor recognition provides an additional motivational mechanism through appreciation and acknowledgment, while work–life balance contributes by helping personnel preserve stability between professional and personal roles. The model shows moderate explanatory power, indicating that these three factors form an important but not exhaustive explanation of work motivation. In practical terms, the study suggests that police organizations can strengthen motivation more effectively when they improve the interpersonal climate of work, institutionalize fair recognition practices, and support healthier balance between work demands and personal life. Because the study used nonprobability sampling in a single organizational setting and relied on cross-sectional perception data, future research should extend the model to other law-enforcement institutions and incorporate additional predictors such as workload, leadership, organizational support, and organizational culture.

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