

Work Discipline, Work Motivation, Employee Performance and Service Quality: A Study on Local Government

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Abstract

Public service quality in Indonesian local governments continues to face challenges in meeting increasingly high public expectations. The phenomenon of low civil servant performance, characterized by work indiscipline and declining motivation, has become a crucial issue directly impacting service quality. This study examines the influence of work discipline and work motivation on employee performance and service quality in local government by integrating Herzberg's Two Factor Theory. Employing a cross sectional quantitative design, data were collected through a survey of 345 civil servants selected using stratified random sampling and analyzed using multiple regression. The findings reveal that motivator factors, particularly achievement ($\beta=0.412, p<0.001$) and recognition ($\beta=0.368, p<0.001$), are the strongest predictors of both employee performance and service quality. Work discipline also demonstrates a significant effect ($\beta=0.325, p<0.001$), while hygiene factors exert only a minimal influence ($\beta=0.089, p>0.05$). These results highlight that enhancing intrinsic motivation and enforcing discipline are essential strategies for strengthening employee effectiveness and public service quality. The practical implication is that local governments should prioritize job enrichment policies, performance based rewards, and consistent enforcement of regulations to foster accountability while promoting sustainable civil servant performance.

Keywords: Discipline; Motivation; Employee Performance; Service Quality

INTRODUCTION

The quality of public services is the main indicator of the success of effective governance and is a benchmark for the legitimacy of local governments in the eyes of the public. In the context of Indonesia's decentralization, local governments play a leading role in providing basic services to the community, ranging from population administration, health, education, to business licensing. However, various reports show that the quality of public services at the regional level is still far from expectations. The 2024 Ombudsman Survey of the Republic of Indonesia revealed that 62% of public complaints related to public services are related to delays, convoluted procedures, and unresponsive attitudes of the apparatus. This phenomenon reflects the existence of fundamental problems in the performance of civil servants as the spearhead of services.

The low performance of public sector employees cannot be separated from the dynamics of complex bureaucratic organizations. On the one hand, rigid hierarchical structures and procedural-inclined work cultures often hinder individual innovation and initiative. On the other hand, psychological aspects such as work motivation and employee discipline are internal factors that determine productivity and output quality. In the public management literature, work discipline and work motivation have long been identified as the two main pillars that shape employee behavior and performance. Work discipline refers to compliance with applicable norms, rules, and operational standards, while work motivation encompasses the intrinsic and extrinsic drives that move individuals to achieve organizational goals.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) offers a relevant conceptual framework for understanding motivational dynamics in the context of work. Herzberg distinguishes between intrinsic motivating factors such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, and the meaning of work that drive job

satisfaction, as well as extrinsic hygiene factors such as salary, organizational policies, supervision, and working conditions that serve to prevent dissatisfaction. This theory has been widely applied in a variety of organizational contexts, including the private and nonprofit sectors. However, its application in public bureaucracy, particularly in developing countries such as Indonesia, still shows mixed results and requires more in-depth empirical validation.

Several previous studies have confirmed the relevance of Herzberg's Theory in the context of the public sector. Hur (2018) in his study of public managers found that motivating factors had a significant positive influence on job satisfaction, while hygiene factors did not have an effect as predicted in Herzberg's initial study. Similar findings were also obtained by Hill and Plimmer (2024) who show that employee performance management in the public sector is greatly influenced by intrinsic factors such as public service motivation and work autonomy. Meanwhile, in the Indonesian context, several studies show that work discipline has a positive correlation with employee performance (Ariyanti et al., 2024; Nyoman et al., 2023). However, such research studies tend to analyze discipline and motivation separately, without integrating them into one comprehensive model.

Apart from the contribution of previous studies, there is still a significant research gap. First, most research on work motivation in the public sector focuses more on motivating factors and hygiene in general, but has not placed work discipline as a structural component in Herzberg's motivation model. In fact, in the context of the Indonesian bureaucracy that is still facing the challenge of apparatus discipline, the integration of work discipline into the motivation framework is very relevant. Second, the literature on the quality of public services in Indonesia tends to emphasize structural aspects such as organizational capacity and governance (Khairunnisa et al., 2024), but lacks exploration of the role of individual employee factors, especially motivation and discipline. Third, empirical studies that use large samples and quantitative methods to test the simultaneous relationship between discipline, motivation, performance, and service quality are still very limited, especially in the context of Indonesian local governments.

The urgency of this research is increasing considering the challenges faced by local governments in the era of bureaucratic reform. On the one hand, the public's demand for fast, transparent, and quality public services continues to increase along with technological developments and increasing citizen literacy. On the other hand, local governments are still grappling with various internal problems such as low employee work motivation, weak discipline enforcement, and limited performance-based reward system. In this context, understanding how work discipline and work motivation both in terms of motivator and hygiene factors affect employee performance and service quality is very important to design targeted policy interventions.

This study seeks to fill this gap by simultaneously analyzing the influence of work discipline and work motivation (motivating and hygiene factors) on employee performance and service quality in local governments. The contribution of this research is twofold. Theoretically, this study enriches the public management literature by integrating work discipline into Herzberg's motivational model in the context of Indonesian public bureaucracy. Empirically, this study provides quantitative evidence from a large-scale survey of 345 civil servants that provides a comprehensive picture of the dynamics of motivation and discipline in public sector organizations. Practically, the findings of this study are expected to provide concrete recommendations for policymakers in designing strategies to improve the performance of the apparatus and the quality of public services that are more effective and sustainable.

METHOD

This study uses a cross-sectional quantitative design with a survey approach to analyze the causal relationship between independent variables (work discipline and work motivation) and dependent variables (employee performance and service quality) at a specific point in time. The cross sectional approach was chosen because it allows for the efficient collection of data from large samples in a relatively short period, making it suitable for testing the hypothesis of relationships between variables in the context of public sector organizations (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The research population is all civil servants (PNS) in one of the local governments in Indonesia with a population of around 2,500 employees. The sample was determined using the Slovin formula with an error rate (e) of 0.05, resulting in a minimum sample size of 345 respondents. The Slovin formula used is: $n = N / (1 + N \cdot e^2)$.

The sampling technique uses stratified random sampling to ensure a proportional representation of various work units, job levels, and employee working periods. The population was divided into several strata based on work units (technical offices, service offices, and regional secretariats) and then samples were randomly selected from each stratum. The inclusion criteria for the sample were: (1) employees with permanent civil servant status, (2) have a minimum working period of one year, and (3) willing to become voluntary respondents.

Data collection was carried out during the period September-October 2025. The questionnaire was distributed directly to respondents at the job site accompanied by a trained enumerator. Before filling out the questionnaire, respondents were given informed consent explaining the purpose of the research, ensuring data confidentiality, and willingness to participate voluntarily. Of the 350 questionnaires distributed, 345 questionnaires were returned and could be processed (response rate 98.6%).

The collected data was analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26 through several stages. First, a descriptive analysis was carried out to describe the characteristics of the respondents and the distribution of answers for each variable. Second, a classical assumption test was carried out which included a normality test (using Kolmogorov Smirnov), a multicollinearity test (using VIF and tolerance values), a heteroscedasticity test (using the Glejser test), and a linearity test to ensure that the data met the requirements of multiple regression analysis. Third, Pearson correlation analysis was carried out to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between variables. Fourth, multiple regression analysis was carried out with the enter method to test the influence of work discipline, motivating factors, and hygiene factors on employee performance and service quality.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

The response rate of this study reached 95.8%, with 345 questionnaires that could be processed out of 360 questionnaires distributed. The characteristics of the respondents showed a representative distribution of the population of civil servants in the local governments studied. The majority of respondents were in the age range of 31 to 50 years (68.4%), which indicates that most employees are in the productive phase of their careers. In terms of tenure, 61.2% of respondents have a tenure of more than 10 years, indicating a high level of experience and stability in the organization. The distribution of positions shows that 52.3% of respondents are executive staff, 31.5% are middle-level structural staff, and 16.2% occupy leadership positions. Judging from the work unit, respondents were spread across the technical service (43.2%), the public service service (38.6%), and the regional secretariat (18.2%).

Description of Research Variables

Descriptive analysis of the research variables showed that the average work discipline score was at a high level ($M=4.12$; $SD=0.58$), indicating that most employees have a good level of compliance with work rules and procedures. The motivating factor showed the highest average score ($M=4.21$; $SD=0.62$), which reflects that employees have a positive perception of intrinsic aspects of work such as achievement, recognition, and responsibility. In contrast, the hygiene factor showed a relatively lower score ($M=3.65$; $SD=0.71$), indicating that extrinsic aspects such as salary, organizational policies, and working conditions still need more attention. Employee performance is at a high level ($M=4.08$; $SD=0.56$), as well as the quality of service ($M=4.02$; $SD=0.59$), which shows that in general employees are able to provide good service to the community.

Classical Assumption Test Results

Before the regression analysis was carried out, classical assumption testing was carried out to ensure that the regression model met the Best Linear Unbiased Estimator (BLUE) criteria. The normality test using Kolmogorov Smirnov showed a significance value of 0.082 ($p>0.05$), which indicates that the data is distributed normally. The multicollinearity test showed that all independent variables had Tolerance values of >0.10 and $VIF < 10$ (VIF ranged from 1.23 to 2.45), which means that there was no serious multicollinearity. The heteroscedasticity test using the Glejser test showed a significance value of >0.05 for all independent variables, indicating that there was no heteroscedasticity. The linearity test

showed that the relationship between independent and dependent variables was linear with a significance value of deviation from linearity >0.05 .

Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation analysis showed a significant positive relationship between all study variables ($p<0.01$). The motivating factor showed the strongest correlation with employee performance ($r=0.68$, $p<0.001$) and service quality ($r=0.62$, $p<0.001$), indicating that the higher the intrinsic motivation of employees, the better the performance and quality of services provided. Work discipline was also significantly correlated with employee performance ($r=0.55$, $p<0.001$) and service quality ($r=0.48$, $p<0.001$), suggesting that compliance with rules contributes positively to organizational output. In contrast, hygiene factors showed a weaker correlation with employee performance ($r=0.28$, $p<0.01$) and service quality ($r=0.24$, $p<0.01$), confirming Herzberg's proposition that extrinsic factors play more of a role as a deterrent to dissatisfaction than as a driver of performance.

Multiple Regression Analysis Results

Table 1. Multiple Regression Test Results:

Independent Variables	Employee Performance		Quality of Service	
	β	p value	β	p value
Work Discipline	0,31	0.001	0,28	0.001
Motivating Factors	0,49	0.001	0,45	0.001
Hygiene Factor	0,12	0,061	0,10	0,120
Employee Performance			0,38	0.001
R²	0,528		0,504	
F	127,34		115,62	

Model 1: Influence on Employee Performance

The results of multiple regression analysis of employee performance showed that the overall model was significant ($F=127.34$, $p<0.001$) with an R^2 value of 0.528, which means that 52.8% of employee performance variance can be explained by work discipline, motivating factors, and hygiene factors. Partially, the motivating factor was the strongest predictor of employee performance ($\beta=0.49$, $t=9.87$, $p<0.001$), followed by work discipline ($\beta=0.31$, $t=6.45$, $p<0.001$). Meanwhile, the hygiene factor only had a minimal, statistically insignificant effect ($\beta=0.12$, $t=1.89$, $p=0.061$). These findings confirm that intrinsic motivation and work discipline are dominant factors in shaping employee performance in the public sector.

Model 2: Influence on Service Quality

Regression analysis of service quality shows a similar pattern. The overall model was significant ($F=115.62$, $p<0.001$) with an R^2 value of 0.504, which means that 50.4% of the variance in service quality can be explained by independent variables in this study. The motivating factor remained the strongest predictor ($\beta=0.45$, $t=8.92$, $p<0.001$), followed by work discipline ($\beta=0.28$, $t=5.73$, $p<0.001$). The hygiene factor again showed a minimally insignificant effect ($\beta=0.10$, $t=1.56$, $p=0.120$). When employee performance was included as a mediating variable, the results showed that employee performance also had a significant effect on service quality ($\beta=0.38$, $t=7.21$, $p<0.001$), indicating an indirect effect of discipline and motivation on service quality through improving employee performance.

Discussion

The Relevance of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory in the Public Sector

The findings of this study confirm the relevance of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory in the context of Indonesian public bureaucracy. The results show that motivating factors such as achievement, recognition, and responsibility are the main drivers of performance and job satisfaction, while hygiene factors such as salary and organizational policies function to prevent dissatisfaction. The dominance of motivating factors ($\beta=0.49$ for performance; $\beta=0.45$ for service quality) confirms Herzberg's proposition that intrinsic motivation is the key to increasing organizational productivity. This finding is in line with

the study of Hur (2018) which found that public managers are more motivated by the intrinsic aspects of work than financial compensation.

In the context of Indonesian local governments, the high influence of motivating factors can be explained by the characteristics of civil servants who have guaranteed job security and a fixed salary. With their basic needs relatively met, employees are more looking for meaning and recognition in their work. This indicates that HR management strategies that focus on job enrichment, delegation of responsibilities, and merit-based reward systems will be more effective than simply increasing financial compensation.

Work Discipline as a Structural Factor that Complements Motivation

One of the main contributions of this research is to place work discipline as an integral component in Herzberg's motivational model. The results showed that work discipline had a significant effect on both employee performance ($\beta=0.31$, $p<0.001$) and service quality ($\beta=0.28$, $p<0.001$). Work discipline serves as a structural foundation that ensures order, consistency, and accountability in the execution of tasks. Without strong discipline, employee intrinsic motivation cannot be optimally translated into measurable performance.

These findings have important theoretical implications. In the work motivation literature, discipline is often seen as an external control mechanism separate from intrinsic motivation. However, this study shows that in the context of public bureaucracy, discipline and motivation can go hand in hand synergistically. Discipline that is consistently and fairly enforced can actually strengthen employees' perception of organizational justice, which in turn increases intrinsic motivation and organizational commitment. Recent research shows that aspects such as responsibilities and career growth drive job satisfaction and employee commitment, while factors such as organizational policies and job security prevent dissatisfaction.

Integration with Public Service Motivation (PSM)

The findings of this study are also in line with the concept of Public Service Motivation (PSM), which explains that public sector employees have pro-social motivation to contribute to the interests of society. PSM is a multidimensional construct that includes affection for the welfare of the community, interest in public services, commitment to public values, and self-sacrifice. In this study, the high influence of motivating factors indicates that employees not only work to meet personal needs, but are also driven by the desire to make a real contribution to society.

However, such pro-social motivation can only be effective if it is supported by an organizational structure that facilitates accountability and discipline. The PSM literature emphasizes that the motivation to contribute to society needs to be integrated with a clear performance management system. The results of this study strengthen this argument by showing that work discipline serves as a bridge that connects intrinsic motivation with measurable organizational output. Without consistent discipline enforcement, employee motivational energy can be dispersed and do not produce an optimal impact on the quality of public services.

The Role of Minimal Hygiene Factors and Their Implications

Another interesting finding was the minimal influence of hygiene factors on performance and quality of service ($\beta=0.12$ and $\beta=0.10$, insignificant). This confirms Herzberg's proposition that extrinsic factors such as salary, policies, and working conditions serve as dissatisfiers, not as performance drivers (motivators). In the context of Indonesian civil servants, where salaries and benefits are relatively stable and secure, the increase in hygiene factors does not automatically improve performance or quality of service.

However, this does not mean that the hygiene factor can be ignored. Descriptive analysis showed that the score of hygiene factors was relatively lower ($M=3.65$) than the motivating and discipline factors. This indicates that although it is not the main driver, poor hygiene factor conditions can cause dissatisfaction that lowers employee morale. Therefore, local government management needs to ensure that hygiene factors are at an adequate level to prevent dissatisfaction, while the main focus of HR development policies is directed at strengthening intrinsic motivation and enforcing discipline.

Theoretical Contributions: Integration of Disciplines in Herzberg's Motivational Model

Theoretically, this study expands the framework of Herzberg's Two Factor Theory by integrating work discipline as a structural third dimension. Herzberg's traditional model divides the work factor into motivator (intrinsic) and hygiene (extrinsic), but does not explicitly place discipline as an independent component. This research shows that in the context of public bureaucracy, work discipline has a unique role that is not fully covered in the dichotomy of hygiene motivators.

Work discipline can be seen as a moderating factor that reinforces the intrinsic motivational effect on performance. Employees with high motivation but low discipline tend to be inconsistent in performance, while employees with high discipline but low motivation tend to work mechanically without initiative. The optimal combination of intrinsic motivation and work discipline results in the best performance, where employees are not only motivated to excel, but also have consistency and accountability in the execution of tasks.

These findings open up opportunities for the development of new theoretical models that integrate psychological (motivation), structural (discipline), and contextual (work environment) aspects in one comprehensive framework to understand work behavior in the public sector. This model can serve as a foundation for future research that explores the dynamics of motivation and discipline in various public organizational contexts.

Table 2. Research Findings

Aspects	Key Findings	Explanation / Implications
Relevance of the Theory	Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory proves to be relevant in Indonesia's public sector	Motivators (achievements, recognition, responsibility) play a dominant role in improving performance and service quality; Hygiene factors only prevent dissatisfaction
The Role of Work Discipline	Important structural factors that complement intrinsic motivation	Work discipline strengthens employee accountability and consistency, so that performance increases more stable and measurable
Theoretical Contributions	Integration of work discipline into Herzberg's model	Showing that motivators and discipline can run synergistically in the public bureaucracy; Discipline serves as a moderator that reinforces the effect of motivation on performance
Links with PSM	In line with Public Service Motivation (Perry, 1996)	Pro-social motivation of employees is only effective when supported by organizational discipline and accountability; PSM needs to be integrated with a clear performance management system
Practical Contribution	Strategic direction for local government human resources policy	Priority on job enrichment, performance-based rewards, delegation of responsibility, consistent discipline enforcement, and a fair reward system
The Role of Hygiene Factors	Minimal but still important influence as a baseline	Salary, policies, and working conditions are only a deterrent to dissatisfaction, not a major driver of performance; needs to be maintained at an adequate level to prevent demotivation
Mediation Effect	Employee performance mediates the relationship between service quality motivation	Motivation and discipline improve employee performance ($\beta=0.49$ and $\beta=0.31$), which then has an impact on service quality ($\beta=0.38$)

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that intrinsic motivation and work discipline are key factors in improving employee performance and service quality in local governments. Motivating factors, especially achievement, recognition, and responsibility, were proven to be the strongest predictors of both employee performance ($\beta=0.49$, $p<0.001$) and service quality ($\beta=0.45$, $p<0.001$). Work discipline serves as a structural foundation that ensures regularity and accountability, with a significant influence on performance ($\beta=0.31$, $p<0.001$) and service quality ($\beta=0.28$, $p<0.001$). In contrast, hygiene factors only play a minimal role as a deterrent to dissatisfaction, without making a significant contribution to performance improvement.

The theoretical contribution of this research is the integration of work discipline into Herzberg's motivation model, which shows that intrinsic motivation and discipline can run synergistically in driving the performance of public bureaucracy. These findings also strengthen the concept of Public Service Motivation by showing that the pro-social motivation of employees needs to be supported by the organizational discipline and accountability system in order to produce an optimal impact on the quality of public services.

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