

The Role of Work Motivation in Mediating the Influence of Organizational Culture on Employee Performance in the Disaster Management Agency in Batu Bara Regency

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Abstract

Employee performance is a strategic factor in supporting the effectiveness of public organizations, particularly the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) of Batu Bara Regency, which has high, fast-paced, and risky work demands. This study aims to analyze the influence of organizational culture on employee performance with work motivation as a mediating variable. The research method used is a quantitative approach with a census technique of all 81 permanent employees of the BPBD of Batu Bara Regency. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using the Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method with the help of the SmartPLS application. The test results show that organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on employee performance and work motivation. In addition, work motivation has been proven to have a positive and significant effect on employee performance. The indirect effect test results show that work motivation can significantly mediate the influence of organizational culture on employee performance. These findings indicate that a strong and positive organizational culture can increase employee work motivation, which ultimately has an impact on improving the performance of BPBD Batu Bara Regency employees. This study provides empirical contributions to the development of human resource management in the public sector, particularly in efforts to improve employee performance through strengthening organizational culture and increasing work motivation in a sustainable manner.

Keywords: Organizational Culture, Work Motivation, Employee Performance

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Introduction

Employee performance is a strategic factor in determining the success of public organizations, particularly the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) of Batu Bara Regency, which plays a vital role in disaster management and humanitarian services. The BPBD is required to work quickly, accurately, and in a coordinated manner in dealing with various emergency situations, so that employee performance is the main key in ensuring the effectiveness of task implementation and the achievement of organizational goals. Employees with optimal performance are expected to be able to provide professional, accurate, and responsible responses in every disaster management activity.

Employee performance is not only influenced by individual abilities, but also greatly determined by organizational factors, one of which is organizational culture. Organizational culture is a system of values, norms, and habits that are shared and serve as guidelines for employees in their attitudes and work. A strong and positive organizational culture can shape work behavior that is disciplined, collaborative, and results-oriented. Conversely, a weak organizational culture can cause inconsistencies in task implementation and reduce employee performance. Therefore, strengthening organizational culture is an important aspect in improving employee performance within the BPBD.

However, the influence of organizational culture on employee performance is not always direct. One psychological factor that plays an important role in bridging this relationship is work motivation. Work motivation is an internal and external drive that influences the intensity, direction, and persistence of employees in carrying out their work. Employees with high work motivation tend to show greater enthusiasm, commitment, and responsibility in carrying out their duties, which has a positive impact on performance. A supportive organizational culture, such as one that promotes cooperation, mutual respect, and clarity of roles, can increase employee work motivation.

In the context of the Batu Bara District Disaster Management Agency, work motivation is a very important aspect given the characteristics of the job, which is stressful, high risk, and demands round-the-clock work. A strong organizational culture is expected to foster employee work motivation so that they remain enthusiastic and highly dedicated in carrying out disaster management tasks. Thus, work motivation is seen as a variable that mediates the influence of organizational culture on employee performance.

Based on this description, research on the role of work motivation in mediating the influence of organizational culture on employee performance at the Batu Bara Regency Disaster Management Agency is important to conduct. This research is expected to provide empirical contributions to the development of human resource management in the public sector, particularly in efforts to improve employee performance through strengthening organizational culture and increasing work motivation in a sustainable manner.

Literature Review

Employee Performance

Definition of Employee Performance

According to Mangkunegara (2021), employee performance refers to the work results achieved by employees in carrying out their duties and responsibilities within the organization. Performance is measured based on how well employees meet the work standards set by the organization. Employee performance includes not only the results achieved but also the process of achieving those results, which covers aspects of efficiency, effectiveness, and quality.

Factors that influence Employee Performance

According to Mangkunegara (2021), there are several factors that influence employee performance, including:

- 1) Individual Factors

The abilities, skills, attitudes, and personal motivation of employees. Employees who have good abilities and skills tend to perform better.

- 2) **Organizational Factors**
Organizational policies, organizational culture, as well as the support and facilities provided by the organization also greatly influence employee performance. Organizations that provide a conducive and supportive work environment will improve the performance of their employees.
- 3) **Work Environment Factors**
External factors such as the physical condition of the workplace, relationships between employees, and communication within the organization also affect employee performance.
- 4) **Work Motivation**
Motivation is a very important factor in encouraging employees to work better. Motivated employees tend to perform better because they feel they have clear goals and the drive to achieve them.

Employee Performance Indicators

Mangkunegara (2021) mentions several indicators used to measure employee performance, including:

- 1) **Work Quality**
The level of accuracy, precision, and conformity of work results with established standards.
- 2) **Work Quantity**
The amount of work that can be completed within a certain period of time in accordance with the organization's expectations.
- 3) **Timeliness**
The ability of employees to complete work within the specified time limits.
- 4) **Initiative**
The ability of employees to take proactive action, without waiting for instructions, in completing tasks.
- 5) **Teamwork**
The ability of employees to work together with other colleagues, both within a team and in a broader work environment.
- 6) **Responsibility**
Employees' awareness to carry out their duties and responsibilities with full commitment and discipline.

Work motivation

Definition of Work Motivation

According to Robbins & Judge (2022), work motivation is a process that explains the intensity, direction, and persistence of individuals in achieving a goal. So, in the context of motivation, teachers are internal and external forces that encourage teachers to carry out their educational duties whether in teaching, educating, guiding, or carrying out other professional responsibilities with enthusiasm, consistency, and a focus on achieving educational goals at school.

Indicators of Work Motivation

According to Robbins & Judge (2022), indicators of work motivation consist of:

- 1) **Intensity**
The extent of a teacher's effort in preparing and implementing learning.
- 2) **Direction**
The extent to which teachers focus on educational goals and character building for students.
- 3) **Perseverance**

Teachers' consistency in teaching despite limited facilities or diverse student conditions.

Work Environment

Definition of Work Environment

Saefullah (2022) states that the work environment is everything that surrounds workers and can influence them in performing their jobs.

Work Environment Indicators

According to Saefullah (2022), the work environment can be measured through the following indicators:

- 1) **Physical Work Environment**
This indicator focuses on the physical conditions of the workspace that affect employee comfort, thereby increasing focus and productivity.
- 2) **Non-Physical Work Environment**
This includes psychological and social factors in the workplace, such as a good social atmosphere that promotes the psychological well-being of employees.
- 3) **Leadership Support**
Supervisors have a strong influence on the quality of the work environment, such as supportive leaders increasing motivation and work enthusiasm.
- 4) **Work Facilities**
Adequate facilities are crucial for smooth operations; good facilities enhance work efficiency and effectiveness.

Organizational Culture

Understanding Organizational Culture

According to Ridwan et al. (2020), organizational culture consists of values, norms, habits, and behavior patterns that grow and develop within an organization, serving as guidelines for employees in their actions and work. A good organizational culture creates a conducive work environment, increases a sense of belonging, and encourages employees to work more disciplined and productively in achieving organizational goals.

Indicators of Organizational Culture

Ridwan et al. (2020) state that organizational culture can be measured through the following indicators:

- 1) **Organizational values**
The extent to which employees understand and apply organizational values in their work.
- 2) **Work norms and rules**
Work norms that guide employees' daily behavior.
- 3) **Work habits**
Habits formed from employee interactions in the work environment.
- 4) **Interpersonal relationships**
The quality of interactions and cooperation among employees.
- 5) **Leadership in the organization**
Leaders as role models for organizational culture.
- 6) **Commitment to the organization**
The extent to which employees feel connected to the organization's goals and values.

Conceptual Framework

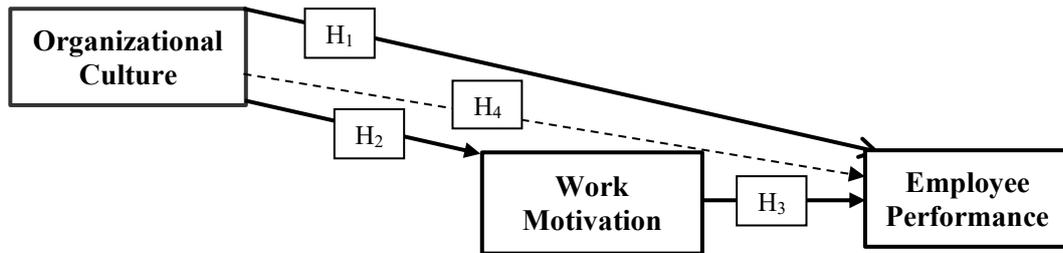


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Research Hypothesis

- H₁ Organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Regional Disaster Management Agency of Batu Bara Regency.
- H₂: Organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on work motivation at the Regional Disaster Management Agency of Batu Bara Regency.
- H₃: H₅: Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Regional Disaster Management Agency of Batu Bara Regency.
- H₄ : Organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work motivation at the Regional Disaster Management Agency of Batu Bara Regency.

Research Methodology

Type of Research

The type of research used by the researcher is quantitative research. According to Sugiyono (2010), quantitative research can be defined as a method based on positivism philosophy, used to study a specific population or sample, with sampling techniques generally conducted randomly, data collection using research instruments, and quantitative/statistical data analysis with the aim of testing predetermined hypotheses. This type of quantitative research was conducted to create a study aimed at adjusting a study and analyzing organizational culture and work environment on employee performance with work motivation as an intervening variable at the Regional Disaster Management Agency of Batu Bara Regency.

Research Location and Time

The research location was at the Regional Disaster Management Agency of Batu Bara Regency, located in Perupuk, Lima Puluh District, Batu Bara Regency, North Sumatra. The research was conducted over a period of 3 months, from October to December 2025.

Population and Sample

Sugiyono (2021) defines population as a generalization area consisting of objects or subjects that have certain qualities and characteristics determined by researchers to be studied and then conclusions are drawn. The population and sample in this study were all permanent employees at the Batu Bara Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency. There were 81 employees at the Batu Bara Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency office. In this study, the entire population was used as the sample, so it is known as a population study.

Research Data Sources

The data source used in this study is primary data.

Results

Outer Model Analysis

Outer Model Analysis using the PLS Algorithm, resulting in:

Validity Test

Table 1. Outer Loadings Values

	Employee Performance	Organizational Culture	Work Motivation
X1.1		0.753	
X1.2		0.822	
X1.3		0.868	
X1.4		0.806	
X1.5		0.793	
X1.6		0.827	
Y.1	0.639		
Y.2	0.867		
Y.3	0.819		
Y.4	0.773		
Y.5	0.851		
Y.6	0.880		
Z.1			0.854
Z.2			0.814
Z.3			0.833

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

Based on the values in Table 1 above, which show the results of outer model testing through loading factor/outer loadings values, all indicators in each variable have a loading value ≥ 0.60 . This indicates that each indicator is measured validly and strongly. Therefore, it can be concluded that all items in the questionnaire have met the validity criteria, as shown in the following figure.

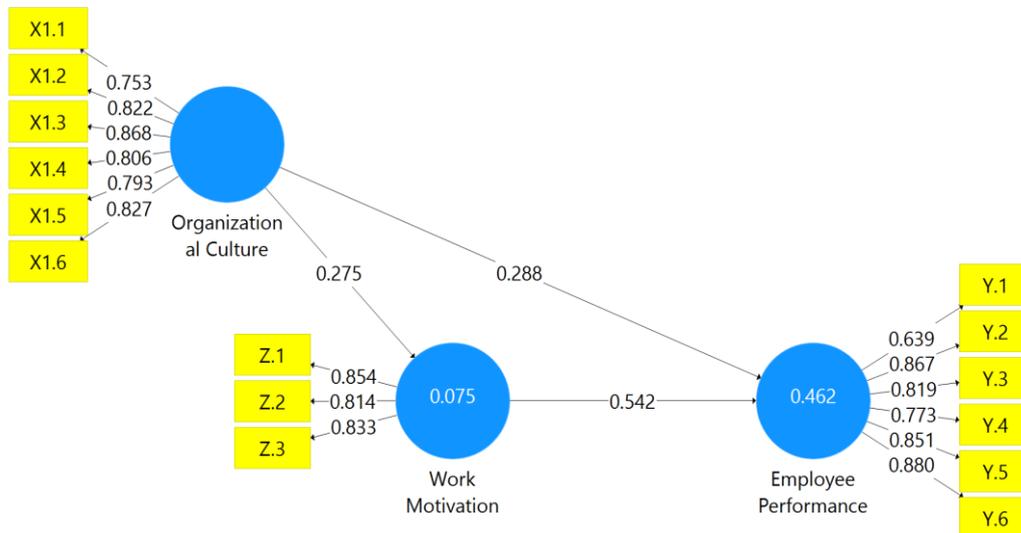


Figure 2. Outer Loading

Reliability Test

Table 2. Construct Reliability and Validity Test

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Employee Performance	0.894	0.919	0.918	0.655
Organizational Culture	0.897	0.902	0.921	0.660
Work Motivation	0.781	0.784	0.872	0.695

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

From Table 2 above, the reliability test results show that the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values for all constructs are above 0.70. This indicates that all indicators have high internal consistency and are reliable in measuring their respective constructs. Thus, the research instrument is declared reliable and suitable for use in structural model testing.

Coefficient of Determination (R²)

In assessing the model with PLS, we begin by looking at the R-square for each dependent latent variable. The table below shows the Rsquare estimation results using SmartPLS.

Table 3. R Square Results

	R Square	Adjusted R-Square
Work Motivation	0.075	0.064
Employee Performance	0.462	0.449

Source: Smart PLS, 2025

Table 3 shows the R square values for both dependent variables. For the work motivation variable, the R square value is 0.075, meaning that the influence of organizational culture is 0.075 or 7.5%, with the remainder attributable to other variables outside the model. The R-squared value for employee performance is 0.462, meaning that organizational culture and work motivation account for 0.462 or 46.2%, with the remainder attributable to other variables outside the model.

Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

Hypothesis Testing

Direct Influence Between Variables

The direct effect between variables can be seen in the path coefficients. The data analysis results show the direct effect values in the following table.

Table 4. Path Coefficients (Direct Effects)

	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Conclusion
Organizational Culture -> Employee Performance	0.288	3.473	0.001	Accepted
Organizational Culture -> Work Motivation	0.275	3.395	0.001	Accepted
Work Motivation -> Employee Performance	0.542	7.286	0.000	Accepted

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

The results in Table 4 show the following direct influence values:

1. Organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on employee performance with a t-statistic value of 3.473 above 1.96 and a significance of 0.001 below 0.05, meaning that organizational culture has a real effect on employee performance because the significance value is below 0.05 . The results of this study are in line with previous studies, which found that organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on employee performance (Rousita et al., 2026).
2. Organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on work motivation with a t-statistic value of 3.395 above 1.96 and a significance of 0.001 below 0.05, meaning that organizational culture has a significant effect on work motivation because the significance value is below 0.05. The results of this study are in line with previous studies, namely that organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on work motivation (Fajrin & Mesra, 2024).
3. Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance with a t-statistic value of 7.286 above 1.96 and a significance of 0.000 below 0.05, meaning that job satisfaction has a real effect on employee performance because the significance value is

below 0.05. The results of this study are in line with previous studies, namely that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance (Handoko et al., 2023; Fajrin & Mesra, 2024).

Indirect Influence Between Variables

The indirect effect between variables can be seen in the specific indirect effects value. The data analysis results show the indirect effect value in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Specific Indirect Effects

	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Conclusion
Organizational Culture -> Work Motivation -> Employee Performance	0.149	3.083	0.002	Accepted

Source: Smart PLS, 2025

Table 5 shows the indirect effect between variables, namely: organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work motivation with a t-statistic value of 3.083 above 1.96 and a significance value of 0.002 below 0.05, meaning that work motivation acts as an intervening variable between organizational culture and employee performance.

Conclusion

1. Organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Regional Disaster Management Agency of Batu Bara Regency.
2. Organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on work motivation at the Regional Disaster Management Agency of Batu Bara Regency.
3. Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Regional Disaster Management Agency of Batu Bara Regency.
4. Organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work motivation at the Regional Disaster Management Agency of Batu Bara Regency.

Recommendations

1. Employee performance with the lowest score was "I produce work that meets the established standards." Therefore, the recommendation is to improve the quality of work to meet the established standards. The organization needs to strengthen the implementation of standard operating procedures (SOPs) through clear socialization and conduct regular performance evaluations and feedback so that employees understand the shortcomings of their work and are encouraged to continue to improve the quality of their work.
2. Work motivation with the lowest score was "My work efforts are always directed towards achieving organizational goals." To ensure that employees' work efforts are always in line with organizational goals, leaders need to communicate the vision, mission, and work targets clearly and continuously, accompanied by the setting of measurable individual work targets so that each employee understands the direction of their contribution to achieving organizational goals.
3. Organizational culture with the lowest value statement "I have the skills to support the performance of my work tasks." To strengthen the application of organizational values as work guidelines, leaders need to consistently socialize and set an example in applying these values, as well as integrate them into rules, performance appraisals, and work culture so that organizational values are truly understood and applied by all employees.

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