

The Role of Work Motivation in Mediating the Effect of work Discipline on Employee Performance at the Medan Belawan Primary Tax Office Medan Belawan Primary Tax Service

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effect of work discipline on employee performance with work motivation as a mediating variable at the Medan Belawan Tax Office (KPP). The type of research used is quantitative with a survey approach, involving all 100 permanent employees of the Medan Belawan KPP as samples. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using Partial Least Squares (PLS) with SmartPLS 4. The results showed that work discipline had a positive and significant effect on employee performance and work motivation. Work motivation also had a positive and significant effect on employee performance. In addition, work motivation was found to mediate the effect of work discipline on employee performance, indicating that improving work discipline can more optimally improve performance when supported by high work motivation. These findings have practical implications for the management of KPP Medan Belawan to strengthen the implementation of work discipline, improve work facilities, and create a work climate that supports employee motivation, so that the quality of public services can be improved professionally.

Keywords: Work Discipline, Work Motivation, Employee Performance

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Introduction

Employee performance is one of the fundamental factors that determine the success of public organizations in achieving their service and administrative goals. The Medan Belawan Primary Tax Office (KPP), as a government agency under the Directorate General of Taxes, has a major responsibility in collecting state revenue, providing tax services, and increasing taxpayer compliance in its working area. To carry out these strategic functions, employees who are highly performing, professional, and consistent in carrying out their duties are needed. However, the achievement of optimal performance is greatly influenced by various internal and external factors inherent in employees and the work environment.

One important factor that affects employee performance is work discipline. Discipline is a form of awareness and willingness of employees to obey all applicable rules, comply with working hours, and carry out tasks in accordance with established procedures. According to Nurjaya (2021), discipline is a crucial factor that determines the level of employee performance, because disciplined employees will work more effectively, efficiently, and responsibly. Research by Hidayati & Ramadhan (2020) also shows that low discipline has a direct impact on decreased productivity and service quality. In the context of tax agencies such as the Medan Belawan Tax Office, work discipline becomes even more important given the high workload, strict revenue targets, and demands for accuracy in tax administration.

In addition to work discipline, work facilities also play a role as external factors that affect employee performance. Work facilities include facilities and infrastructure that support the smooth running of work, such as workspaces, computers, internet networks, tax information systems, and other administrative equipment. According to Budiarti (2024), adequate work facilities can increase the effectiveness of civil servants because employees can more easily complete tasks and provide services to the community. Research by Lubis & Darmawan (2021) also confirms that complete and modern work facilities can increase the productivity of public sector employees. In the context of the Medan Belawan Tax Office, the smooth operation of the internet network, the availability of adequate computers, and an effective administrative system are crucial in determining the quality of tax services.

On the other hand, work motivation is a psychological factor that plays an important role in determining the extent to which discipline and work facilities can improve employee performance. Work motivation is understood as internal and external drives that make employees want to work optimally. Robbins & Judge (2020) emphasize that highly motivated employees tend to perform better, be more disciplined, and be able to make the most of work facilities. Research by Sari & Pratama (2021) found that motivation is a mediating variable that strengthens the influence of the work environment on employee performance. Similarly, Nugroho & Abdullah (2023) proved that work motivation can be a bridge between organizational factors and improved performance of public sector employees.

Based on these findings, it can be assumed that work discipline and work facilities have a significant influence on employee performance, both directly and indirectly through work motivation as a mediating variable. However, research integrating these three variables in the context of tax organizations, particularly the Medan Belawan Primary Tax Office (KPP Pelayanan Pajak Pratama Medan Belawan), is still very limited. In fact, the characteristics of work in the KPP environment are very complex, involving a high administrative burden, demanding revenue targets, and a considerable intensity of public service. Therefore, it is important to conduct research that comprehensively analyzes the influence of work discipline and work facilities on employee performance with work motivation as a variable that mediates this relationship.

Thus, this study aims to provide empirical understanding of how work discipline and work facilities can improve employee performance through work motivation, as well as provide strategic recommendations for the management of the Medan Belawan Primary Tax Office in improving the performance of its employees.

Literature Review Theoretical Framework Employee Performance Definition of Employee Performance

According to Buadiarti (2024), employee performance is the result or output of the duties and responsibilities carried out by civil servants in performing public service, government administration, and national development functions.

Factors Affecting Employee Performance

Factors Affecting Employee Performance according to Budiarti (2024):

- 1) Quality of Human Resources
Performance will be low if employees do not have the knowledge, skills, or technical abilities required for the job.
- 2) Work Discipline
Low work discipline results in slow service, delayed administrative processes, and overall decreased performance.
- 3) Work Facilities
The performance of civil servants is highly dependent on the availability of work facilities. The poorer the facilities, the slower the service output.
- 4) Work Motivation
Adequate compensation increases motivation → motivation has a direct impact on performance.
- 5) Smooth Internet Access
The smoother the internet → the easier it is for employees to provide services → performance improves

Employee Performance Indicators

According to Buadiarti (2024), employee performance indicators consist of:

- 1) Understanding of Duties and Responsibilities.
One of the obstacles to civil servant performance is employees' lack of understanding of the tasks assigned to them.
- 2) Work Discipline and Compliance with Working Hours
Discipline is a key component in assessing civil servant performance.
- 3) Ability to Complete Work
Technical and professional abilities are part of performance.
- 4) Use of Work Facilities and Infrastructure
Civil servant performance is influenced by the extent to which employees can work optimally with the available facilities.
- 5) Quality of Public Services to the Community
Civil servants are assessed based on their ability to provide good public services.

Work Motivation Definition of Work Motivation

According to Vo et al., 2022, work motivation is a drive that stems from individual needs (competence, autonomy, social relations) that encourages productive and effective individual work behavior.

Work Motivation Indicators

Work motivation indicators according to Vo et al., 2022 are as follows:

- 1) Competence
Refers to an individual's ability to perform tasks well and feel capable of mastering their job.
In this study, competency is measured through "highest level of education achieved" as a proxy.
- 2) Autonomy
Refers to an individual's freedom and control over how they perform their work, namely the ability to make their own decisions and have choices in their work.

3 Social connectedness

Referring to the individual's need to feel connected, accepted, and have positive relationships with others in the work environment, for example, feeling that they belong to a group, are supported by coworkers, and have a sense of "social belonging."

Work Discipline Definition of Work Discipline

Mangkunegara (2021) defines work discipline as an individual's willingness to obey the rules and work standards set by the organization, as well as demonstrating responsibility in carrying out tasks consistently.

Indicators of Work Discipline

Mangkunegara (2021) explains that work discipline can be measured through several main indicators, namely:

- 1) Punctuality
The ability of employees to arrive on time, start and complete work according to the predetermined schedule.
- 2) Compliance with Work Regulations
The level of employee compliance with all rules applicable within the organization, both written (SOPs, policies) and unwritten.
- 3) Compliance with Work Standards
Employees' adherence to the quality and work procedures determined by the organization.
- 4) Attendance Rate
The frequency of employee attendance at work, as well as the minimal number of absences without valid reasons.
- 5) Responsibility in Performing Duties
Employees' attitude that demonstrates seriousness and willingness to complete work properly and maintain work facilities.

Conceptual Framework

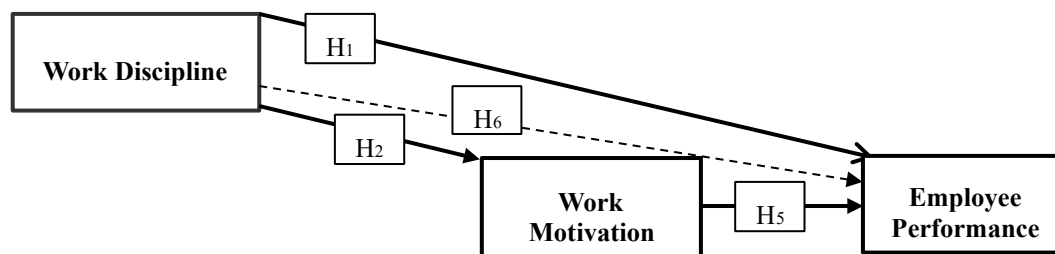


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Research Hypothesis

- H₁ Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Medan Belawan Primary Tax Office.
- H₂ Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on work motivation at the Medan Belawan Primary Tax Office.
- H₃ Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Medan Belawan Primary Tax Office.
- H₄ : Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work motivation at the Medan Belawan Primary Tax Office.

Research Methodology Type of Research

The type of research used by the researcher is quantitative research. This type of quantitative research is conducted to create a study that aims to adjust a study and to analyze

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the role of work motivation in mediating the influence of work discipline on employee performance at the Medan Belawan Primary Tax Office.

Research Location and Time

The research location was the Medan Belawan Primary Tax Office, located at Jalan Kolonel Laut Yos Sudarso No. 27 KM 8, RW.2, Tanjung Mulia, Medan Deli District, Medan City. 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 are all permanent employees at the Medan Belawan Primary Tax Office. There are 100 civil servant employees at the Medan Belawan Primary Tax Office. In this study, the entire population was used as the sample, which 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 produced the following results: **Validity Test**

Table 1. Outer Loadings Values

	Employee Performance	Work Discipline	Work Motivation
X1.1		0.831	
X1.2		0.748	
X1.3		0.814	
X1.4		0.751	
X1.5		0.864	
Y.1	0.830		
Y.2	0.808		
Y.3	0.851		
Y.4	0.787		
Y.5	0.661		
Z.1			0.864
Z.2			0.896
Z.3			0.855

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.

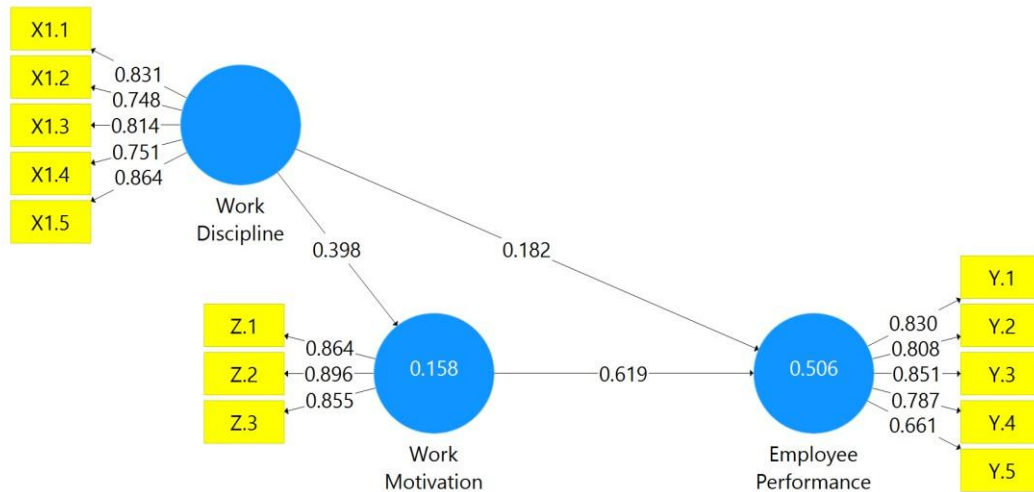


Figure 2. Outer Loading

Reliability Test

Table 2. Construct Reliability and Validity Test

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Employee Performance	0.847	0.853	0.892	0.625
Work Discipline	0.863	0.886	0.900	0.645
Work Motivation	0.841	0.842	0.905	0.760

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 (R^2)

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	0.158	0.150
Employee Performance	0.506	0.496

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 0.158, meaning that the influence of work discipline is 0.158 or 15.8%, with the remainder attributable to other variables outside the model. The R-square value for employee performance is 0.506, meaning that work discipline and employee motivation account for 0.506 or 50.6%, 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 processing results show the direct effect values in the following table.

Table 4. Path Coefficients (Direct Effects)

	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Conclusion
Work Discipline -> Employee Performance	0.182	2.044	0.041	Accepted
Work Discipline -> Work Motivation	0.398	5.194	0.000	Accepted
Work Motivation -> Employee Performance	0.619	8,912	0.000	Accepted

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

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

1. Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance with a tstatistic value of 2.044 above 1.96 and a significance of 0.041 below 0.05, meaning that work discipline has a real effect on employee performance because the significance value is above 0.05 . The results of this study are in line with previous studies, namely that work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance (Mesra et al., 2024).
2. Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on work motivation with a t-statistic value of 5.194 above 1.96 and a significance of 0.000 below 0.05, meaning that work discipline has a real 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 work discipline has a positive and significant effect on work motivation (Dwipayana et al., 2023).
3. Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance with a tstatistic value of 8.912 above 1.96 and a significance of 0.000 below 0.05, meaning that job satisfaction has a significant effect on employee performance because the significance value is below 0.05. The results of this study are consistent with previous research findings, namely that the determining factors of employee performance are work motivation (Yudistira et al., 2025).

Indirect Effects 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 (Indirect Effects)

	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Conclusion
Work Discipline -> Work Motivation -> Employee Performance	0.246	4.443	0.000	Accepted

Source: Smart PLS, 2025

Table 5 shows the indirect effects between variables, namely:

1. Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work motivation with a t-statistic value of 4.443 above 1.96 and a significance value of 0.000 below 0.05, meaning that work motivation acts as an intervening variable between work discipline and employee performance.

Conclusion

1. Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Medan Belawan Primary Tax Office.
2. Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on work motivation at the Medan Belawan Tax Office.
3. Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Medan Belawan Tax Office.

4. Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work motivation at the Medan Belawan Tax Office.

Recommendations

1. The lowest-scoring employee performance statement was "I provide good quality and professional public services to the community." Therefore, the recommendation is that the Medan Belawan Primary Tax Office should improve the quality of its public services by strengthening work discipline, providing adequate work facilities, and increasing employee motivation so that services to the community can be provided professionally and in accordance with established service standards.
2. Work motivation with the lowest score was "I am motivated to work because I have a harmonious working relationship with my colleagues and superiors." The Medan Belawan Tax Office is advised to strengthen harmonious working relationships by improving internal communication, teamwork, and the role of leaders in creating a mutually respectful work environment, so that employee motivation can increase.
3. Work discipline with the lowest score statement: "I arrive and complete my work on time in accordance with applicable regulations." The Medan Belawan Primary Tax Office is advised to strengthen the implementation of time discipline through consistent supervision, leadership by example, and the fair application of sanctions and rewards so that employees arrive and complete their work on time in accordance with applicable regulations.

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