

## The Influence of Work Environment, Work Discipline, and Work Ethic on Employee Performance with Work Motivation as Mediation: A Study at PT. BRI Gorontalo Branch

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### Abstract

This study examines the influence of work environment, work discipline and work ethic on employee performance with work motivation as a mediator. The research sample consisted of 75 respondents at PT. Bank Rakyat Indonesia Gorontalo Branch. Data analysis techniques using smart Pls 4.0. The results of the study indicate that the work environment has a positive effect on employee performance. Work discipline has a negative effect on employee performance. Work ethic has a negative effect on employee performance. Work discipline has a negative effect on work motivation. Work ethic has a positive effect on work motivation. Work motivation has a positive effect on employee performance. Work motivation does not mediate the positive effect of the work environment on employee performance. Work motivation does not mediate the positive effect of work discipline on employee performance. Work motivation mediates the positive effect of work ethic on employee performance.

**Keywords** : Employee performance, work discipline, work environment, work ethic, work motivation.

### 1. Introduction

Human resources (HR) play a strategic role in achieving a company's competitive advantage (Pahuja et al., 2024), particularly in today's increasingly dynamic business environment. Factors such as work environment, work discipline, and work ethic are critical determinants of employee performance (Ngebursian, Latupapua, & Risambessy, 2024), as they contribute significantly to organizational productivity and effectiveness. A supportive work environment – both physical and non-physical – can foster job satisfaction and enhance employees' enthusiasm in accomplishing their tasks. Simultaneously, the consistent implementation of discipline and the cultivation of a strong work ethic are essential for building a productive and results-oriented work culture.

Work motivation is regarded as a psychological mechanism that mediates the influence of various external factors on performance (Pancasila, Haryono, & Sulistyono, 2020). When the work environment is conducive, discipline is enforced consistently, and a positive work ethic is instilled, individual motivation to perform tends to

increase. Within the framework of motivation theory—namely the needs for achievement, power, and affiliation—motivation serves as a key driver for employees to set and accomplish performance targets. Understanding how motivation mediates the relationship among these factors is therefore crucial to enhancing organizational effectiveness.

This study was conducted at PT Bank Rakyat Indonesia (Persero) Gorontalo Branch, a state-owned financial institution with a strategic role in the national banking sector. Performance data over the past five years indicate a consistent decline in target achievements, signaling the need for a thorough evaluation of the underlying factors influencing employee performance. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, shifts in work patterns, and the imbalance between expectations and actual performance outcomes suggest the necessity of revisiting existing work systems and managerial approaches.

In response to these challenges, BRI Gorontalo implemented a credit restructuring policy along with adjustments to its work systems. These changes directly impacted the working conditions and triggered the reorganization of values related to discipline, work ethic, and individual motivation. Through improvements in these areas, employees are expected to demonstrate sustained performance enhancements that align with organizational goals. Nevertheless, the extent to which these factors influence employee performance—both directly and through the mediating role of work motivation—remains to be empirically examined.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of the work environment, work discipline, and work ethic on employee performance, while considering work motivation as a mediating variable. The findings are expected to offer theoretical contributions to the development of human resource management studies and provide practical implications for policy formulation to improve employee performance, particularly within BRI Gorontalo Branch and more broadly within the financial services sector.

## **2. Research Method**

This study employed a quantitative research design aimed at examining the influence of work environment, work discipline, and work ethic on employee performance, with work motivation as a mediating variable. The research population consisted of all employees of PT Bank Rakyat Indonesia (Persero) Gorontalo Branch, totaling 253 individuals. The sample was selected using purposive non-probability sampling, targeting permanent employees, and a total of 75 respondents were determined using the Slovin formula with a 10% margin of error. Data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed in both online and offline formats, supported by interviews to enhance data accuracy and context understanding.

The primary data in this study were collected directly from employee responses to the questionnaires, while secondary data included organizational profiles and employee performance records. All constructs – work environment, work discipline, work ethic, work motivation, and employee performance – were operationalized based on established definitions and measured using a five-point Likert scale. Validated indicators were adopted from previous literature, ensuring content and construct validity. Quantitative data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS software, focusing on hypothesis testing through the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach.

To ensure data quality, a series of validity and reliability tests were conducted. Convergent validity was evaluated using outer loading values ( $\geq 0.70$ ) and Average Variance Extracted ( $AVE \geq 0.50$ ), while discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio ( $HTMT < 0.90$ ). Reliability was measured using Cronbach’s Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR), both of which required minimum thresholds of 0.70. The structural model was evaluated using path coefficients,  $R^2$  values,  $f^2$  effect size, and  $Q^2$  predictive relevance. Hypothesis testing was conducted through bootstrapping to examine direct and indirect effects, following mediation analysis criteria as outlined by (Joseph F. Hair et al., 2021).

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Outer Model Results

##### 3.1.1 Outer Loading

**Table 1. Loading Factor Values of Each Indicator**

Variable	Indicator	Loading Factor	Description	
Work Environment (WE)	X1.1.3	0.847	Valid	
	X1.2.1	0.849	Valid	
	X1.2.2	0.893	Valid	
	X1.3.1	0.885	Valid	
	X1.3.2	0.849	Valid	
	X1.4.1	0.835	Valid	
	X1.4.2	0.894	Valid	
	X1.5.1	0.885	Valid	
	X1.5.2	0.839	Valid	
	X1.6.1	0.904	Valid	
	X1.6.2	0.791	Valid	
	X1.7.1	0.860	Valid	
	Work Discipline (WD)	X2.3.1	0.760	Valid
		X2.4.1	0.829	Valid
X2.4.2		0.893	Valid	
X2.5.1		0.920	Valid	
X2.5.2		0.886	Valid	
X2.6.1		0.882	Valid	
X2.6.2		0.913	Valid	
X2.7.1	0.882	Valid		

	X2.7.2	0.937	Valid
	X2.8.1	0.882	Valid
Work Ethic (WEth)	X3.2	0.890	Valid
	X3.2.2	0.847	Valid
	X3.3.2	0.782	Valid
	X3.4.1	0.929	Valid
	X3.4.2	0.851	Valid
	X3.5.1	0.795	Valid
Work Motivation (WM)	Y1.1	0.793	Valid
	Y1.1.2	0.892	Valid
	Y1.2.1	0.889	Valid
	Y1.2.2	0.860	Valid
	Y1.3.1	0.837	Valid
	Y1.3.2	0.873	Valid
	Y1.4.1	0.824	Valid
	Y1.4.2	0.765	Valid
	Y1.5.1	0.908	Valid
	Y1.5.2	0.915	Valid
Employee Performance (EP)	Z1.2.1	0.814	Valid
	Z1.1	0.760	Valid
	Z1.4.1	0.817	Valid
	Z1.5.2	0.751	Valid
	Z1.6.2	0.749	Valid
	Z1.7.1	0.822	Valid

The results of the loading factor test presented in Table 4.8 confirm that all indicators used to measure the latent variables meet the threshold for convergent validity. According to Joe F. Hair, Howard, & Nitzl (2020), an indicator is considered valid when the loading factor exceeds 0.70. All indicators for the five constructs – Work Environment, Work Discipline, Work Ethic, Work Motivation, and Employee Performance – achieved loading factor values ranging from 0.749 to 0.937, indicating strong correlations between indicators and their respective latent constructs.

The Work Environment variable (WE) demonstrated particularly strong factor loadings across its indicators, notably X1.6.1 (0.904), indicating that this item significantly contributes to capturing the essence of the latent construct. Similarly, the Work Discipline construct showed consistently high loading values, especially X2.7.2 (0.937), reflecting the robustness of the measurement items.

The indicators for Work Ethic, Work Motivation, and Employee Performance also met the recommended criteria, thereby supporting the construct validity of the measurement model. These results collectively reinforce the appropriateness of the measurement instruments used in this study and provide a reliable basis for further structural model analysis.

### 3.1.2 Validity Test Results

**Table 2. HTMT Value Testing**

Variable	DK	EK	KK	LK
Work Discipline (DK)				
Work Ethic (EK)	0.519			
Employee Performance (KK)	0.651	0.647		
Work Environment (LK)	0.686	0.349	0.631	
Work Motivation (MK)	0.493	0.852	0.765	0.393

Based on Table 2, the discriminant validity for most variable pairs has been fulfilled, as indicated by the HTMT values being below the threshold of <0.90 (Henseler, Hubona, & Ray, 2016). These values demonstrate that discriminant validity is met, provided the HTMT ratio between constructs remains under 0.90. Conversely, values exceeding 0.90 would indicate discriminant validity issues, suggesting that the constructs may not be empirically distinct.

### 3.1.3 Reliability Test Results

**Table 3. Construct Reliability and Validity Testing Results**

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha (CA)	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Work Discipline (WD)	0.967	0.972	0.774
Work Ethic (WE)	0.923	0.940	0.723
Employee Performance (EP)	0.959	0.965	0.734
Work Environment (WEV)	0.969	0.972	0.742
Work Motivation (WM)	0.877	0.906	0.618

Based on the reliability analysis presented in Table 3, the study concludes that all variables meet the recommended thresholds for construct validity as suggested by (J. Hair & Alamer, 2022). Specifically, the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values for each variable exceed the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.70, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are above 0.50, indicating that the constructs demonstrate adequate internal consistency and convergent validity.

### 3.2 Inner Model Results

**Table 4. Loading Factor Values of Each Indicator**

Variable	R-square	R-square Adjusted
Employee Performance (EP)	0.682	0.664
Work Motivation (WM)	0.623	0.607

The R-square (R<sup>2</sup>) value as shown on Table 4 above indicates the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables included in the model. Based on the analysis results, the R-square value for employee performance is 0.682, suggesting that 68.2% of the variance in employee performance

can be explained by the model, while the remaining 31.8% is influenced by other factors not accounted for in this model. Similarly, the R-square value for work motivation is 0.623, meaning that 62.3% of the variance in work motivation is explained by the independent variables within the model.

### 3.3 Hypothesis Testing Results

The data analysis in this study employed SmartPLS 4, a software based on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), chosen for its efficiency and suitability in handling predictive research models (Ghozali, 2021). Hypothesis testing was conducted by evaluating the variance of the dependent variable explained by the independent variables through Original Sample (O), Sample Mean (M), Standard Deviation (STDEV), T-statistics, and P-values. These metrics were calculated using the bootstrapping procedure to assess the statistical significance of relationships among variables.

**Table 5. Results of Direct and Indirect Hypothesis Testing**

Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Result
Work Environment (WE) → Employee Performance (EP)	0.302	2.673	0.008	Accepted
Work Discipline (WD) → Employee Performance (EP)	0.183	1.709	0.087	Rejected
Work Ethic (WEth) → Employee Performance (EP)	0.043	0.413	0.680	Rejected
Work Environment (WE) → Work Motivation (WM)	0.106	1.117	0.264	Rejected
Work Discipline (WD) → Work Motivation (WM)	0.042	0.394	0.693	Rejected
Work Ethic (WEth) → Work Motivation (WM)	0.722	6.901	0.000	Accepted
Work Motivation (WM) → Employee Performance (EP)	0.485	4.783	0.000	Accepted
WE → WM → EP (Indirect Effect via Work Motivation)	0.051	1.112	0.266	Rejected
WD → WM → EP (Indirect Effect via Work Motivation)	0.020	0.385	0.701	Rejected
WEth → WM → EP (Indirect Effect via Work Motivation)	0.350	4.035	0.000	Accepted

### 3.4 Discussion

#### 3.4.1 The Influence of Work Environment on Employee Performance

The test results indicate that the work environment (WE) has a positive influence on employee performance (EP), as evidenced by an Original Sample value of 0.302, a T-statistic of 2.673, and a P-value of 0.008, thus supporting Hypothesis H1. This

finding implies that the work environment positively affects employee performance at PT Bank Rakyat Indonesia (Persero), Gorontalo Branch. It reinforces the theoretical perspective suggesting that a well-established work environment – both physical and non-physical – plays a crucial role in supporting work effectiveness and achieving optimal performance (Sedarmayanti, 2019). A comfortable, clean, and safe work environment, coupled with effective communication between superiors and subordinates, fosters a pleasant and productive atmosphere.

This result aligns with the findings of Marisya (2022), who concluded that a conducive physical and non-physical work environment enhances employee focus and efficiency, thereby facilitating the achievement of organizational goals. Similarly, Raziq & Maulabakhsh (2015) stated that a favorable work environment not only boosts productivity but also improves job satisfaction and reduces work-related stress. A positive work climate enables employees to concentrate better, collaborate effectively in teams, and feel motivated to meet performance targets.

Therefore, the work environment functions as a strategic element in employee performance management and should be prioritized in human resource policies, especially at PT BRI Gorontalo Branch, which features well-organized workspace layouts, a secure environment, and harmonious interpersonal relations. These aspects are proven to be performance-enhancing factors.

### **3.4.2 The Influence of Work Discipline on Employee Performance**

The test results show that work discipline (WD) has a negative influence on employee performance (EP), with an Original Sample value of 0.183, a T-statistic of 1.709, and a P-value of 0.087, indicating that Hypothesis H2 is rejected. This suggests that work discipline does not significantly influence employee performance at PT Bank Rakyat Indonesia (Persero), Gorontalo Branch. This finding is consistent with Sastrohadiwiryo & Syuhada (2019), who noted that discipline alone may not be a primary driver of employee performance. This could be due to discipline being a normative standard within the organizational culture at BRI Gorontalo, thereby lacking distinctive impact on individual performance achievements.

This finding is also in line with Bawelle & Sepang (2016), who asserted that, although work discipline does not significantly affect employee performance on its own, it may contribute indirectly when combined with other variables such as work ethic and enthusiasm. This indicates that discipline may function as an indirect factor or become effective only when supported by other variables such as motivation or leadership. External factors such as incentive structures, work pressure, or dominant leadership styles may exert a greater influence on employee performance than mere rule compliance.

Furthermore, Rozalia (2015) found that discipline can improve performance if accompanied by high motivation. Therefore, the insignificant direct relationship between discipline and performance in this study can be explained through the mediating or moderating roles of other more dominant variables. In essence, while discipline remains a critical foundation of human resource management, its impact on performance outcomes cannot be significant in isolation without internal support mechanisms.

### **3.4.3 The Influence of Work Ethic on Employee Performance**

The test results reveal that work ethic (WEth) has a negative influence on employee performance (EP), as indicated by an Original Sample value of 0.043, a T-statistic of 0.143, and a P-value of 0.680, resulting in the rejection of Hypothesis H3. This finding suggests that work ethic does not significantly influence employee performance at PT Bank Rakyat Indonesia (Persero), Gorontalo Branch. The result is consistent with Timbuleng & Sumarauw (2015), who found that, although work ethic may not directly affect performance, it can have a meaningful impact when combined with variables such as enthusiasm and discipline.

Work ethic is generally understood as a set of positive work behaviors grounded in commitment, responsibility, and self-awareness (Sinamo, 2009). Theoretically, values associated with work ethic—such as integrity, commitment, and conscientiousness—should lead to productive and result-oriented work patterns. However, in this context, it appears that these values have not been fully internalized as part of the dominant work culture at BRI Gorontalo. In other words, work ethic may still be individualized and has not yet been institutionalized into organizational systems that translate such values into daily performance.

Moreover, this result implies that while employees may exhibit positive attitudes toward their work, such attitudes do not automatically guarantee high performance without the support of other factors such as a reward system, managerial guidance, or conducive working conditions. If the organizational environment does not support the enactment of such values, their impact on performance may remain limited. Thus, work ethic functions more as a supporting element that requires synergy with other factors such as work motivation to significantly contribute to performance improvement.

### **3.4.4 The Influence of Work Motivation on Employee Performance**

The results of the analysis indicate that work motivation (WM) has a positive influence on employee performance (EP), with an Original Sample value of 0.485, a T-statistic of 4.783, and a P-value of 0.000, confirming that Hypothesis H7 is accepted. The findings suggest that work motivation significantly contributes to improving employee performance at PT Bank Rakyat Indonesia (Persero), Gorontalo Branch.

This result highlights motivation as a key factor in driving performance enhancement, consistent with the theory proposed by (Robbins, S. P., & Judge, 2019), who identifies motivation as comprising three critical elements: intensity, direction, and persistence of an individual in achieving work goals. Highly motivated employees tend to exhibit greater enthusiasm, perseverance, and diligence in completing tasks, leading to more optimal work outcomes.

Furthermore, employee motivation can be understood through three primary dimensions as outlined in McClelland's theory: the need for achievement, the need for power, and the need for affiliation. These dimensions are believed to encourage employees to exert greater effort, achieve work targets, and deliver high-quality performance. Employees who feel challenged to achieve or who demonstrate strong leadership aspirations are more inclined to exceed established performance standards. This finding is also in line with the research by (Rozalia, 2015), which emphasized that work motivation plays a crucial role in enhancing employee performance across various organizational sectors. Motivated employees are more likely to be responsible, take initiative, and be results-oriented, thereby contributing substantially to the organization's goals. These include meeting service targets, ensuring punctuality, delivering excellent customer service, and achieving operational efficiency at PT Bank Rakyat Indonesia (Persero), Gorontalo Branch.

### **3.4.5 The Mediating Role of Work Motivation in the Relationship Between Work Environment and Employee Performance**

The test results show that work motivation does not mediate the relationship between the work environment and employee performance at PT Bank Rakyat Indonesia (Persero), Gorontalo Branch, with an Original Sample value of 0.051, a T-statistic of 1.112, and a P-value of 0.266, indicating that Hypothesis H8 is rejected. This suggests that the influence of the work environment on employee performance is more direct rather than operating indirectly through work motivation. In other words, a conducive work environment alone appears to be sufficient to improve performance without the need to first trigger a psychological drive in the form of motivation.

Theoretically, a supportive work environment is believed to enhance job enthusiasm and comfort, which in turn boosts motivation and productivity (Jayanthi, Riyanto, & Fa'uzhobihi, 2023; Sedarmayanti, 2019). However, in the context of this study, the work environment at BRI Gorontalo seems to have a direct impact on performance without necessarily stimulating motivational activation. This may be due to the physical and social aspects of the work environment facilitating task execution, accelerating workflows, and reducing work-related stress, thereby enabling employees to perform effectively even without a marked increase in motivation.

This finding contrasts with the study by Mubarak, Adam, & Djali (2020), which suggested that the work environment significantly affects motivation, which then influences performance. A supportive workplace fosters a sense of comfort, safety, and appreciation, which eventually triggers intrinsic motivation to perform better. The difference in findings implies the influence of contextual factors such as organizational culture, leadership styles, and task structures that may vary from one institution to another.

#### **3.4.6 The Mediating Role of Work Motivation in the Relationship Between Work Discipline and Employee Performance**

The findings reveal that work motivation does not mediate the relationship between work discipline and employee performance at PT Bank Rakyat Indonesia (Persero), Gorontalo Branch, with an Original Sample value of 0.020, a T-statistic of 0.385, and a P-value of 0.701, indicating that Hypothesis H9 is rejected. This result implies that work motivation does not mediate the influence of work discipline on employee performance within the institution. While theoretically, work discipline can foster consistent and structured work behaviors, it appears insufficient in this context to generate motivational increases that directly impact performance.

This finding diverges from previous research by Mubarak, Adam, & Djali (2020), which found that work motivation acts as an important mediating variable bridging the effect of discipline on employee performance. Discipline encourages order and work commitment, which in turn triggers enthusiasm for achieving targets and enhances performance. However, at BRI Gorontalo, the disciplinary system in place seems unable to cultivate intrinsic or affective work motivation. This suggests that the implementation of discipline at the institution remains largely administrative and normative, rather than driven by employees' intrinsic aspirations for achievement and development.

Moreover, the lack of clear incentives or recognition associated with disciplined behavior may be a contributing factor. Robinson (2019) explains that motivation is maximized when individuals perceive desired consequences, such as rewards or promotions. When this relationship is absent, discipline becomes a routine with little impact on motivation. Therefore, the role of supervisors and the organizational culture becomes crucial in reinforcing the perception that disciplined behavior is appreciated and respected as part of a fair system.

#### **3.4.7 The Mediating Role of Work Motivation in the Relationship Between Work Ethic and Employee Performance**

The analysis confirms that work motivation mediates the relationship between work ethic and employee performance at PT Bank Rakyat Indonesia (Persero), Gorontalo Branch, with an Original Sample value of 0.350, a T-statistic of 4.035, and a P-value of 0.000, indicating that Hypothesis H10 is accepted. The findings

demonstrate that work motivation significantly mediates the effect of work ethic on employee performance. This means that work ethic not only directly influences motivation but also enhances performance through motivational pathways. The results emphasize that a strong work ethic, characterized by responsibility, honesty, commitment, and integrity, fosters high work enthusiasm and a drive to achieve optimal performance outcomes.

This result aligns with Sinamo's (2009) perspective, which asserts that work ethic comprises not only behavioral attributes of a work community but also underlying motivation. In other words, work ethic functions as a psychological foundation that provides meaning, direction, and energy to work activities. Employees with a high work ethic not only comply with job requirements but also possess a strong desire to perform better through internal motivational drives.

Additionally, this finding is consistent with research by Hosen, Natsir, & Triatmanto (2024), which concluded that motivation plays a key role in mediating the relationship between work ethic and performance outcomes. Employees who uphold values such as professionalism, moral discipline, and integrity typically possess high motivation to complete their work efficiently and punctually. These results illustrate that motivation serves as a psychological mechanism that transforms ethical work values into concrete and productive actions.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Based on the findings and analysis, this study concludes that the work environment has a positive effect on employee performance, while work discipline and work ethic show negative effects on performance. Additionally, the work environment and work discipline negatively influence work motivation, whereas work ethic has a positive impact on motivation. These results indicate that although the work environment contributes directly to improving performance, it may not effectively stimulate employee motivation. Meanwhile, work ethic appears to play a dual role by enhancing both motivation and performance when supported by strong personal values such as responsibility and integrity.

Given the limitations of this study, which focuses solely on PT. Bank Rakyat Indonesia (Persero) Gorontalo Branch and utilizes a specific model involving the work environment, discipline, work ethic, motivation, and performance, future research is encouraged to include broader variables—both dependent, independent, and mediating—across various regions beyond Gorontalo. From a practical standpoint, management at PT. BRI Gorontalo is advised to improve both the physical and psychosocial aspects of the work environment through better facilities, effective communication, and a clear team-oriented structure. In parallel, cultivating a strong work ethic through soft skill training, value internalization, and a

professional, integrity-based organizational culture is crucial. Notably, the presence of employees with a strong work ethic who are ready to take on tasks from leadership distinguishes them as valuable assets in achieving organizational goals.

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