

The Influence of Motivation, Work Ethic and Work Discipline on the Performance of Employees in the Public Works and Spatial Planning Department of Gunungsitoli City

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Article history

Submitted: 2025/10/20; Revised: 2025/11/13; Accepted: 2025/12/24

Abstract

Employee performance is one of the most important elements in achieving organizational goals, especially within government institutions that directly provide services to the public. This study aims to analyze the influence of motivation, work ethic, and work discipline on employee performance at the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City. This research employed a quantitative approach using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3 software for data analysis. The population of this study consisted of employees at the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City, with 70 respondents selected as the research sample. Data were collected through questionnaires, observations, and documentation studies. The results of the study revealed that motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, with a path coefficient value of 0.285, a t-statistic of 2.536, and a p-value of 0.012. Work ethic also demonstrated a positive and significant influence on employee performance, with a path coefficient value of 0.331, a t-statistic of 2.786, and a p-value of 0.006. Furthermore, work discipline showed the strongest influence on employee performance, with a path coefficient value of 0.344, a t-statistic of 3.147, and a p-value of 0.002. Simultaneously, motivation, work ethic, and work discipline explained 70.5% of the variance in employee performance, as indicated by the R-square value of 0.705. The findings indicate that improving employee motivation, strengthening work ethic, and enforcing work discipline are essential strategies for enhancing employee performance and organizational effectiveness within public sector institutions.

Keywords

Employee Performance, Human Resource Management, Motivation, Public Sector Organization, Work Ethic.



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INTRODUCTION

Employee performance is one of the most important elements in achieving organizational goals, especially within government institutions that directly provide services to the public. Public sector organizations are required to maintain

effectiveness and efficiency in delivering services so that community satisfaction can be achieved. The success of public institutions is highly dependent on the quality of their human resources, particularly civil servants who act as implementers of government policies and public service providers. According to the thesis entitled *The Influence of Motivation, Work Ethic, and Work Discipline on Employee Performance at the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City*, employee performance plays a central role in determining the success of organizational objectives because employees are expected to work professionally, responsibly, and efficiently in carrying out their duties.

The Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City is one of the government institutions responsible for infrastructure development and spatial planning management. This institution oversees several divisions, including water resources, highways, spatial planning, and equipment management. As a public service institution, it requires employees who possess high performance and dedication in carrying out their responsibilities. However, the study found that employee performance within the institution had not yet reached optimal levels. Data from the organization indicated that employee performance achievement continued to decline from 2017 to 2021. The performance percentage decreased from 85.00% in 2017 to 64.23% in 2021, showing that employee performance was still categorized as “fairly good” rather than excellent. This condition reflects the need for improvements in several organizational and individual factors influencing employee productivity and effectiveness.

One of the major factors influencing employee performance is motivation. Motivation is considered an internal driving force that encourages individuals to perform certain activities in order to achieve organizational goals. Murti and Srimulyani (2013) explained that motivation is a condition that drives employees to direct their efforts toward achieving company objectives. Similarly, Wibowo (2015) stated that motivation reflects the strength within a person that influences the direction, intensity, and persistence of organizational behavior. In the context of the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City, employee motivation was found to be relatively low. Some employees tended to work without enthusiasm, lacked creativity, and even showed lazy behavior during working hours. Low motivation can negatively affect employee productivity, responsibility, and commitment toward organizational objectives.

Besides motivation, work ethic is another important factor affecting employee performance. Work ethic refers to positive work behavior rooted in strong awareness,

commitment, and responsibility toward work. Sinamo (2014) defined work ethic as a set of positive work behaviors based on fundamental beliefs and total commitment to an integral work paradigm. A strong work ethic encourages employees to work diligently, responsibly, and professionally. Employees with a high work ethic generally demonstrate discipline, persistence, honesty, and dedication in completing their tasks. Conversely, employees with poor work ethic often waste working hours, show low commitment, and fail to complete their tasks effectively.

The research conducted at the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City revealed several problems related to work ethic. Some employees were observed spending work hours chatting, sitting idly, or leaving the office for matters unrelated to their duties. Additionally, employees showed low perseverance and responsibility, causing delays in task completion. Such conditions indicate that work ethic significantly contributes to the effectiveness of employee performance and organizational productivity.

Another factor that strongly influences employee performance is work discipline. Discipline reflects employees' obedience and compliance with organizational rules and regulations. According to Harahap and Tirtayasa (2020), discipline is an element that helps individuals become better in carrying out their work responsibilities. Employees with high discipline tend to follow regulations, maintain punctuality, and complete tasks responsibly. In contrast, poor discipline often leads to absenteeism, lateness, and low productivity.

The study found that discipline problems were evident among employees of the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City. Several employees demonstrated low attendance rates and were frequently late to work. Furthermore, some employees did not fully comply with workplace regulations due to weak enforcement of sanctions and limited supervision from management. Attendance data also showed significant percentages of employees arriving late or leaving work before official hours throughout the year. Such disciplinary issues can directly reduce organizational effectiveness and employee performance.

Employee performance is generally influenced by various internal and external factors, including motivation, work ethic, discipline, organizational support, leadership, and work environment. Mangkunegara (2017) identified several indicators of employee performance, including work quality, work quantity, task execution, and responsibility. Employees who possess strong motivation, positive work ethic, and

high discipline are more likely to achieve better performance outcomes and contribute significantly to organizational success.

Based on these conditions, the study aimed to analyze the influence of motivation, work ethic, and work discipline on employee performance at the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City. The findings of the study indicated that motivation, work ethic, and work discipline each had a positive and significant influence on employee performance. Therefore, improving these three aspects is essential for enhancing employee productivity, organizational effectiveness, and the quality of public services provided by government institutions.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative research approach to examine the influence of motivation, work ethic, and work discipline on employee performance at the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City. The research was conducted at the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City with the respondents consisting exclusively of civil servants (PNS) working in the institution. The population of this study included all employees within the institution, while the sample consisted of 70 respondents selected to represent the research population. Data collection techniques were carried out through the distribution of questionnaires using a Likert scale measurement to assess the variables of motivation, work ethic, work discipline, and employee performance. In addition to questionnaires, documentation studies and observations were also conducted to support the research findings and obtain a comprehensive understanding of employee conditions within the organization. The dependent variable in this research was employee performance, while the independent variables consisted of motivation, work ethic, and work discipline. Employee performance indicators included work quality, work quantity, task implementation, and responsibility, as proposed by Mangkunegara (2017). Motivation indicators involved compensation, working conditions, and work facilities, while work ethic indicators included responsibility, enthusiasm, discipline, diligence, and maintaining dignity in the workplace. Furthermore, work discipline indicators referred to employee compliance with organizational rules, punctuality, and adherence to workplace procedures. Data analysis in this study used Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS software to test the proposed hypotheses. The analysis process included the evaluation of the outer model through convergent validity, discriminant validity, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and construct reliability testing, followed by the evaluation of the inner model using R-square, F-square, and path coefficient analysis to determine the significance

and strength of relationships among variables. This methodological approach was chosen to provide accurate empirical evidence regarding the effects of motivation, work ethic, and work discipline on employee performance within the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Motivation Have A Significant Effect On Employee Performance At The Public Works And Spatial Planning Office Of Gunungsitoli City

The results of this study indicate that motivation has a positive and significant influence on employee performance at the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City. The analysis was conducted using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach through SmartPLS 3 software. Based on the findings, the relationship between motivation and employee performance demonstrated a positive path coefficient value of 0.285, indicating that an increase in employee motivation contributes directly to the improvement of employee performance. Furthermore, the statistical testing showed a t-statistic value of 2.536, which was higher than the t-table value of 1.96, while the p-value was 0.012, lower than the significance level of 0.05. These results confirm that motivation significantly affects employee performance.

The findings reveal that employees who possess stronger motivation tend to demonstrate better work performance in terms of quality, quantity, responsibility, and task implementation. Motivation acts as an internal driving force that encourages employees to work more enthusiastically and productively. Employees with high motivation are generally more focused on achieving organizational objectives, more committed to completing their duties, and more willing to contribute positively to the institution. In this study, motivation was measured using indicators such as employee behavior, employee effort, and employee persistence. These indicators significantly contributed to improving employee performance within the organization.

The statistical findings are also supported by the effect size analysis. The F-square value for the influence of motivation on employee performance was 0.263, indicating a moderate effect size. This means that motivation contributes substantially to employee performance improvement, although other variables such as work ethic and work discipline also influence performance outcomes. Additionally, the R-square value of employee performance was 0.705, indicating that motivation, work ethic, and work discipline together explained 70.5% of the variance in employee performance. This percentage demonstrates that the research model has a moderate to strong explanatory capability in describing factors influencing employee performance.

The research findings also revealed several practical conditions related to employee motivation within the institution. Although the implementation of motivation within the organization was generally categorized as good, several employees still showed low levels of motivation. Some employees lacked technical expertise according to their job responsibilities, while approximately 23% of employees were not willing to carry out tasks without direct instructions from supervisors. Moreover, several employees still demonstrated behaviors that did not support optimal work performance, such as low initiative and lack of creativity in completing their duties. These conditions indicate that organizational management still needs to improve motivational strategies to maximize employee performance.

Theoretically, the findings support the opinion of Uno (2012), who stated that motivation is an internal force that influences the direction, intensity, and persistence of employee behavior in performing work activities. Motivation encourages employees to work harder, remain focused, and persist in achieving organizational goals. Employees with strong motivation tend to show higher enthusiasm, stronger commitment, and greater responsibility in completing their work tasks. Conversely, employees with low motivation are more likely to experience declining productivity, reduced work quality, and lower organizational involvement.

The findings of this study are also consistent with several previous studies cited in the thesis. Research conducted by Afandi and Bahri (2020), Jufrizen and Hadi (2021), Ikhsan Abd. Wahid (2019), M. Effendi and Febrie Yogie (2019), and Sheila A. Yughi et al. (2022) similarly concluded that motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Therefore, the results of this study strengthen previous empirical evidence that employee motivation is a critical factor in improving organizational performance. Increasing employee motivation through recognition, supportive leadership, appropriate rewards, and professional development opportunities can significantly enhance employee productivity and overall institutional effectiveness.

Work Ethic Have A Significant Effect On Employee Performance At The Public Works And Spatial Planning Office Of Gunungsitoli City

The results of this study demonstrate that work ethic has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City. The hypothesis testing was conducted using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method with the assistance of

SmartPLS 3 software. Based on the statistical analysis, the path coefficient value for the relationship between work ethic and employee performance was 0.331, indicating a positive relationship between the two variables. This result implies that an improvement in employee work ethic directly contributes to higher employee performance. Furthermore, the hypothesis testing showed a t-statistic value of 2.786, which exceeded the critical t-table value of 1.96, while the p-value was 0.006, lower than the significance level of 0.05. These findings confirm that work ethic significantly influences employee performance and that the second research hypothesis was accepted.

The findings indicate that employees with a stronger work ethic tend to demonstrate better performance in completing their duties and responsibilities. Work ethic reflects positive work behavior characterized by discipline, commitment, responsibility, diligence, honesty, and dedication toward organizational objectives. Employees who possess a high work ethic generally show greater seriousness in completing assignments, maintain professionalism, and demonstrate stronger accountability in carrying out their work. In this study, work ethic was measured through several indicators, including hard work, responsibility, discipline, perseverance, and appreciation for work values. These indicators contributed positively to employee performance within the institution.

The effect size analysis further supports the significance of work ethic in influencing employee performance. The F-square value for the influence of work ethic on employee performance was 0.317, which indicates a moderate effect size. This finding suggests that work ethic provides a meaningful contribution to improving employee performance, although it operates alongside other influential factors such as motivation and work discipline. In addition, the R-square value of employee performance was reported at 0.705, indicating that 70.5% of the variation in employee performance could be explained collectively by motivation, work ethic, and work discipline. This demonstrates that the research model has substantial explanatory power in identifying determinants of employee performance within the organization.

The practical findings of the study also revealed several issues related to employee work ethic in the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City. Although the general condition of employee work ethic was categorized as relatively good, several employees still displayed behaviors that reflected weak work ethic. Some employees were observed spending work hours chatting, sitting idly, or leaving the office for activities unrelated to work responsibilities. In addition, some employees lacked persistence and responsibility in completing assigned tasks,

resulting in delays and inefficiencies in work completion. These conditions indicate that improving employee work ethic remains necessary to achieve optimal organizational performance.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings support the opinion of Sinamo (2014), who explained that work ethic is a set of positive work behaviors rooted in strong awareness, commitment, and fundamental beliefs toward work. Employees with a strong work ethic are more likely to work diligently, responsibly, and professionally because they view work not merely as an obligation but also as a form of self-actualization and contribution to organizational success. A positive work ethic also encourages employees to maintain integrity, discipline, and consistency in achieving organizational goals.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research conducted by several scholars cited in the thesis, including studies by Jufrizen et al. (2021), Sari et al. (2020), and Siregar (2021), which similarly concluded that work ethic has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. Therefore, this study strengthens existing empirical evidence that work ethic is one of the key determinants of employee performance in public sector organizations. Enhancing employee work ethic through organizational culture development, leadership support, performance evaluation, and professional responsibility can contribute significantly to improving employee productivity and institutional effectiveness.

Work Discipline Have A Significant Effect On Employee Performance At The Public Works And Spatial Planning Office Of Gunungsitoli City

The results of this study indicate that work discipline has a positive and significant influence on employee performance at the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City. The hypothesis testing was conducted using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method with SmartPLS 3 software. Based on the statistical analysis, the path coefficient value for the relationship between work discipline and employee performance was 0.344, which indicates a positive relationship between the two variables. This result demonstrates that improvements in employee work discipline contribute directly to enhanced employee performance. Furthermore, the statistical test produced a t-statistic value of 3.147, which was higher than the t-table value of 1.96, while the p-value was 0.002, lower than the significance level of 0.05. These findings confirm that work discipline significantly affects employee performance and that the third research hypothesis was accepted.

The findings show that employees who maintain high levels of discipline tend to demonstrate better work performance in terms of responsibility, punctuality, task completion, and adherence to organizational procedures. Work discipline reflects employee obedience to organizational regulations, attendance policies, working hours, and institutional standards. Employees with strong discipline generally complete their duties on time, follow established procedures, and show greater accountability in performing their responsibilities. In this study, work discipline was measured using indicators such as attendance, punctuality, compliance with organizational rules, and responsibility in carrying out tasks. These indicators contributed significantly to improving employee performance within the organization.

The effect size analysis further strengthened the findings regarding the influence of work discipline on employee performance. The F-square value for the influence of work discipline on employee performance was 0.341, indicating a moderate effect size. This means that work discipline provides a substantial contribution to employee performance improvement compared to other variables in the research model. Additionally, the R-square value of employee performance was 0.705, which indicates that motivation, work ethic, and work discipline collectively explained 70.5% of the variance in employee performance. This result demonstrates that the research model has strong explanatory capability in identifying factors influencing employee performance at the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City.

The study also identified several practical disciplinary issues among employees within the institution. Although employee discipline was generally categorized as good, several employees still demonstrated behaviors inconsistent with organizational regulations. Attendance records showed that some employees frequently arrived late, left work before official hours, or failed to maintain consistent attendance. In addition, there were indications that some employees did not fully comply with workplace rules due to weak enforcement of sanctions and limited supervision from management. These disciplinary problems negatively affected employee productivity and reduced organizational effectiveness in delivering public services. The findings suggest that improving supervision systems and implementing stricter disciplinary measures are necessary to enhance employee performance.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings support the opinion of Hasibuan (2016), who stated that work discipline is an important managerial function used to improve employee awareness and willingness to comply with organizational regulations and social norms. Discipline encourages employees to perform their duties

responsibly and consistently according to organizational expectations. Employees who maintain good discipline are more likely to demonstrate professionalism, commitment, and productivity in carrying out their work responsibilities. Conversely, poor discipline often leads to reduced productivity, inefficiency, and declining organizational performance.

The findings of this study are also consistent with previous research cited in the thesis. Studies conducted by Harahap and Tirtayasa (2020), Jufrizen and Hadi (2021), and Sari et al. (2020) similarly concluded that work discipline has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. Therefore, this study reinforces existing empirical evidence that work discipline is one of the most important factors influencing employee performance in public sector institutions. Strengthening discipline through clear regulations, consistent supervision, fair sanctions, and leadership commitment can significantly improve employee productivity, accountability, and organizational effectiveness in providing public services.

Motivation, Work Ethic, And Work Discipline Simultaneously Have A Significant Effect On Employee Performance At The Public Works And Spatial Planning Office Of Gunungsitoli City

The results of this study indicate that motivation, work ethic, and work discipline simultaneously have a positive and significant influence on employee performance at the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City. The hypothesis testing was conducted using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach with SmartPLS 3 software to examine the combined effect of the independent variables on employee performance. Based on the results of the structural model analysis, the coefficient of determination (R-square) value for employee performance was 0.705, meaning that 70.5% of the variance in employee performance could be explained collectively by motivation, work ethic, and work discipline. Meanwhile, the remaining 29.5% was influenced by other variables outside the scope of this study, such as leadership style, organizational culture, compensation, work environment, and communication factors. The R-square value indicates that the research model has strong explanatory capability in describing factors affecting employee performance within the institution.

The simultaneous influence of the three independent variables was further reflected in the significance of each variable within the structural model. Motivation showed a path coefficient value of 0.285 with a t-statistic value of 2.536 and a p-value of 0.012. Work ethic demonstrated a path coefficient value of 0.331 with a t-statistic value of 2.786 and a p-value of 0.006. Meanwhile, work discipline produced the highest

path coefficient value of 0.344 with a t-statistic value of 3.147 and a p-value of 0.002. These findings indicate that all independent variables significantly contributed to improving employee performance, with work discipline showing the strongest influence among the three variables. The positive coefficients demonstrate that increases in motivation, work ethic, and work discipline are associated with higher levels of employee performance.

The effect size analysis also supports the simultaneous contribution of the independent variables to employee performance. The F-square value for motivation was 0.263, work ethic was 0.317, and work discipline was 0.341, all of which fall within the moderate effect size category. These findings indicate that each variable individually contributes meaningfully to employee performance while collectively forming a strong explanatory model. Work discipline showed the largest effect size, suggesting that employee compliance with organizational regulations and work procedures is one of the most critical determinants of performance within the institution. However, motivation and work ethic also played substantial roles in supporting employee productivity and effectiveness.

The practical findings of the study revealed that employee performance at the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City was still not fully optimal. Several organizational issues related to motivation, work ethic, and discipline were identified during the research process. Some employees lacked initiative, showed low enthusiasm in completing tasks, and depended heavily on direct instructions from supervisors before carrying out their responsibilities. In terms of work ethic, several employees were observed spending working hours chatting, sitting idly, or engaging in activities unrelated to work responsibilities. Additionally, disciplinary problems such as lateness, absenteeism, and noncompliance with organizational rules were still frequently found among employees. These conditions negatively affected employee productivity and reduced the effectiveness of public service delivery.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings support the view that employee performance is influenced by multiple behavioral and organizational factors simultaneously. According to Mangkunegara (2017), employee performance reflects the quality and quantity of work achieved by employees in carrying out their responsibilities. Motivation encourages employees to work enthusiastically and persistently, work ethic strengthens commitment and professionalism, while discipline ensures compliance with organizational procedures and responsibilities. The interaction of these three factors creates a productive and effective work environment that supports organizational success.

The findings of this study are also consistent with previous empirical studies cited in the thesis, which concluded that motivation, work ethic, and work discipline collectively have a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Therefore, the study confirms that improving employee motivation, strengthening work ethic, and enforcing work discipline are essential strategies for enhancing employee productivity, organizational effectiveness, and the quality of public services at the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that motivation, work ethic, and work discipline each have a positive and significant influence on employee performance at the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City. Motivation was proven to improve employee performance through increased enthusiasm, persistence, and responsibility in completing work tasks, as indicated by a path coefficient value of 0.285, a t-statistic of 2.536, and a p-value of 0.012. Work ethic also demonstrated a significant positive effect on employee performance with a path coefficient value of 0.331, a t-statistic of 2.786, and a p-value of 0.006, indicating that employees with stronger commitment, discipline, and responsibility tend to achieve better performance outcomes. Furthermore, work discipline showed the strongest influence on employee performance with a path coefficient value of 0.344, a t-statistic of 3.147, and a p-value of 0.002, confirming that compliance with organizational rules and punctuality significantly contribute to employee productivity and effectiveness. Simultaneously, motivation, work ethic, and work discipline collectively explained 70.5% of the variance in employee performance, as reflected by the R-square value of 0.705, while the remaining 29.5% was influenced by other factors outside the study. Therefore, improving employee motivation, strengthening work ethic, and enforcing work discipline are essential strategies for enhancing employee performance and organizational effectiveness within the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office of Gunungsitoli City.

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