

Received: 26 April 2026; Revised: 16 June 2026; Accepted: 21 July 2026; Published: 31 July 2026

The Moderating Effect of Tax Socialization on the Relationship Between Tax Services, Sanctions, and MSME Compliance

DIAH MUSTIKA ROHADI^{1a}, AGUNG YULIANTO^{1b}

^{1a,b}Accounting Study Program, Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati, Cirebon, Indonesia

Email: diahmustikarohadi20@gmail.com, agung.yulianto@ugj.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study examines the effect of tax officer services and tax sanctions on MSME taxpayer compliance in Cirebon City, with tax socialization as a moderating variable. The compliance of MSMEs to tax laws is still a challenge, despite their significant contribution to the national economy. This research was a quantitative study with primary data collected using questionnaires given to MSME taxpayers registered at Cirebon Satu Tax Office. 284 respondents were selected using probability sampling method. Data were analysed using SEM-PLS method with SmartPLS 4 software. The findings show that tax officer services and tax sanctions improve MSME taxpayer compliance significantly. Tax socialization does not moderate the relationship between tax sanctions and taxpayer compliance. Tax socialization weakens the relationship between tax officer services and taxpayer compliance. This finding shows that tax socialization does not always amplify the positive association of tax services and compliance. Therefore, to improve MSME taxpayer compliance, it is important to increase service quality and design more effective tax socialization programs. This research extends the Theory of Planned Behaviour by highlighting tax socialization as a contextual factor impacting taxpayer compliance.

Keywords: *Officer Services; Tax Sanctions; MSME taxpayer Compliance; Tax Socialization*

1. INTRODUCTION

Taxes are crucial for the stability of the national budget and national economic growth because they generate the majority of government revenue. In an economic context, taxes not only provide funding for the government but also serve as a regulatory mechanism to achieve a more equitable distribution of wealth and sustainable economic growth. The government continuously implements various innovations, including digital tax administration reforms, to improve operational effectiveness and taxpayer compliance. However, tax compliance remains very low

in Indonesia, particularly among the country’s most vital economic pillars: micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

The Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises in Indonesia says that there are now more than 64.2 million Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). This sector takes up about 61.07% of the country's GDP, which is about IDR 8,573.89 trillion. It also employs around 117 million people and is responsible for 60.4% of total domestic investment (Junaidi, 2024). Although MSMEs contribute significantly to the economy, their tax comp

liance remains relatively low. As reported in Siswanto (2025), a report from the Institute for Economic and Financial Development (Indef) says that about 57 million of Indonesia's 64 million MSMEs have not properly paid their taxes. This indicates that the tax potential of the MSME sector has not been fully optimized. So, getting MSMEs to be more conscious of taxes and follow the rules is still a big problem that needs ongoing education and good policy changes. The digital transformation in the Indonesian tax administration is also related to MSME taxpayer compliance. Since January 2025, the Direktorat Jendral Pajak (DJP) has applied Coretax to integrate registration, tax return reporting, payment and supervision into one platform DJP (2025) This reform is expected to simplify tax administration, enhance service transparency and improve taxpayer compliance, especially if it is accompanied by effective tax socialisation.

Table 1. Compliance Rate of MSMEs Taxpayers

Year	Registered MSME Taxpayers	MSME Taxpayers Who Filed Tax Returns	Compliance Ratio
2021	539	362	67,16%
2022	649	485	74,73%
2023	1.018	557	54,72%
2024	1.447	573	39,60%

Sumber : KPP Pratama Cirebon Satu (2025)

The number of taxpayers from the micro, small, and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) sector has increased significantly, from 539 in 2021 to 1,447 in 2024, demonstrated in table 1. However, the compliance rate has actually declined over the past two years. The compliance rate fell from 74,73% in 2022 to 54,72% in 2023, and then to 39,60% in 2024. This issue indicates there is a difference between the number of taxpayers and the quantity of people who file their tax statements on time.

Table 2. Tax Revenue Collection for MSMEs at the Cirebon 1 Tax Office

Year	Tax Revenue Collection Year of Tax Revenue Realization
2021	10.565.505.024

* Corresponding author’s e-mail: diahmustikarohadi20@gmail.com
<http://openjournal.unpam.ac.id/index.php/JIA>

2022	9.943.010.317
2023	10.528.773.889
2024	10.907.945.218

Source : KPP Pratama Cirebon Satu (2025)

In addition, MSMEs tax revenue realization showed a fluctuating but increasing trend during 2021–2024. In 2022, revenue went down, but it went back up in 2023 and 2024. However, this increase does not necessarily mean that tax collection has been totally optimized. Because the compliance ratio in Table 1 is going down, real revenue growth may still be below its potential level. This inconsistency between falling compliance and rising revenue shows a gap between actual tax revenue and prospective tax capacity. This strengthens the need to examine factors affecting taxpayer compliance.

This research is grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) formulated by Ajzen (1991) to examine the determining factors influencing compliance attitudes. TPB believes that attitudes are the primary determinant of conduct, including tax compliance. This intention is based on three fundamental elements: behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs. These three elements represent perceptions of how easy or difficult it is to fulfill obligations. Intention is the primary factor determining whether a person does something, such as paying taxes. This means that taxpayer compliance can be viewed as the result of a combination of social pressure, behavioral attitudes, and how easy or difficult it is to fulfill one's tax obligations.

According to Manrejo & Yulaeli (2022), a person is said to be in compliance with tax regulations when they pay taxes in accordance with the regulations, with correct calculations, and on time. Thus, taxpayer compliance is an ongoing and voluntary effort by taxpayers to satisfy the tax obligations imposed on them in accordance with applicable regulations. Therefore, the extent to which taxpayers comply with these provisions is one of the most important indicators for assessing how well the tax system functions.

The level of professionalism among tax officials and the enforcement of tax sanctions are just two of the many things affecting how well taxpayers follow the rules. Taxpayers tend to be better at following the rules if tax officials act quickly and are friendly, and are helpful. This helps the public trust tax authorities and view them positively. Research Nabilla et al. (2024), Faidani et al. (2023), and Ristiyana et al. (2024) supports these findings. The study shows that taxpayers' propensity to comply with regulations increases thanks to the assistance they receive from tax officials. On the other hand, Maili (2022) Welly et al. (2024) study found the opposite result, namely that the services provided by tax officials do not affect the compliance of MSME taxpayers.

Tax sanctions are a way to urge people to pay their taxes on time, in addition to the help that tax officials give. Tax sanctions are a way to make sure that people follow the rules and stop them from breaking them. Most taxpayers will pay their taxes if these sanctions are clear, fair, and strictly enforced. The results of this study

are similar to those of Faidani et al. (2023), Mansur et al. (2022), which show that fines affect how likely people are to pay their taxes. Nonetheless, the study of Priyatna (2023) Utami et al. (2023) indicates that tax sanctions do not affect the compliance of MSME taxpayers to fulfill their tax obligations.

The findings of previous studies remain inconsistent, as some studies reported significant effects of tax officer services and tax sanctions on MSME taxpayer compliance, while others found no significant relationship. So, more research is needed to look into other aspects that can make this connection stronger. One of these approaches that potentially change this connection is tax socialization. In addition to tax officer service and tax sanctions, other factors such as the implementation of e-filing and taxpayer awareness have also been found to influence taxpayer compliance in reporting tax obligations Pratami (2022). Tax socialisation is introduced as a moderating variable because it can strengthen or weaken the effect of tax officer services and tax sanctions on taxpayer compliance by improving taxpayers' understanding and perceived behavioural control of tax obligations. People need tax socialization, which includes counseling, seminars, education, and digital media, to assist them learn more about taxes. According to tax experts Fairuz et al. (2025), tax socialization can help people understand the effects of breaking the law. Tax socialization can strengthen the relationship between tax sanctions and taxpayer compliance, as well as the relationship between tax officer services and taxpayer compliance.

Simply raising revenue doesn't always mean that taxpayers are following the rules better, which is why this topic is worth looking into. Consequently, this study aims to evaluate the effect of tax officer services and tax sanctions on MSMEs taxpayer compliance, with tax socialization functioning as a moderating variable. The Cirebon Satu Tax Office will be the main subject of this investigation. This study is based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, which helps explain why taxpayers follow tax laws. This study also aims to assist tax authorities in formulating enhanced policy initiatives to enhance MSMEs taxpayer compliance. This can be achieved by ensuring high-quality tax services, fair tax sanctions, and more effective tax education initiatives. This study theoretically expands the application of the Theory of Planned Behaviour by exploring tax socialisation as a contextual factor that moderates the relationship between tax officer services, tax sanctions, and MSME taxpayer compliance. The novelty of this study lies in the simultaneous examination of the moderating role of tax socialisation in the relationship of tax officer services, tax sanctions, and taxpayer compliance in a single research model with MSME taxpayers registered at KPP Pratama Cirebon Satu.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Ajzen (1991) presents the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which serves as the theoretical framework for this study. This theory states that intention has a

significant influence on human behavior. The most important element determining whether a person will do something or not is their intention. The stronger a person's resolve to achieve something, the greater the likelihood they will do it. Additionally, how confident a person is that they can control a certain behavior also influences the development of that behavior.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) states that there are three main elements influencing a person's intention: behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and perceived behavioral control. A person's attitude toward a behavior reflects their evaluation of that action, classified as positive or negative. Subjective norms are the social pressure or support from people and things in one's surroundings that can influence the decision to act Azzahro & Ajimat (2024). At the same time, perceived behavioral control indicates how capable a person feels of performing an action or the extent of control they possess to achieve it. This perceived behavioral control influences intentions and can also directly influence behavior when based on real-life conditions.

In this study, tax compliance among MSME taxpayers is defined as behavior driven by the taxpayer's intention to fulfill their tax obligations. Individuals who hold a positive attitude toward tax payment, feel social pressure to comply with tax laws, and are confident in their ability to perform tax related tasks correctly tend to be more compliant with regulations. Tax officer services, tax sanctions, and tax socializations are external factors that can influence these three components of the TPB framework. Good tax officer services can help the public feel comfortable paying taxes and make the process seem easier. Tax sanctions can make taxpayers more likely to comply by making them consider the consequences and applying pressure to ensure compliance. At the same time, tax socialization can help taxpayers better understand tax regulations, which can make them feel more confident about paying taxes. Thus, these three elements help shape intent, which ultimately influences how MSME taxpayers comply with the rules.

Taxpayer Compliance

Taxpayer compliance means that people are willing to pay their taxes in conformity with the rules that apply. This means figuring out how much tax you owe, paying it on time, and reporting your tax responsibilities correctly Supriatiningsih & Jamil (2021). Taxes are a big source of money for the government, which uses that money to pay for public services and national development. So, it is important to keep taxpayers compliant. Because of this, making sure that taxpayers follow the rules is now a top responsibility in running the tax system.

Tax Officer Services

Tax authorities offer tax officer services to help people pay their taxes. According to Nabilla et al. (2024) the quality of tax services depends on how well tax officers can assist, provide information, and facilitate taxpayers in fulfilling their tax obligations. Taxpayers tend to trust tax authorities more and understand tax procedures if they receive good service. Such services include providing

accurate information, assisting people with their tax matters, and maintaining a professional demeanor when helping taxpayers. Taxpayers are more likely to pay their taxes if they receive good service.

Tax Sanctions

Tax sanctions are legal or administrative punishments for people who don't pay their taxes on time (Utami & Supadmi, 2023). The goal of these punishments is to stop people from breaking the law and to get them to follow tax laws. There are many ways that tax sanctions can be enforced to taxpayers who are late or don't follow the rules. These include fines, interest, and other administrative actions. Tax sanctions also work as a way to stop people from breaking the law again (Pratiknjo & Lasdi, 2022). Clear and strict punishments are supposed to make taxpayers more disciplined, which will improve total compliance.

Tax Socialization

Tax socialization is what tax authorities do to help people learn more about tax laws, rules, and responsibilities by sharing information. The goal of these programs is to help people learn more about how to file and pay their taxes. Sufiyanto et al. (2024) state that tax socialization serves as a guidance tool used by tax officials to help taxpayers understand tax laws, which in turn encourages them to comply with regulations. Anisya et al. (2022) also state that tax socialization involves conveying information to taxpayers through counseling, seminars, and other forms of media to help them understand what they need to do regarding their taxes.

The Influence of Tax Officials' Services on MSME Taxpayers' Compliance

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991) the service quality of tax officers has a direct effect on the perceived behavioral control of taxpayers their perception of ability to meet tax obligations. When tax officers give clear information, help taxpayers with technical procedures and act in a professional and approachable manner, taxpayers are more confident to understand and carry out their tax duties. This increased perceived behavioral control then enhances their intention to comply and ultimately leads to compliant behavior. In the Indonesian context, the mechanism was verified by Manrejo & Yulaeli (2022), who showed perceived behavioral control is a significant predictor of tax compliance behavior. Taxpayers who feel supported and capable are more consistently willing to fulfill their obligations. Moreover, a service-oriented tax administration also creates trust in the tax authority, which reinforces the subjective norm that complying is expected and worth the effort. Previous empirical research also shows that the quality of tax officer service positively affects MSME taxpayer compliance. Faidani et al. (2023) and Ristiyana et al. (2024). This study posits that the services provided by tax officers have a favorable impact on the compliance of MSME taxpayers.

H1: Tax officer service has a positive effect on MSME taxpayer compliance

The Impact of Tax Sanctions on Tax Compliance Among MSME Taxpayers

In the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991), tax sanctions mainly influence through behavioral beliefs a taxpayer's perception of the expected consequences of a specific action. Taxpayers develop negative attitudes toward tax evasion when they are convinced that noncompliance will almost certainly lead to tangible sanctions, such as fines, interest charges or audits, which in turn strengthens their intention to comply. This is consistent with the deterrence effect where the perceived certainty and severity of punishment increase the expected cost of noncompliance, leading to compliance as the rational and preferred choice. In the Indonesian context, Manrejo & Yulaeli (2022) proved that the behavioral beliefs, which are shaped by the tax enforcement environment, are a significant determinant of compliance intentions among taxpayers. Clear, firm and consistently applied tax sanctions are therefore not merely a legal instrument, but a behavioural signal, which influences the way taxpayers assess the risk of not meeting their obligations. Taxpayers are more careful of following rules if they know that there are sanctions. This is empirically supported by Mansur et al. (2022) and Faidani et al. (2023) both confirming that tax sanctions positively affect MSME taxpayer compliance. Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Tax sanctions have a positive effect on MSME taxpayer compliance.

The Effect of Tax Socialization on Moderating the Relationship Between Tax Officials' Service and Tax Compliance Among MSME Taxpayers

According to Ajzen (1991), the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) states that three types of beliefs influence behavior: behavioral, normative, and control beliefs. According to Azzahro & Ajimat (2024), control beliefs are a person's perception of the factors that can help or hinder the occurrence of a behavior and the extent to which these factors influence the occurrence of the behavior. In the context of tax compliance, tax officer service mainly works through perceived behavioral control by making tax procedures more approachable and manageable. Tax socialization is a moderator that interacts with this mechanism through control beliefs: the information and guidance that socialization programs provide shape taxpayers' perceptions of the enabling or constraining conditions of compliance. If the socialization is well targeted and in accordance with the practical needs of the MSME taxpayers, then this will strengthen the perceived behavioral control that has been built by the tax officer service. Taxpayers feel more able and supported in fulfilling their obligations. However, in case of socialization material that is general, repetitive and not in line with the real needs of taxpayers, it is at risk of creating a cognitive complexity that weakens rather than strengthens the positive effect of service quality on compliance. Faidani et al. (2023) also confirmed that tax socialization strengthens the effect of tax officer service on MSME taxpayer compliance. Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Tax socialization moderates the influence of tax officials' services on MSME taxpayer compliance.

The Influence of Tax Socialization in Moderating the Relationship Between Tax Sanctions and MSME Taxpayer Compliance

The Theory of Planned conduct, put out by Icek Ajzen, posits that individual conduct is shaped by perceptions of the consequences of an action. Understanding the consequences of violating tax laws can encourage the public to follow the rules more closely. One way to help people understand this better is through tax socialization programs that teach people about tax laws and the sanctions for not following them. In TPB terms, tax socialization can enhance the deterrent effect of sanctions by increasing taxpayers' awareness of the specific consequences and procedures of enforcement, which strengthens behavioral beliefs about the costs of noncompliance. This is supported by research by Faidani et al. (2023), tax socialization can make tax sanctions more effective in getting MSME taxpayers to follow the rules. But if taxpayers already see sanctions as a credible threat, then socialization could not have much deterrent value, since the perceived severity of sanctions already dominates their compliance decision rather than additional information. As a result, the following hypothesis can be expressed:

H4: Tax socialization moderates the effect of tax sanctions on MSME taxpayer compliance.

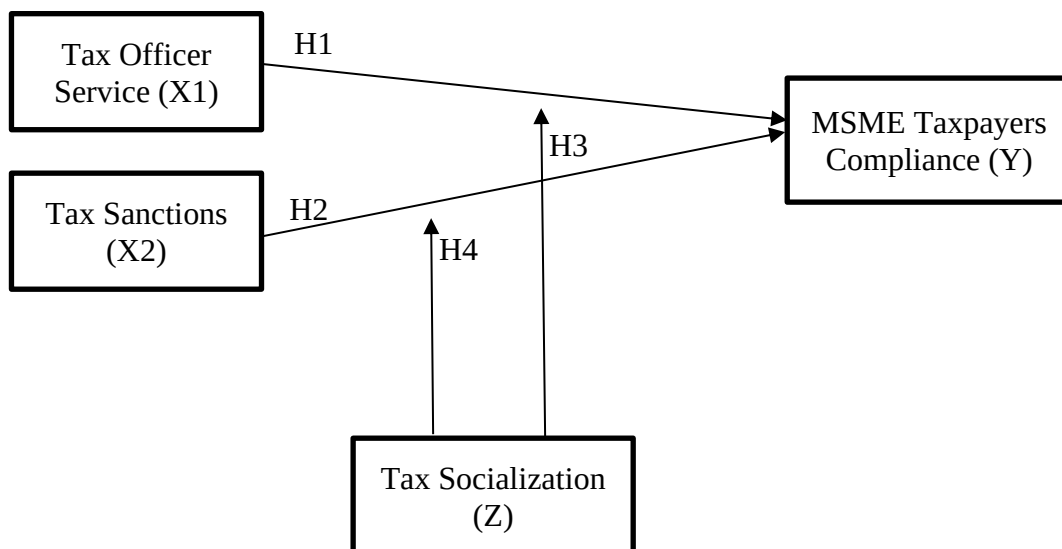


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a quantitative methodology utilizing an associative design to examine the interrelationships among research Sugiyono (2019). The research examines the impact of tax officer services and tax sanctions on MSME taxpayer compliance, incorporating tax socialization initiatives as a moderating variable.

Data Collection Techniques

This study utilizes primary data obtained from questionnaires distributed to MSME taxpayers registered at the Cirebon Satu Tax Office. The questionnaire distribution was done online through Google Form, with assistance from KPP Pratama Cirebon Satu by distributing the link of the form directly to registered MSME taxpayers. There are a lot of statements about the research variables in the questionnaire. These include tax officer services, tax sanctions, tax socialization, and MSME taxpayer compliance. Individuals asked participants to rate each statement on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was ‘strongly disagree’ and 5 was ‘strongly agree’.

Operational Definitions of Variables

This study encompasses one dependent variable, two independent variables, and one moderating variable. The dependent variable is the compliance of MSME taxpayers, whereas the independent variables are tax officer services and tax sanctions. socialization to taxpayers is a moderating variable that alters the correlation between the independent factors and taxpayer compliance.

Table 3. Definitions and Operationalization of Variables

Variable	Indicator	Measurement
Tax Compliance Among MSME Taxpayers (Y)	1. Registration with the tax office in accordance with regulations 2. Compliance with tax filing deadlines 3. Accurate tax calculations and compliance with tax payments 4. Timely payment of tax arrears Yuliani et al. (2024)	Likert Scale
Tax Officer Service (X1)	1. Tangibility is the physical aspect of the service that tax authorities give to taxpayers. 2. Reliability means that the level of service that tax authorities give to taxpayers is always the same. 3. Assurance is the promise made by the tax office to taxpayers that they will get the finest service possible. 4. Responsibility is the quality and precision of the tax services that officials (tax officers) give to taxpayers 5. Empathy is the way tax officials show they care about taxpayers. (Martha R. &, cited Welly et al., 2024)	Likert Scale

Tax Sanctions (X3)	1. If you break the tax laws, you could face severe financial sanctions 2. One way to teach people is to give them harsh tax sanctions 3. Tax offenders must face harsh punishments without fail. Yuliani et al. (2024)	Likert Scale
Tax Socialization (Z)	1. Socialization procedures 2. Frequency of socialization 3. How clear socializing is 4. Knowledge of taxes Welly et al. (2024)	Likert Scale

Sample Collection Techniques

The Cirebon Satu Tax Office has 1,447 individual MSME taxpayers, and they are the people who are being population in this study. This was the number of people who made up the sample. The sampling method is probability sampling method, that is simple random sampling, where each MSME taxpayer registered in KPP Pratama Cirebon Satu has the same probability to be a respondent. The Raosoft calculator was used to figure out the sample size, which had a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level. Based on these criteria, 284 participants were chosen to answer the questions. This is a large enough group to reflect the whole population. The criteria for selecting respondents are as follows: (1) registered as individual MSME taxpayers at KPP Pratama Cirebon Satu, (2) have a valid Taxpayer Identification Number (NPWP), and (3) actively conducting business at the time of this study.

Data Analysis Techniques

This research utilizes the Partial Least Squares (PLS) technique to examine and forecast correlations among latent variables (Ghozali, 2014, as referenced in Halimah et al., 2024). It utilized SmartPLS version 4 as the tool for analysis. PLS is a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method that looks at how variables in a research model are related to each other Ghozali (2016). SEM-PLS was chosen over the usual regression because in this study there are latent variables with multiple indicators and moderation effects (interaction terms between variables). SEM-PLS is more flexible and less rigid, in terms of its assumption of data distribution. It can accommodate complex structural relationships and moderating variables Ghozali (2016). The data analysis was done in three steps:

1. Checking the outer model,
2. Checking the inner model,
3. Testing the hypothesis.
 - a. Outer Model

The measuring model (outer model) was used to check how accurate and reliable the model was. This assessment entails the analysis of

composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha, and both convergent and discriminant validity to confirm that the indicators sufficiently reflect the underlying constructs Ghozali (2016).

b. Inner Model

The purpose of internal model analysis is to predict the relationships between latent variables, which is sometimes referred to as structural equation modeling. According to Ghozali, 2015, p. 73 in Halimah et al., 2024).

c. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is conducted after a thorough evaluation of the internal and external models has been completed. The direction of the relationship between endogenous and exogenous factors is determined through hypothesis testing.

Several procedural steps were taken to minimize potential measurement bias. The questionnaire was anonymous to enable the respondents to answer in an honest way. The measurement instruments are adopted from the previously validated scales reducing measurement error Respondents were informed that there were no right or wrong answers and that biased responses were discouraged.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The table below presents the respondents data for this study. Of the 284 participants, 156 (55%) were female and 128 (45%) were male. This indicates that the gender distribution is fairly balanced, although the number of women is higher than that of men. The majority of respondents, namely 175 people (62%), were between the ages of 20 and 40. The second-largest age group consisted of those under 40 years old, with 84 people (29%). The smallest age group consists of those over 40 years old, with 25 people (9%). This means that the majority of participants in this study are in the productive age group. The majority of respondents, 148 people (52%), have completed Senior high school. The next largest group, 67 people (23.6%), hold a bachelor's degree. Following that, 34 people (12%) graduated from junior high school, 21 people (7.4%) graduated from Diploma Degree, and a small number (3.2%) graduated from elementary school; 1.4% graduated from master's programs, and 0.4% graduated from PhD/Doctor. Based on the data we gathered, the majority of the people who took part were women of working age who had finished high school. This demographic trait might affect how well they comprehend and use the study tool.

Table 4. Respondent demographics

Sample characteristics	Number of participants	Percentage
Gender		
Female	156	55%
Male	128	45%
Total	284	100%
Age		
>20 Years	25	9%
20-40 Years	175	62%
<40 Years	84	29%
Total	284	100%
Highest Level of Education		
Elementary School	9	3,2%
Junior High School	34	12%
Senior High School	148	52%
Diploma Degree	21	7,4%
Bachelor Degree	67	23,6%
Magister	4	1,4%
PhD/Doctor	1	0,4%
Total	284	100%

Results

Analysis Outer Model Convergent Validity

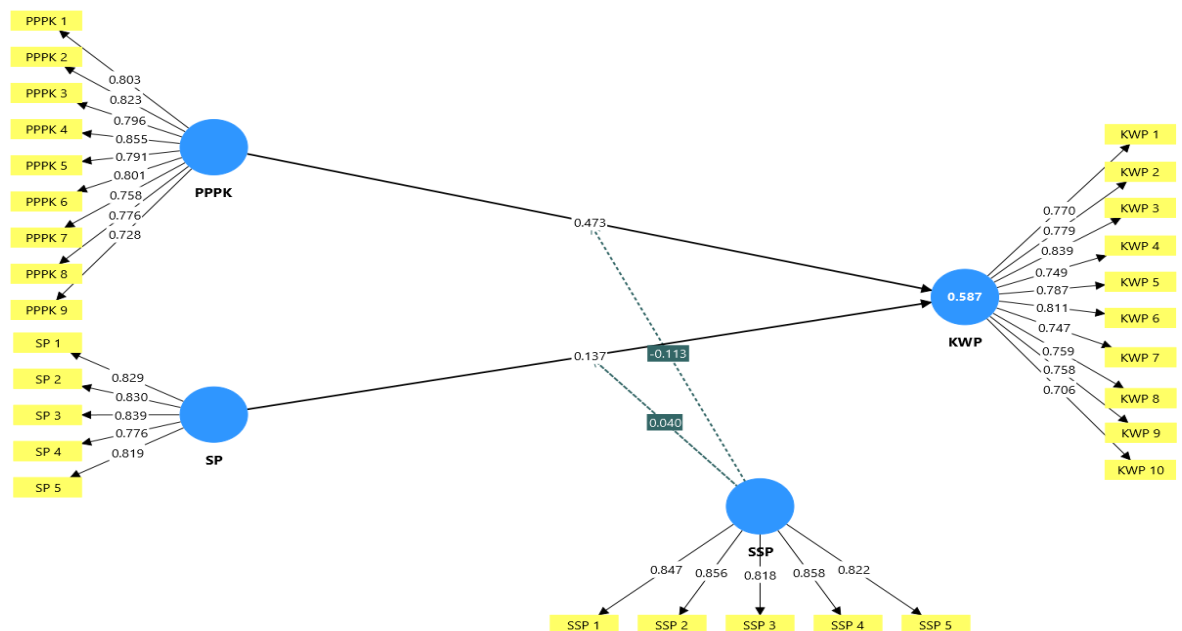


Figure 2. Results of the Convergent Validity Test

Figure 2 shows the results of the convergent validity test using outer loading values. The results reveal that all of the indicators have loading values over 0.7, which means they are legitimate and can be used for more research. So, each indicator is thought to be able to accurately show its own construct, which includes things like taxpayer compliance, tax officer services, tax sanctions.

Discriminant Validity

Table 5. Cross-Loading Test Results

Variabel	KWP	PPPK	SP	SSP	SSP x SP	SSP x PPPK
KWP 1	0.770	0.520	0.431	0.456	-0.365	-0.405
KWP 2	0.779	0.581	0.491	0.481	-0.500	-0.526
KWP 3	0.839	0.537	0.460	0.415	-0.396	-0.466
KWP 4	0.749	0.421	0.352	0.281	-0.337	-0.358
KWP 5	0.787	0.544	0.466	0.446	-0.410	-0.450
KWP 6	0.811	0.619	0.502	0.475	-0.406	-0.475
KWP 7	0.747	0.682	0.508	0.551	-0.497	-0.563
KWP 8	0.759	0.609	0.529	0.518	-0.392	-0.434
KWP 9	0.758	0.635	0.586	0.544	-0.430	-0.455
KWP 10	0.706	0.481	0.454	0.415	-0.367	-0.434
PPPK 1	0.623	0.803	0.532	0.567	-0.542	-0.593
PPPK 2	0.615	0.823	0.591	0.601	-0.502	-0.566
PPPK 3	0.627	0.796	0.616	0.519	-0.496	-0.508
PPPK 4	0.626	0.855	0.637	0.544	-0.486	-0.574
PPPK 5	0.554	0.791	0.580	0.592	-0.451	-0.512
PPPK 6	0.603	0.801	0.575	0.517	-0.521	-0.600
PPPK 7	0.584	0.758	0.626	0.557	-0.426	-0.462
PPPK 8	0.541	0.776	0.564	0.552	-0.367	-0.430
PPPK 9	0.508	0.728	0.531	0.602	-0.396	-0.462
SP 1	0.583	0.678	0.829	0.685	-0.550	-0.538
SP 2	0.545	0.646	0.830	0.645	-0.508	-0.480
SP 3	0.558	0.612	0.839	0.594	-0.478	-0.464
SP 4	0.434	0.527	0.776	0.494	-0.307	-0.290
SP 5	0.415	0.518	0.819	0.529	-0.341	-0.337
SSP 1	0.510	0.598	0.636	0.847	-0.578	-0.503
SSP 2	0.508	0.665	0.600	0.856	-0.597	-0.570
SSP 3	0.434	0.505	0.525	0.818	-0.474	-0.407
SSP 4	0.481	0.585	0.593	0.858	-0.488	-0.456
SSP 5	0.588	0.595	0.682	0.822	-0.589	-0.513

Source : SmartPLS 4 Output in 2026

The findings of the discriminant validity test in table 5, which used cross-loading analysis, reveal that each indicator has a larger loading value on the construct it measures than on other constructs. All indicators also have cross-loading values above 0.70, which suggests that these indicators are very strong and consistently represent the intended constructs. This indicates that every variable in this study possesses excellent discriminant validity and can be empirically

distinguished. Thus, this research instrument is valid in terms of discriminant validity and can be used in further research.

Composite Reability

The Cronbach's alpha value is one method for determining how reliable a composite scale is by assessing the reliability of the composite scale (Ghozali, 2016). Table 6 shows the results of the Composite Reliability test, all variables in this study are highly reliable. The Cronbach's alpha values for each of the four variables are: taxpayer compliance 0.924, tax officer service 0.926, tax sanctions 0.878, and tax socialization 0.896. All Cronbach's alpha values are higher than 0.70, indicating high reliability. Furthermore, the composite reliability values are all the same: taxpayer compliance at 0.936, tax officer service at 0.938, tax sanctions at 0.910, and tax socialization at 0.923. The reliability is very good because all composite reliability values are higher than 0.70.

Table 6. Composite Reability

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
KWP	0.924	0.928	0.936	0.595
PPPK	0.926	0.928	0.938	0.629
SP	0.878	0.887	0.910	0.671
SSP	0.896	0.901	0.923	0.706

Source : SmartPLS 4 Output in 2026

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) parameter is used to find out how effectively a study's construct can explain the differences between its indicators. The lowest AVE value in this study is 0.5. Indicators are said to have good convergent validity if their AVE values are higher than 0.5. The AVE values for tax compliance, tax officer services, tax sanctions, and tax socialization are 0.595, 0.629, 0.671, and 0.706, respectively. All of these AVE values are more than the minimum criterion of 0.5, which means that every variable in this study meets the standards for convergent validity. So, the indicators for each variable are closely linked and can be used to measure the things being studied.

Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)

The table below shows that the HTMT ratio for all characteristics is less than 0.9. This indicates that the relationships among the constructs remain strong. In other words, each variable in the research model is clearly distinct from the others, and there are no issues regarding discriminant validity. Thus, the research model comprising these four variables is valid and can be used in subsequent stages of the study.

Table 7. Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)

Variable	KWP	PPPK	SP	SSP	SSP x SP	SSP x PPPK
KWP						

PPPK	0.787				
SP	0.676	0.807			
SSP	0.646	0.774	0.803		
SSP x SP	0.553	0.610	0.569	0.685	
SSP x PPPK	0.616	0.686	0.549	0.616	0.881

Source : SmartPLS 4 Output in 2026

Analysis Inner Model

R-Square (R)

Table 8 shows that differences in Tax Compliance among Individual MSME Taxpayers (Y) are largely attributed to Tax Officer Services (X1), Tax sanctions (X2), and Tax Awareness Campaigns (Z). This is indicated by an R-Square (R^2) value of 0.587. This figure indicates that the research model successfully explains the dependent variable well, specifically 58.7%. The remaining 41.3% is attributed to other factors not included in the research model. Thus, it can be concluded that the model used effectively explains why MSME taxpayers comply with regulations.

Table 8. R-Square (R)

Variabel	R-square	R-square adjusted
KWP	0.587	0.579

Source : SmartPLS 4 Output in 2026

Hypothesis Test

The next step was to compare the T-statistic value to the key T-value to see if the hypothesis was true. If the T-statistic value is greater than 1.65 and the P-value is less than 0.05, the hypothesis is accepted. This suggests that the link between the variables is statistically significant. This test was done with the SmartPLS4 technique. The table below illustrates what happened to the data after this test. The table shows the path coefficients, which are what you use to test the study hypothesis.

Table 9. Hypothesis Test

Variabel	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
PPPK -> KWP	0.473	0.465	0.093	5.080	0.000
SP -> KWP	0.137	0.151	0.078	1.755	0.040
SSP x PPPK -> KWP	-0.113	-0.109	0.056	2.004	0.023
SSP x SP -> KWP	0.040	0.038	0.058	0.687	0.246

Source : SmartPLS 4 Output in 2026

At a 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) and a t-statistic threshold of 1.65, the SEM-PLS study gave the following results:

- 1) The first hypothesis (H1) is supported, which means that tax officer services (PPPK) have a big and positive effect on taxpayer compliance (KWP). This is shown by a t-statistic of 5.080 (>1.65) and a p-value of 0.000.
- 2) The second hypothesis (H2) is also validated. It shows that tax sanctions (SP) have a strong and positive effect on taxpayer compliance (KWP), with a t-statistic of 1.755 (>1.65) and a p-value of 0.040.
- 3) The third hypothesis (H3) shows that the relationship between tax socialization (SSP) and tax officer services (PPPK) has a negative but significant influence on taxpayer compliance (KWP). This is shown by a t-statistic of 2.004 (>1.65) and a p-value of 0.023. This means that tax socialization makes it less likely that tax officers will help taxpayers comply.
- 4) The fourth hypothesis (H4) is not supported since the interaction between tax socialization (SSP) and tax sanctions (SP) does not have a big effect on taxpayer compliance (KWP), with a t-statistic of 0.687 (<1.65) and a p-value of 0.246.

In general, these results show that not all of the moderating effects are important in the suggested research model.

Discussion

The Effect of Tax Officer Service on Tax Compliance Among MSME Taxpayers

The findings of hypothesis testing show that the services of tax officers have a significant and positive effect on the compliance of UMKM taxpayers in Cirebon City with a t-statistic value of 5.080 (> 1.65) and a p-value of 0.000. The research reveals that service quality of tax officers directly affect the willingness of taxpayers to pay their tax obligation. Taxpayers gain more trust in the tax authority and feel more confident in meeting their tax obligations when tax officers are responsive, informative and professional.

This conclusion is consistent with Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991) that perceived behavioral control is an important factor to influence one's intention to act. In terms of tax compliance, taxpayers see better service from tax officers as improving their behavioral control by making tax procedures seem more controllable and accessible. It also increases trust in the tax authority, since taxpayers who receive clear guidance and respectful treatment from tax officers are more likely to see the tax system as fair and reliable. They feel more compelled to do their tasks, not only because they are forced to, but also because they want to.

This results is in agreement with Nabilla et al. (2024), who discovered that the quality of tax officer service considerably enhances the compliance of MSME taxpayers. This is different from the finding of Maili (2022) who found no substantial influence of tax officer service on compliance, a discrepancy that reflects variances in the tax service conditions and MSME characteristics across different research locations.

The Influence of Tax Sanctions on MSME Taxpayer Compliance

The result of the hypothesis testing shows that the tax sanctions have a substantial beneficial influence on the compliance of MSME taxpayers in Cirebon City with the t-statistic of 1.755 (>1.65) and p-value 0.040. The research indicates that regular implementation of tax punishments directly improves the inclination of taxpayers to comply with their tax responsibilities. When taxpayers know that transgressions lead to tangible penalties fines, audits, they are more likely to comply than to suffer the consequences.

This result is consistent with the deterrence effect, in which the certainty and severity of punishment make individuals consider the cost of noncompliance against the benefit of escaping tax obligations. When taxpayers feel that sanctions are applied consistently, the perceived cost of noncompliance increases, making compliance the rational choice. Within the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed Ajzen (1991) tax sanctions alter taxpayers' behavioral beliefs, which are their judgments of the expected consequences of a certain activity. A taxpayer who believes that noncompliance will reliably result in fines or audits develops a negative attitude towards tax evasion that strengthens his or her intention to comply. This mechanism can account for the continued effectiveness of tax sanctions, even when service-oriented approaches are still developing. Whereas improving the service of tax officers increases perceived behavioral control by making compliance easier and more accessible, sanctions operate through a different pathway by shaping the cost-benefit calculation that underlies behavioral beliefs. The two mechanisms are thus mutually reinforcing and not mutually exclusive.

These findings align with previous research by Yanti et al. (2023), Yuliani et al. (2024), and Yusuf Mochamad et al. (2022) who found that tax sanctions positively influence taxpayer compliance. This suggests that sanctions function as an effective deterrent across different taxpayer groups and settings. Nonetheless, these findings contrast with those of Utami et al. (2023), who reported no significant effect of tax sanctions on MSME taxpayer compliance. These differences can be attributed to variations in regional conditions, taxpayer characteristics, and the implementation of tax enforcement policies.

The Effect of Tax Socialization in Moderating Tax Officer Service on MSME Taxpayer Compliance

The third hypothesis test demonstrates that tax socialization has a significant and negative effect on the relationship between tax officer services and MSME taxpayer compliance in Cirebon City. The t-statistic is 2.004 (>1.65), and the p-value is 0.023. These findings suggest that tax socialization diminishes the impact of tax officer services on taxpayer compliance.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) claims that behavior is determined by attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. In the field of taxation, perceived behavioral control means taxpayers believe they are able to know and complete their tax obligations. This confidence can be improved through

the service of tax officers in the form of guidance and help. While tax socialization is designed to increase the knowledge and understanding of taxpayers about tax regulations. Hence, theoretically, tax socialization should amplify the favorable effect of tax officer service on taxpayer compliance.

However, the results of this study demonstrate that tax socialization diminishes the influence of tax officer service on taxpayer compliance. This finding is contrary to the results of Hartinah et al. (2023) which tax socialization improves taxpayer compliance. The difference lies in the peculiarities of MSME taxpayers, who depend more on direct assistance from tax authorities than on general knowledge through socialization initiatives. Extensive, recurrent or inadequately focused socialization could result in information overload, as taxpayers are confronted with more information than they can successfully digest Shahrzadi et al. (2024). As a result, socialization could add complexity rather than increase understanding. Besides, the disparity between knowledge offered through socialization and assistance provided by tax officers can lower taxpayers' trust and confidence. Thus, tax socialization is likely to supplant rather than supplement tax officer service, which reduces the effectiveness of tax officer service in encouraging taxpayer compliance.

The Effect of Tax Socialization in Moderating Tax Sanctions on MSME Tax Compliance

These results show that tax socialization is not a moderating variable in the relationship between tax sanctions and taxpayer compliance. The empirical results back this up, showing a t-statistic of 0.687 (<1.65) and a p-value of 0.246, which means that the effect was not significant. These results show that tax socialization does not change the relationship between tax sanctions and taxpayer compliance. Tax sanctions still have a direct effect on compliance, no matter how much tax socialization is done.

The theory of planned behavior can explain this finding. TPB says that tax fines have an impact on the taxpayers' perception of the repercussions of non-compliance, which in turn impacts their attitude to compliance. Sanctions, such as fines, interest charges and audits, are real and immediate consequences with which taxpayers could associate their own actions. By contrast, tax socialization gives basic information on tax regulations and procedures, but does not influence the actual severity or certainty of punishment. The taxpayers' reaction to fines depends on the perceived seriousness and the inevitability of the consequences, and so additional socialization does not alter their calculus of the danger of noncompliance. Sanctions are already a substantial and independent element in increasing taxpayer compliance.

These results align with previous research by Fairuz et al. (2025) which similarly identified no moderating influence of tax socialization. However, they contradict the findings of Sulbahri & Kusuma (2022), who found that tax socialization diminishes the impact of tax punishments on individual taxpayer

compliance in an e-filing environment. This variation can be explained by the varied research environments. Their study was on individual taxpayers utilizing e-filing. Socialization allows taxpayers to comprehend procedures and fines. However, this study focuses on MSME taxpayers, for whom the immediate economic implications of non-compliance have a greater influence on their compliance than the broad information delivered through socialization. Therefore, the disparities in features of taxpayers and context of compliance can explain the inconsistent outcomes.

5. CONCLUSION & SUGGESTION

This study demonstrates that the quality of tax officer services and the enforcement of tax sanctions significantly improve the compliance of MSME taxpayers in Cirebon City. Enhanced services help taxpayers comply with their tax obligations and effective enforcement of sanctions promotes compliance with existing rules by taxpayers. However, an interesting finding is that tax socialization weakens rather than strengthens the effect of tax officer services on taxpayer compliance, while not affecting the deterrence effect of tax sanctions. This finding helps to extend the theory of planned behavior (TPB) by demonstrating that two sources of perceived behavioral control can be in conflict. If the officers of the tax have provided direct and personalized guidance, additional general information from socialization programs causes information overload which reduces the positive effect of the officer service on compliance.

Based on the results of this study, several practical recommendations are proposed to Direktorat Jendral Pajak (DJP) and KPP Pratama Cirebon Satu. The socialization program should be redesigned so that it does not duplicate the direct guidance provided by tax officers. The content should be in accordance with the problems experienced by MSME taxpayers such as how to use Coretax or how to calculate tax for small businesses. Socialization activities should be combined with personal consultation so that taxpayers can directly discuss their individual situations. Further, this study confirms that sanction certainty is still effective in providing a stimulus for compliance. Direktorat Jendral Pajak should continue to evaluate and consistently enforce tax sanctions. The policy direction should emphasize the quality and relevance of communication with MSME taxpayers, rather than on the number of socialization activities.

This study has several limitations: sample is limited to one KPP Pratama, only three variables were examined, data collected using cross sectional method and compliance was measured by self-reported perception. Future research is encouraged to expand the geographical scope, incorporate more variables such as tax awareness, trust in government, and Coretax usage, and use a longitudinal research design. It is also a good idea to look at different types of socialization, particularly personalized or need-based versus general. Furthermore, it is suggested to explore qualitative or mixed-method approaches in greater depth to understand

why tax socialization can reduce the effectiveness of officer service on taxpayer compliance.

REFERENCES

- Ajzen, I. (1991). The Theory Of Planned Behavior. *Organizational Behavior And Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179–211. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978\(91\)90020-T](https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T)
- Anisya, Tjan, J. S., & Sukmawati, S. (2022). Pengaruh Sosialisasi Perpajakan , Sanksi Perpajakan , Dan Faktor Kesadaran Terhadap Kepatuhan Pelaporan Spt Tahunan Wajib Pajak Orang Pribadi Abstrak Pendahuluan. 5(3), 182–191.
- Azzahro, T., & Ajimat, A. (2024). Persepsi Wajib Pajak Mengenai Pengaruh Keadilan Pajak, Pemeriksaan Pajak Dan Diskriminasi Pajak Terhadap Penggelapan Pajak. *Jurnal Ilmiah Akuntansi Universitas Pamulang*, 12(1), 118–132. <https://doi.org/10.32493/jiaup.v12i1.42270>
- Djp. (2025). Aktifkan Akun Coretax Djp, Hindari Kendala Lapor Spt Tahunan. Kementerian Keuangan Direktorat Jendral Pajak.
- Faidani, A. B., Soegiarto, D., & Susanti, D. A. (2023). Pengaruh Kesadaran Pajak, Pemahaman Peraturan Perpajakan, Sanksi Perpajakan, Dan Kualitas Pelayanan Terhadap Kepatuhan Wajib Pajak Dengan Sosialisasi Sebagai Variabel Moderasi. *Jurnal Riset Akuntansi Mercu Buana*, 9(1).
- Fairuz, D. A. S., Ferina, I. S., & Amin, A. R. (2025). Pengaruh Pengetahuan Pajak, Tarif Pajak Dan Sanksi Pajak Terhadap Kepatuhan Wajib Pajak Umkm Di Kota Palembang Dengan Sosialisasi Perpajakan Sebagai Variabel Moderasi. *Balance : Jurnal Akuntansi Dan Bisnis*, 28–40. <https://doi.org/10.32502/balance.v10i1.560>
- Ghozali, I. (2016). *Desain Penelitian Kuantitatif Dan Kualitatif Untuk Akuntansi, Bisnis, Dan Ilmu Sosial Lainnya*. Badan Penerbit Universitas Diponegoro.
- Halimah, H. S., Rahmawati, E., & Yulianto, A. (2024). Impact Of Understanding Tax Regulations , Fiscus Service Quality , And Tax Sanctions On Taxpayer Compliance Moderated By Risk Preference. 11(10), 1388–1415.
- Hartinah, D. A. S. , Kusumawati, A. , & Rasyid, S., (2023). Analisis Kepatuhan Wajib Pajak Orang Pribadi : Sosialisasi Pajak Sebagai Variabel Moderasi. 7, 195–218.
- Junaidi, M. (2024). Umkm Hebat, Perekonomian Nasional Meningkatno Title. Direktorat Jendral Perbendaharaan (Djpb).
- Maili, N. A. (2022). Pengaruh Pemahaman Perpajakan, Sanksi Pajak, Tarif Pajak, Dan Kualitas Pelayanan Terhadap Kepatuhan Wajib Pajak Umkm. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 6(3), 13553–13562.
- Manrejo, S., & Yulaeli, T. (2023). Tax Compliance Model Based On Taxpayers

- Planned Behavior In Indonesia. January 2022.
<https://doi.org/10.15826/Jtr.2022.8.3.123>
- Mansur, F., Hernando, R., Prasetyo, E., (2022). Current Jurnal Kajian Akuntansi Dan Bisnis Terkini Msme Taxpayer Compliance : The Role Of Tax Sanctions As. 3(2), 278–293.
- Nabilla, A., Marundha, A., & Khasanah, U. (2024). Pengaruh Kualitas Layanan Pajak , Sanksi Pajak Dan Kesadaran Wajib Pajak Terhadap Kepatuhan Wajib Pajak Umkm Di Wilayah Jakarta Timur. 2(1).
- Pratami, Y. (2022). Penerapan E-Filing , Peran Relawan Pajak Dan Kesadaran Wajib Pajak Terhadap Kepatuhan Wpop Dalam Melaporkan. 10(2), 169–183.
- Pratknjo, M. L., & Lasdi, L. (2022). Pengaruh Sanksi Pajak Dan Tax Amnesty Terhadap Keputusan Kepatuhan Wajib Pajak. Perspektif Akuntansi, 5(2), 141–156.
- Priyatna, N. R. (2023). Pengaruh Kesadaran Wajib Pajak, Pengetahuan Perpajakan, Dan Sanksi Perpajakan Terhadap Kepatuhan Wajib Pajak Umkm Di Pasar Lama Tangerang. Global Accounting, 2(2).
- Ristiyana, R., Atichasari, A. S., & Indriani, R. (2024). Pengaruh Insentif , Digitalisasi Dan Relawan Pajak Terhadap Kepatuhan Wajib Pajak Dengan Kualitas Pelayanan Sebagai Variabel Moderasi. 8(April), 1339–1349.
- Shahrzadi, L., Mansouri, A., Alavi, M., & Shabani, A. (2024). International Journal Of Information Causes , Consequences , And Strategies To Deal With Information Overload : A Scoping Review. International Journal Of Information Management Data Insights, 4(2), 100261.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/J.jime.2024.100261>
- Siswanto, D. (2025). Potensi Pajak Umkm Besar, Tapi Kepatuhan Masih Rendah. Kontan.Co.Id. <https://nasional.kontan.co.id/news/potensi-pajak-umkm-besar-tapi-kepatuhan-masih-rendah>
- Sufiyanto, R., S, A. K. H., Triatmaja, N. A., Niqrisah, Y., & Pratiwi, D. (2024). Pengetahuan Wajib Pajak Terhadap Kepatuhan Wajib Pajak Orang Pribadi (Studi Empiris Pada Kantor Pelayanan Pajak Pratama Boyolali). 12(01), 101–110.
- Sugiyono. (2019). Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif (Cetakan Ke). Alfabeta.
- Sulbahri, R. A., & Kusuma, G. S. M. (2022). Pengaruh Penerapan E-Filling Dan Sanksi Perpajakan Terhadap Kepatuhan Wajib Pajak Orang Pribadi Dengan Sosialisasi Perpajakan Sebagai Variabel Moderasi. Jurnal Kompetitif, 11(2).
- Supriatiningsih, S., & Jamil, F. S. (2021). Pengaruh Kebijakan E-Filing, Sanksi Perpajakan Dan Kesadaran Wajib Pajak Terhadap Kepatuhan Wajib Pajak Orang Pribadi. Jurnal Ilmiah Akuntansi Kesatuan, 9(1), 199–208.
- Utami, I., Suwarti, T., & Masdjojo, G. N. (2023). Pengaruh Pengetahuan Perpajakan , Sosialisasi Perpajakan , Kesadaran Pajak , Dan Sanksi Pajak

Terhadap Kepatuhan Wajib Pajak Umkm. 6(1), 67–75.

Utami, N., & Supadmi, N. L. (2023). Pemahaman Peraturan Perpajakan, Tingkat Penghasilan, Sanksi Pajak Dan Kepatuhan Wajib Pajak Orang Pribadi. E-Jurnal Akuntansi, 33(6), 1549–1562.

Welly, W., Nurhasanah, S., Sari, D. P., & Zuraidah, I. (2024). Pemahaman Wajib Pajak, Pelayanan Fiskus Dan Sosialisasi Terhadap Kepatuhan Wajib Pajak Umkm. Jemasi: Jurnal Ekonomi Manajemen Dan Akuntansi, 20(2), 144–159.

Yanti, L. D., Wijaya, V. S., (2023). Pengaruh Pengetahuan Perpajakan , Tarif Pajak , Mekanisme Pembayaran Pajak Dan Sanksi Pajak Terhadap Kepatuhan Wajib Pajak. 6(41), 206–216.

Yuliani, S. P., Sistalia, T. A., & Yulianto, A. (2024). The Effects Of Tax Sanctions, Taxpayer Awareness, And Tax Understanding Msme On Tax Compliance: The Moderating Role Of Risk Preference. Ilomata International Journal Of Tax And Accounting, 5(2), 367–385.

Yusuf Mochamad, Furqon, I. K., & Stiawan, D. (2022). Tax Socialization, Tax Knowledge, And Tax Sanctions' Influence On Taxpayer Compliance With Individuals At Kpp Pratama Pekalongan. 10(1), 38–52.