

Examining the Relationship Between Individual Characteristics and Work Ethic at the Dairi Panwaslu Office

Nurul Ampe Lestari Angkat, Mesra B

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of Individual Characteristics on Work Ethic among employees at the Panwaslu Office of Dairi Regency. The research was motivated by the importance of strengthening employee work ethic through personal attributes that support organizational performance, particularly in the context of supervisory institutions that demand high integrity and responsibility. The study employed a quantitative explanatory design with a saturated sampling technique, involving the entire population of 35 employees as respondents. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and analyzed with SPSS 25.0, including validity and reliability tests, descriptive statistics, regression analysis, the coefficient of determination (R^2), and t-tests. The results of the descriptive analysis revealed that both variables were rated highly, with a mean of 4.52 for Individual Characteristics and 4.23 for Work Ethic, indicating positive perceptions among employees. The instrument testing confirmed that all items were valid, while reliability was demonstrated with Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.87 and 0.81, exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.60. Regression analysis produced the equation $Y = -0.056 + 0.977X$, showing that Individual Characteristics significantly and positively affect Work Ethic ($B = 0.977$, $t = 8.875$, $p = 0.000$). The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.904$) indicates that 90.4% of the variance in Work Ethic is explained by Individual Characteristics. In conclusion, the findings confirm that Individual Characteristics have a strong and significant influence on Work Ethic. This implies that personal attributes play a crucial role in shaping employees' work behavior. Strengthening positive individual characteristics can therefore serve as a strategic approach to improving employee performance and organizational outcomes at the Panwaslu Office of Dairi Regency.

Keywords: Individual Characteristics, Work Ethic, Panwaslu

Nurul Ampe Lestari Angkat
Program Studi Magister Manajemen, Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi, Indonesia
e-mail: nurulampe@gmail.com

Mesra B
e-mail: mesrab@dosen.pancabudi.ac.id
2nd International Conference on Islamic Community Studies (ICICS)
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<https://proceeding.pancabudi.ac.id/index.php/ICIE/index>

Introduction

The professionalism and credibility of public institutions largely depend on the quality of their human resources. In the context of Panwaslu (Election Supervisory Committee) Dairi, employees play a strategic role in safeguarding the integrity of democratic processes through effective supervision of elections. Their ability to carry out these responsibilities is not only determined by technical skills but also by their internal values and attitudes toward work. In this regard, work ethic becomes a fundamental factor that reflects employees' discipline, persistence, and integrity in fulfilling their duties [1].

Individual characteristics are widely recognized as internal factors that influence employees' attitudes and behaviors in the workplace. These characteristics encompass personality traits, abilities, values, and attitudes that distinguish one employee from another [2]. Employees with strong personal characteristics such as responsibility, independence, and consistency tend to demonstrate a higher work ethic compared to those whose traits are less aligned with organizational expectations [3]. In a challenging institutional setting like Panwaslu, where employees must work under pressure and maintain impartiality, the role of individual characteristics becomes even more critical.

Previous studies suggest that individual characteristics directly affect performance and behavior at work. Jatmiko and Astuti (2021), for example, argue that individual differences such as discipline, motivation, and values often shape how employees interpret their responsibilities [4]. While much of the existing literature connects individual characteristics to job performance [5][6], less attention has been given to their relationship with work ethic as an independent construct. This gap highlights the need to further examine how individual characteristics contribute specifically to the development of work ethic.

Work ethic itself refers to a set of values and attitudes that guide individuals in viewing and approaching their work. According to Tasmara (2002) [7], work ethic can be observed through four aspects: valuing time, persistence and resilience, the desire for independence, and adaptability. These dimensions are particularly relevant to Panwaslu staff, who are required to handle sensitive tasks, face political pressures, and ensure impartiality in election oversight. Employees who strongly value time and demonstrate resilience, for instance, are more likely to uphold the credibility and independence of the institution.

However, observations indicate that the work ethic among Panwaslu Dairi employees is not uniform. Some employees display strong discipline and adaptability, while others struggle with consistency in meeting their responsibilities. This variation suggests that individual characteristics may play a significant role in shaping these differences. A better understanding of this relationship would enable institutions like Panwaslu to identify which personal attributes are most influential in fostering a strong work ethic.

In addition, while Sinamo (2011) [8] emphasized that work ethic is essential for achieving high productivity, and Hasing and Sulkarnain (2019) highlighted its role in reinforcing performance outcomes, there remains limited research that focuses specifically on the linkage between individual characteristics and work ethic within public sector organizations, particularly election supervisory bodies [9]. This presents an important opportunity for empirical exploration, especially in the regional context of Dairi.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to examine the relationship between individual characteristics and work ethic at the Panwaslu Dairi office. By analyzing this relationship, the research seeks to contribute both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it enriches the academic discourse on human resource management by emphasizing work ethic as an outcome of individual traits. Practically, the findings are expected to provide insights for Panwaslu in developing strategies to strengthen employees' professionalism and integrity through the cultivation of positive individual characteristics and the reinforcement of work ethic.

Literature Review

Individual characteristics

Individual characteristics essentially refer to a set of distinctive traits attached to each employee that differentiate them from others within an organization. These characteristics can be understood as personal attributes, values, attitudes, and personality traits that shape an individual's mindset, interaction patterns, and workplace behavior. Every individual has unique abilities, interests, and backgrounds, which ultimately influence how they respond to assigned tasks and responsibilities [10].

Furthermore, individual characteristics can also be seen as a combination of internal factors, such as motivation, values, and emotions, along with external factors like experiences and the work environment [11]. They encompass physiological, psychological, and social aspects that together determine how an individual performs their role within an organization [12]. In other words, individual characteristics serve as the foundation for understanding variations in employee behavior and performance. In the context of public organizations such as Panwaslu, the individual characteristics of employees play a crucial role, as they are closely linked to integrity, responsibility, and professionalism in carrying out supervisory duties. Employees with positive individual characteristics such as discipline, achievement orientation, and high commitment tend to perform better. Conversely, weak individual characteristics may hinder work effectiveness, which is why understanding this aspect is essential to support the achievement of organizational goals [13].

According to Indra Imban (2017) in Sari (2023) [14], individual characteristics can be measured through several key indicators, namely: Ability, Needs, Beliefs, Work Experience, Expectations.

Work Ethic

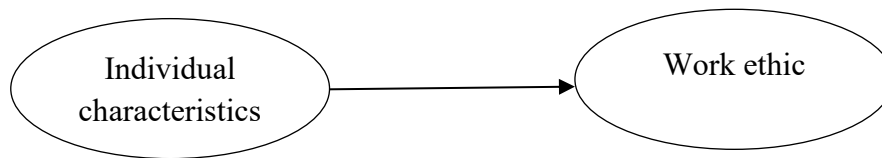
Work ethic is a set of attitudes, beliefs, and values that form the foundation of an individual's approach to work. It represents a series of positive behaviors rooted in fundamental convictions, accompanied by total commitment to a particular work paradigm. Thus, work ethic is not only related to an individual's technical skills but also reflects their motivation, dedication, and integrity in performing their duties [15].

Furthermore, Sutrisno (2016) explains that work ethic is a mental attitude possessed by individuals to value work as something meaningful and highly valuable [16]. A person with a strong work ethic perceives work as a moral responsibility, and in some cases, even as a form of worship that contributes not only to themselves but also to society [8]. This highlights that work ethic encompasses spiritual, moral, and social dimensions that are interconnected.

In addition, work ethic plays a significant role in enhancing employee productivity and performance. Individuals with a strong work ethic typically demonstrate greater enthusiasm, perseverance, and resilience in facing work-related challenges. Conversely, a lack of work ethic may lead to apathy, low motivation, and a decline in work quality. Therefore, work ethic is regarded as one of the main assets in developing superior and competitive human resources. Tasmara (2002:231) in Fadila Nurjayanti (2021) [7] explains that work ethic can be measured through four main aspects, namely: Valuing time, Resilience and perseverance, Desire for independence, Adaptability.

Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis

This study conceptualized Organizational behavior as the independent variable (X) and Job Satisfaction as the dependent variable (Y) as shown on the following figure.



The hypothesis is:

Ha : Individual Characteristics has a positive and significant effect on Work ethic among employees at the PANWASLU, Dairi Regency.

Ho : Organizational behavior does not have a positive and significant effect on Work ethic at PANWASLU , Dairi Regency.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research approach to examine the effect of individual characteristics on employee performance, with work ethic serving as a moderating variable, at the Panwaslu Office of Dairi Regency. The research design is explanatory, as it aims to test hypotheses and analyze causal relationships between the independent variable (individual characteristics), the dependent variable (employee performance), and the moderating variable (work ethic).

The population in this study consists of 35 employees working at the Panwaslu Office of Dairi Regency. Given the relatively small size of the population, the study applies a saturated sampling technique (census), where all members of the population are included as the research sample. Thus, the entire population of 35 employees serves as respondents, ensuring comprehensive and representative findings. Primary data are obtained through a structured questionnaire distributed to the respondents. The questionnaire is designed based on theoretical indicators of individual characteristics, employee performance, and work ethic, with responses measured using a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree [17]. In addition, secondary data such as institutional reports and relevant documentation are collected to support and enrich the analysis [18].

The data are analyzed using quantitative statistical techniques with SPSS version 25.0. Several analytical steps are undertaken. First, a validity test is conducted to ensure that each questionnaire item accurately measures its intended construct. An item is considered valid if the correlation coefficient (r-count) exceeds the critical value (r-table). Second, a reliability test is performed using Cronbach's alpha, with a value above 0.70 indicating acceptable reliability. The regression model in this study incorporates the moderating variable and is expressed as:

$$Y = a + bX$$

Where: Y = Job Satisfaction, X = Organizational Behavior ,a = Constant ,b = Regression Coefficient.

Subsequently, the t-test is applied to determine whether individual characteristics have a significant effect on employee performance, both directly and when moderated by work ethic. Referring to Hair (2022), the hypothesis is accepted if the t-count is greater than the t-table value or if the significance level (p-value) is below 0.05. Finally, the coefficient of determination (R^2) is calculated to assess the proportion of variance in employee performance that can be explained by individual characteristics and work ethic. Values closer to 1 indicate stronger explanatory power.

By employing this methodology, the study provides an empirical basis for understanding how individual characteristics and work ethic interact to influence employee performance, offering both theoretical contributions and practical implications for public sector organizations.

Results

Descriptive Analysis

The first stage of the descriptive analysis is to review the main summary statistics of the two composite variables under study. This provides an overview of the data distribution and the general tendencies of respondents' perceptions.

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Individual Characteristics	35	3.43	5.00	4.52	0.43
Work ethic	35	3.12	5.00	4.23	0.32

Source: Analysis of provided data, N=35

Based on the results in Table 1, both variables Individual Characteristics and Work Ethic demonstrate highly positive tendencies. The composite mean score for Individual Characteristics is 4.52, which reflects that respondents generally perceive themselves as having strong and favorable personal traits relevant to their roles. Similarly, the mean score for Work Ethic is 4.23, indicating that employees also report a high level of positive attitudes and values related to their work.

The relatively high averages for both variables suggest that, overall, employees at the Panwaslu Office of Dairi Regency possess strong individual capacities and maintain a solid work ethic. These findings align with the expectation that effective performance in supervisory roles requires both favorable individual characteristics and a supportive ethical orientation toward work.

Furthermore, the standard deviation values are relatively small (0.43 for Individual Characteristics and 0.32 for Work Ethic), indicating that responses are closely clustered around the mean. This low variability highlights a high level of consistency in the respondents' answers, suggesting that perceptions across the sample are largely homogeneous and stable. In other words, most employees evaluate their individual traits and work ethic in a similarly positive manner, which underscores the overall strength of these factors within the organization.

Validity and Reliability Tests

Validity was assessed using Pearson's correlation coefficient (r_{value}), which compares the correlation of each individual item with the total score of its respective variable. For a sample size of $N = 35$ at a 5% significance level (two-tailed), the critical value of r_{table} is approximately 0.334. An item is considered valid if its r_{value} exceeds this threshold.

The analysis results confirmed that all questionnaire items measuring Individual Characteristics and Work Ethic produced correlation coefficients greater than the r_{table} value. This indicates that each item appropriately represents and measures the variable it was designed to assess, thereby fulfilling the validity requirements.

Reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, which evaluates the internal consistency of the measurement scale. According to Ghazali (2016), a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient above 0.60 is considered acceptable, with higher values reflecting stronger reliability.

Table 2. Reliability Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Benchmark	Result
Individual Characteristics	0.87	> 0.60	Reliable
Work ethic	0.81	> 0.60	Reliable

Both variables demonstrate strong internal consistency. The Individual Characteristics scale achieved a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.87, while the Work Ethic scale recorded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.81. These results are well above the established benchmark of 0.60, confirming that

the instruments are highly reliable. The findings indicate that the research instrument is both valid and reliable. All questionnaire items effectively measure their respective constructs, and the internal consistency of both scales supports their use in further statistical analyses, such as regression and moderation testing.

Regression Analysis

Simple Linear Regression

A regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the effect of Individual Characteristics on Work Ethic at the Panwaslu Office, Dairi Regency. The analysis used the composite scores for both variables derived from the provided data.

Table 3. Regression Results

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig. (p)
(Constant)	-0.056	0.489	–	-0.119	0.911
Individual Characteristics	0.977	0.102	0.952	8.864	0.000

Dependent Variable: Work ethic

Based on the analysis, the regression equation can be expressed as: $Y = -0.056 + 0.977X$, the regression coefficient (B) for the Individual Characteristics variable is 0.977. This indicates that for every one-point increase in the individual characteristics score, Work Ethic is expected to increase by 0.977 points, assuming other factors remain constant.

The significance value (p-value) of 0.000, which is far below the 0.05 significance level, confirms a significant and positive relationship between the two variables. The regression analysis reveals a significant and very strong positive relationship between Individual Characteristics and Work Ethic.

The regression coefficient ($B=0.977$, $t=8.864$, $p=0.000$) suggests that more favorable individual characteristics lead to substantially improved work ethic. Furthermore, the standardized beta coefficient ($Beta=0.952$) indicates that the effect of individual characteristics on work ethic is very strong. This finding supports the notion that employees' personal attributes and traits positively influence their work ethic, thereby enhancing overall performance within the organization.

Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The coefficient of determination (R^2) was calculated to measure the proportion of variance in Work Ethic that can be explained by Individual Characteristics.

Table 4. Coefficient of Determination

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2
1	0.952	0.904	0.903

The analysis results show that the R^2 value is 0.904, which means that 90.4% of the variance in Work Ethic can be explained by Individual Characteristics. The remaining 9.6% of the variance is influenced by other factors not included in this research model.

The correlation coefficient ($R=0.952$) indicates a very strong positive relationship between the two variables. This result is consistent with the regression analysis, which demonstrated that individual characteristics have a significant and positive influence on work ethic. These findings confirm that employees' personal attributes and traits play a crucial role in shaping their work ethic, while only a small portion of the variance is affected by external factors beyond the scope of this study.

Hypothesis Testing (t-Test)

The hypothesis testing was conducted using a t-test to examine whether the independent variable (Individual Characteristics) has a positive and significant influence on the dependent variable (Work Ethic).

Table 5. t-Test Result

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t
(Constant)	-0.061	0.499	–	-0.122
Individual Characteristics	0.985	0.111	0.963	8.875

Dependent Variable: Work ethic

The calculated t-value ($t_{\text{calculated}}$) for the Individual Characteristics variable is 8.875. This value is compared with the critical t-value (t_{table}) for the degrees of freedom (df), calculated as $N - k - 1$. With $N = 47$ and $k = 1$, the degrees of freedom are 45. For a one-tailed test at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$, the critical t-value is 1.6794. Since $t_{\text{calculated}}$ (8.875) $> t_{\text{table}}$ (1.6794), the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted.

Furthermore, the significance value (p-value) for the Individual Characteristics variable is 0.000, which is lower than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). This also leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0).

Based on these results, it can be concluded that Individual Characteristics have a positive and significant influence on Work Ethic. This finding highlights that employees' personal traits and attributes strongly contribute to shaping their work ethic, providing evidence that individual factors are essential determinants of employees' attitudes and behaviors in the workplace.

Conclusion

The main objective of this research was to analyze the influence of Individual Characteristics on Work Ethic among employees at the Sidikalang District Office, Dairi Regency. The study involved 35 respondents, and the data were collected through questionnaires, which were then tested for validity, reliability, and further analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. The descriptive analysis revealed that both variables scored highly. Individual Characteristics had a mean of 4.52 with a standard deviation of 0.43, while Work Ethic had a mean of 4.23 with a standard deviation of 0.32. These findings indicate that employees generally perceive their personal characteristics positively and also demonstrate a strong level of work ethic. The relatively small standard deviation values show that the responses were consistent among participants. The instrument tests confirmed that all items were valid and reliable. The Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.87 for Individual Characteristics and 0.81 for Work Ethic exceeded the 0.60 benchmark, which demonstrates that the instruments are both valid and internally consistent.

The regression analysis further showed that Individual Characteristics significantly and positively affect Work Ethic. The regression equation obtained was $Y = -0.056 + 0.977X$, with a regression coefficient (B) of 0.977, indicating that an improvement in individual characteristics will lead to a corresponding increase in work ethic. The significance level ($p = 0.000$) was below 0.05, confirming that the relationship is statistically significant. The coefficient of determination (R^2) value of 0.904 indicates that 90.4% of the variance in Work Ethic can be explained by Individual Characteristics, while the remaining 9.6% is influenced by other factors not included in this research. This suggests that personal attributes are a dominant determinant of employees' work ethic in this organizational setting. The t-test results

reinforced this conclusion, as the calculated t-value (8.875) was far greater than the critical t-value (1.6794). This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, confirming that Individual Characteristics have a significant influence on Work Ethic.

In summary, the research findings demonstrate that employees' individual characteristics strongly and significantly enhance their work ethic. This highlights the importance of considering personal attributes in organizational management and human resource development. Strengthening positive individual characteristics among employees can be a strategic approach to improving overall organizational performance.

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