



The Influence of Work Motivation, Work Discipline, and Work Environment on Employee Performance at the Liquiçá Municipal Authority Office

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Abstract

Employee performance is a key factor in the effectiveness of public service delivery within local government institutions. This study aims to analyze the effect of work motivation, work discipline, and work environment on employee performance at the Liquiçá Municipal Authority Office, Timor-Leste. The research employs a quantitative approach with an associative research design. The entire population of 135 employees was used as the research sample through a saturated sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the assistance of Smart PLS version 4.0. The results indicate that work motivation, work discipline, and work environment have a positive and significant effect on employee performance. The R-square value of 0.854 indicates that the three independent variables explain 85.4% of the variance in employee performance. These findings emphasize that improving the performance of local government employees requires an integrated strategy through strengthening work motivation, enforcing work discipline, and creating a supportive work environment.

Keywords: Work Motivation; Work Discipline; Work Environment; Employee Performance.

1. Introduction

Employee performance has long been recognized as a key determinant of organizational effectiveness, particularly in public sector institutions responsible for delivering services to the community. Unlike private sector organizations, public organizations operate within complex bureaucratic structures, strict regulations, and high accountability demands, which often

limit managerial flexibility in managing human resources. Consequently, improving employee performance in government institutions remains an ongoing challenge, especially in developing and post-conflict countries.

In recent years, governments in various countries have increasingly emphasized performance-based management as a primary strategy to enhance public service quality, efficiency, and

transparency. However, empirical evidence suggests that many performance improvement initiatives in the public sector fail to achieve the expected outcomes due to fundamental issues in human resource management, such as low work motivation, weak work discipline, and unsupportive work environments. These factors directly influence employees' attitudes, behaviors, and productivity, ultimately affecting overall organizational performance.

Work motivation is widely acknowledged as a primary psychological driver that shapes employees' willingness to exert effort in achieving organizational goals. Motivation theories, such as Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Self-Determination Theory, suggest that highly motivated employees tend to demonstrate stronger commitment, initiative, and performance. In the public sector context, work motivation is influenced not only by financial incentives but also by intrinsic factors such as recognition, job security, career development opportunities, and a sense of responsibility in serving the public interest.

In addition to motivation, work discipline plays a crucial role in ensuring organizational effectiveness. Work discipline reflects employees' compliance with organizational rules, procedures, and ethical standards, including punctuality, attendance, and adherence to work regulations. High levels of discipline contribute to operational efficiency, reduce administrative errors, and foster a professional work culture. Conversely, weak discipline can lead to absenteeism, delays, and declining service quality.

The work environment is another important determinant of employee performance. It encompasses physical conditions, such as workspace layout, lighting, cleanliness, and facilities, as well as non-physical aspects, including interpersonal relationships, organizational communication, and leadership support. A conducive work environment enhances job satisfaction, motivation, and productivity,

whereas poor working conditions may lead to stress and reduced performance.

Despite the extensive literature on employee performance, most empirical studies focus on developed countries or private sector organizations. Research specifically examining public sector institutions in developing and post-conflict countries remains limited. This research gap is particularly evident in the context of Timor-Leste, a relatively young nation still strengthening its public administration system following periods of conflict and institutional transformation.

The Liquiça Municipal Authority Office plays a strategic role in administrative governance and public service delivery at the municipal level. However, internal performance reports and attendance records over recent years indicate several performance-related challenges, such as declining evaluation scores, increased absenteeism, and delays in task completion. These issues suggest underlying problems related to work motivation, discipline, and the work environment that warrant systematic empirical investigation.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effects of work motivation, work discipline, and work environment on employee performance at the Liquiça Municipal Authority Office using a quantitative approach and Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to public sector human resource management literature and practically to policymaking and managerial strategies aimed at improving employee performance in local government institutions in Timor-Leste.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Employee Performance

Employee performance refers to the level of achievement of work results accomplished by employees in carrying out their assigned duties and responsibilities in accordance with organizational standards. Performance reflects not only the quantity of output but also its quality,

timeliness, effectiveness, and accountability. In the public sector, employee performance is directly linked to service quality and public trust in government institutions.

Mangkunegara (2019) defines employee performance as the quality and quantity of work achieved by an employee in performing tasks in accordance with assigned responsibilities. Similarly, Mathis and Jackson (2021) argue that performance is influenced by employees' abilities, motivation, and opportunities to perform. In government organizations, employee performance is often measured through performance targets, attendance, compliance with regulations, and task completion.

2.2 Work Motivation

Work motivation refers to internal and external forces that influence employees' attitudes and behaviors in performing their jobs. Motivation determines the intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward achieving organizational goals. Classical motivation theories commonly applied in human resource management research include Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory.

Herzberg distinguishes between motivator factors (intrinsic), such as achievement, recognition, and responsibility, and hygiene factors (extrinsic), such as salary, working conditions, and organizational policies. In the public sector, work motivation is often more strongly influenced by intrinsic factors, including public service commitment, job stability, and opportunities for professional development. Robbins and Judge (2020) emphasize that highly motivated employees tend to demonstrate stronger commitment and superior performance.

2.3 Work Discipline

Work discipline is defined as employees' attitudes and behaviors reflecting compliance with organizational rules, procedures, and norms. It includes punctuality, attendance, adherence to working hours, and obedience to superiors' instructions. Discipline serves as a managerial tool

to ensure organizational activities run according to established plans and standards.

Hasibuan (2020) states that work discipline is the awareness and willingness of individuals to comply with all organizational rules and social norms. Good discipline fosters an orderly work environment, enhances efficiency, and minimizes violations, whereas poor discipline leads to absenteeism, low productivity, and declining service quality, particularly in public organizations.

2.4 Work Environment

The work environment encompasses all surrounding conditions that may affect employees' performance, either directly or indirectly. It includes physical aspects such as workspace layout, lighting, cleanliness, and facilities, as well as non-physical aspects such as interpersonal relationships, organizational communication, and leadership style.

According to Sedarmayanti (2020), a good work environment provides a sense of safety, comfort, and support that enables employees to perform their tasks effectively. A conducive work environment enhances job satisfaction, motivation, and productivity, which are critical for maintaining employee performance in the public sector.

2.5 Hypotheses

Based on the literature review, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

H2: Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

H3: Work environment has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative approach with an associative research design to analyze the relationships between work motivation, work discipline, work environment, and employee

performance. The research was conducted at the Liquiça Municipal Authority Office, Timor-Leste.

The population consists of all 135 employees of the institution. A saturated sampling technique was applied, whereby the entire population was used as the research sample. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale.

Data analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-

SEM) with Smart PLS version 4.0. The measurement model was evaluated through convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability tests. The structural model was assessed using coefficient of determination (R-square) values and hypothesis testing through bootstrapping procedures

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

1. Indicator Loading.

Table 1. Outer Loading Matrix

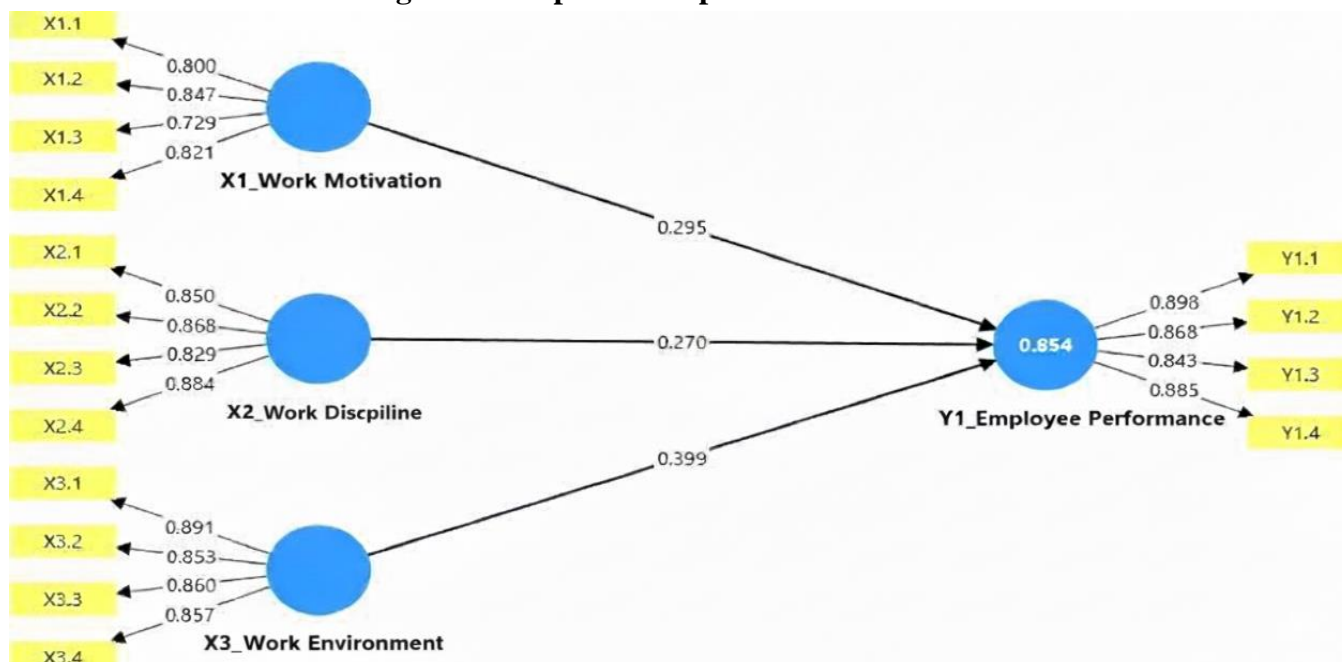
Outer Loadings				
	X1 Work Motivation	X2 Work Dicipline	X3 Work Environment	Y1 Employee Performance
X1.1	0.800			
X1.2	0.847			
X1.3	0.729			
X1.4	0.821			
X2.1		0.850		
X2.2		0.868		
X2.3		0.829		
X2.4		0.884		
X3.1			0.891	
X3.2			0.853	
X3.3			0.860	
X3.4			0.857	
Y1.1				0.898
Y1.2				0.868
Y1.3				0.853
Y1.4				0.885

Source: Output Smart PLS 4 (2025)

Table 1. The outer model evaluation aims to test the convergent validity of each indicator against the latent variable it measures. An indicator is considered to have good convergent validity if its outer loading value is above 0.70. The higher the

loading value, the stronger the relationship between the indicator and the construct it represents. In this study, the outer loading values were obtained through data processing using Smart PLS.

Figure 1. Graphical Output Model Smart PLS



Source: Output Smart PLS 4.0 (2025)

2. Bootstrap Path Coefficients

Table 2. Path Coefficients

Path coefficients – Mean, STDEV, T values, P values					
	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (IO/STDEVI)	P values
X1- Work Motivation → Y1- Employee Performance	0.295	0.291	0.104	2.836	0.005
X2- Work Dicipline → Y1 Employee Performance	0.270	0.270	0.094	2.870	0.004
X3- Work Environment → Y1 Employee Performance	0.399	0.400	0.103	3.853	0.000

Source: Output Smart PLS 4 (2025)

Path coefficient analysis is used to determine the direction and strength of influence between variables in a structural model (Inner Model). The path coefficient value indicates the contribution of each independent variable in influencing the dependent variable. The larger the coefficient value, the stronger the influence the variable has on the intended construct. The results of the path coefficient test are obtained through the bootstrapping process in Smart PLS, which produces coefficient values along with t-statistics

and p-values, which are then used to determine whether a relationship is statistically significant.

4.2 Discussion

The results of this study confirm that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Liquiça Municipal Authority Office. This finding indicates that employees with higher levels of motivation tend to demonstrate stronger responsibility, initiative, and commitment in performing their duties. This

result is consistent with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which emphasizes the importance of intrinsic motivators such as responsibility, recognition, and achievement in improving performance. Empirically, the indicator with the highest factor loading for work motivation is responsibility for tasks, suggesting that employees who feel accountable for their work outcomes are more likely to perform effectively in a public sector environment.

The Effect of Work Motivation on Employee.

The results of hypothesis testing indicate that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Liquiça Municipal Authority Office. This finding suggests that employees who possess higher levels of motivation tend to demonstrate better performance in terms of work quality, responsibility, and task completion. The dominant indicator of work motivation is responsibility for tasks, indicating that employees who feel accountable for their duties are more likely to work optimally. This result supports Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which emphasizes that intrinsic motivation such as responsibility, achievement, and recognition plays a crucial role in enhancing employee performance, particularly in public sector organizations. The results of this study align with Herzberg's (1966) motivation theory, which states that motivating factors such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, and opportunities for development can encourage individuals to perform optimally. Employees who are driven to achieve and feel valued will demonstrate higher work ethic and take responsibility for completing tasks. Furthermore, Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory explains that employees will be motivated if they believe their efforts will result in good performance and provide valuable rewards.

In the context of the Liquiça Municipal Authority Office, employee work motivation is reflected in work ethic, responsibility for tasks, drive for achievement, and work initiative. Highly motivated employees tend to be more active, disciplined in completing their work, and

concerned with achieving organizational goals. This supports the opinion of Robbins & Judge (2020), who stated that motivation is a primary internal factor determining the direction, intensity, and persistence of an individual's work behavior.

The Effect of Work Discipline on Employee Performance.

The results also show that work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, although its influence is relatively smaller compared to work motivation and work environment. This finding indicates that compliance with organizational rules, punctuality, and adherence to work procedures contribute to improved employee performance. The indicator with the highest factor loading for work discipline is punctuality in attendance, highlighting the importance of time discipline in ensuring smooth administrative processes and service delivery.

This result is consistent with Hasibuan's (2020), which states that work discipline reflects employees' awareness and willingness to comply with organizational regulations. In the context of the Liquiça Municipal Authority Office, disciplined behavior such as punctual attendance and obedience to work schedules helps reduce delays and increases operational efficiency. However, the relatively smaller effect size suggests that discipline alone is insufficient to significantly enhance performance unless it is supported by adequate motivation and a conducive work environment. Thus, disciplinary policies should be implemented fairly and consistently while remaining supportive rather than punitive.

The Effect of Work Environment on Employee Performance.

The findings further confirm that the work environment has a positive and significant effect on employee performance and represents the most dominant factor among the three independent variables. This indicates that a supportive, safe, and comfortable work environment both physically and socially plays a critical role in enhancing employee performance. The strongest

indicator of the work environment variable is leadership support, emphasizing the importance of leaders in guiding, motivating, and facilitating employees' work activities.

This finding aligns with Sedarmayanti's (2020) work environment theory, which emphasizes that favorable physical and non-physical conditions can enhance productivity and job satisfaction. In practice, strong leadership support at the Liquiça Municipal Authority Office encourages open communication, strengthens teamwork, and builds employee trust, even in situations where physical facilities may be limited. Overall, this result underscores that improving the work environment through effective leadership, supportive relationships, and adequate facilities is a strategic priority for enhancing employee performance in local government institutions.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that work motivation, work discipline, and work environment have positive and significant effects on employee performance at the Liquiça Municipal Authority Office. Among these factors, the work environment has the strongest influence, followed by work motivation and work discipline. These findings indicate that employee performance in local government institutions is not determined by a single factor but rather by the combined influence of motivational, disciplinary, and environmental conditions.

From a practical perspective, the dominance of the work environment highlights the importance of creating supportive organizational conditions through effective leadership, open communication, and positive interpersonal relationships. Improving physical work facilities, although important, should be accompanied by efforts to strengthen leadership support and teamwork. At the same time, enhancing intrinsic work motivation through recognition,

responsibility, and career development opportunities is essential to encourage sustained employee performance.

Furthermore, consistent enforcement of work discipline, particularly regarding punctuality and compliance with regulations, remains necessary to ensure organizational effectiveness. Overall, this study emphasizes the need for an integrated human resource management strategy to improve employee performance and public service quality in local government institutions in Timor-Leste. The findings are expected to contribute to policy formulation and managerial decision-making aimed at strengthening public sector governance in developing and post-conflict countries.

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