

Advances: Jurnal Ekonomi & Bisnis

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Can transformative leadership, work discipline, and work motivation improve employee performance?

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Received: 2023-04-28 Accepted: 2023-06-30
Available online: 2023-06-30

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords: Transformational leadership; work discipline; work motivation; employee performance.</p> <p>Conflict of Interest Statement: The author(s) declares that the research was conducted without any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.</p> <p>Copyright © 2023 AJEB. All rights reserved.</p>	<p>Purpose: This study analyzes the influence of transformational leadership, work discipline, and work motivation on employee performance at the Mariso Sub-District Office in Makassar City. Understanding these relationships is essential for improving organizational effectiveness and optimizing employee performance in public institutions.</p> <p>Research Design and Methodology: This research adopts a quantitative approach to explaining the relationship between leadership, work discipline, motivation, and employee performance. The study employs multiple regression analysis to assess the significance and strength of these variables in influencing employee performance. Data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed to employees at the Mariso Sub-District Office and analyzed using IBM SPSS 24.</p> <p>Findings and Discussion: The results indicate that transformational leadership, work discipline, and work motivation all positively and significantly impact employee performance. The findings reveal that employees who experience effective leadership, adhere to high levels of discipline, and maintain strong motivation tend to perform better. Furthermore, work motivation is a key factor in enhancing productivity, where higher motivation levels lead to improved performance outcomes.</p> <p>Implications: This study contributes to theoretical and practical discussions on human resource management by confirming that leadership style, discipline, and motivation are crucial determinants of employee performance. The findings suggest that organizations should develop transformational leadership, reinforce work discipline, and implement effective motivation strategies to optimize employee engagement and productivity.</p>

Introduction

In various organizations, human resources are the primary determinant of success in achieving both short-term and long-term goals. Organizational success is not solely determined by the systems and technology employed but also by the quality of individuals who execute the organization's operations. Therefore, effective human resource management is crucial in ensuring optimal employee performance. One of the key aspects of human resource management is leadership, which plays a vital role in directing, motivating, and shaping a positive work culture within an organization. High work discipline and strong motivation significantly contribute to individual and organizational performance. Employees strategically ensure efficient and accountable public service delivery in the public sector, particularly at the sub-district (kecamatan) level. However, maintaining and improving employee performance remains a challenge, particularly concerning leadership styles, levels of discipline, and employee motivation. Transformational leadership, which aims to inspire and stimulate employees to exceed expectations, is often considered a practical approach to enhancing performance. However,

its implementation in some government offices, including sub-district administrations, has not always yielded the desired outcomes. Various factors, including bureaucratic rigidity, resistance to change, and limited managerial autonomy, may hinder its effectiveness, impacting employees' ability to perform optimally in delivering public services.

The phenomenon observed at the Mariso Sub-District Office in Makassar City highlights that employee discipline remains a critical challenge in achieving optimal performance. Low levels of work discipline directly affect the effectiveness of public service delivery, as sub-district employees are responsible for administrative tasks and direct interactions with the public. One of the contributing factors to this issue is the ineffective implementation of transformational leadership, which has not fully met employee expectations. Some employees perceive that the leadership approach adopted in their workplace fails to encourage them to work with higher discipline and accountability. This issue is further compounded by low employee motivation, which can stem from an uninspiring work environment, ineffective reward systems, and limited career development opportunities. Hasibuan (2014) Work motivation is crucial in shaping individual performance and influencing employees' efforts to complete tasks. Employees who lack motivation tend to exhibit decreased enthusiasm and commitment, affecting their overall productivity and efficiency. Given these challenges, it is imperative to investigate how transformational leadership, work discipline, and work motivation interact to enhance employee performance in the local government sector. This study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how these factors influence the performance of sub-district employees and offer insights into strategies that can be implemented to foster a more productive and disciplined workforce.

Recent research has explored the influence of transformational leadership, work discipline, and work motivation on employee performance. Transformational leadership, characterized by inspiring and motivating followers, positively impacts performance (Lopes, 2023). Transformational leaders encourage employees to go beyond their essential responsibilities, fostering a sense of purpose and commitment that enhances job performance. Work discipline, which refers to adherence to organizational rules and procedures, has also been identified as a significant factor affecting employee performance, although findings in this area remain mixed. While disciplined employees are generally more efficient and productive, the extent of their direct impact on performance varies across different organizational settings. Work motivation, the internal drive to achieve job-related goals, has consistently influenced performance (Sani et al., 2017). Motivated employees tend to exhibit higher engagement, creativity, and perseverance levels in completing their tasks, which can amplify the positive effects of leadership and discipline. Transformational leadership, work discipline, and work motivation have been found to exert both simultaneous and individual impacts on employee performance (Lopes, 2023). However, the strength of these relationships is not always consistent. One study reported a relatively weak combined influence of transformational leadership and work discipline on employee performance, suggesting that other contextual variables may moderate these effects (Sani et al., 2017). These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the factors that shape employee performance in various organizational contexts. Despite the growing body of research on transformational leadership, work discipline, and work motivation, several gaps remain in both empirical and theoretical perspectives. Empirically, prior studies have primarily examined these factors in corporate and private-sector organizations, while research in public-sector institutions, particularly at the sub-district government level, is still limited. Existing studies have also yielded inconsistent findings regarding the impact of transformational leadership and work discipline on employee performance. While some studies suggest a strong positive relationship (Lopes, 2023), others indicate a weak combined effect (Sani et al., 2017). These discrepancies highlight the need for further investigation, particularly in the context of government employees, where bureaucratic structures and formalized procedures may influence the effectiveness of leadership styles and disciplinary measures. The role of work motivation as a mediator in these relationships remains underexplored, necessitating a more comprehensive analysis of how motivation interacts with leadership and discipline to shape employee performance. Much of the existing literature has focused on the direct effects of leadership and discipline on performance, with limited discussion on the interplay between these factors. Furthermore, studies have often treated work motivation as an independent variable rather than a

mediating factor, leading to an incomplete understanding of its moderating role in performance enhancement. By addressing these research gaps, this study aims to provide a more nuanced perspective on the dynamic interactions between transformational leadership, work discipline, and work motivation in public-sector workplaces.

This study aims to fill the existing research gaps by conducting an in-depth analysis of how transformational leadership, work discipline, and work motivation improve employee performance at the Mariso Sub-District Office in Makassar City. By examining the interactions among these variables, this research seeks to provide new insights into managerial strategies that can enhance work effectiveness within local government institutions. Unlike previous studies that primarily focused on corporate settings, this study explores the unique dynamics of public-sector employees, where bureaucratic constraints and formalized procedures may moderate the impact of leadership and discipline. Furthermore, this research advances the theoretical framework by investigating work motivation as a mediating variable rather than an independent factor, offering a more comprehensive understanding of its role in employee performance. Specifically, this study will assess whether transformational leadership effectively enhances employee discipline and motivation and how these factors collectively influence performance outcomes. The findings are expected to serve as a reference for local governments in designing more effective human resource development policies and programs, ultimately improving the quality of public services at the sub-district level.

Literature Review

Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory remains a foundational framework for understanding employee motivation and performance. This theory distinguishes between motivators (intrinsic) and hygiene factors (extrinsic factors) influencing job satisfaction and productivity. (Herzberg, 1965). Herzberg asserts that motivators, such as recognition, responsibility, and achievement, lead to higher levels of job satisfaction and performance. At the same time, hygiene factors, including salary, company policies, and working conditions, prevent dissatisfaction but do not necessarily enhance motivation. (Larasati & Gilang, 2014). In transformational leadership, motivators play a significant role, as leaders who inspire and empower employees can create meaningful work experiences that foster motivation and performance. (Saputro, 2021) The application of transformational leadership in enhancing job satisfaction and work engagement has been widely examined. Studies indicate that employees under transformational leadership often demonstrate higher commitment and performance levels due to increased intrinsic motivation. (Meyer et al., 2002). Moreover, work discipline aligns with Herzberg's hygiene factors, as clear rules, effective procedures, and a structured environment help maintain stability and prevent dissatisfaction. (Fajrin, 2018). Employees working in highly disciplined settings tend to experience fewer workplace conflicts and increased efficiency, which supports Herzberg's assertion that strong organizational policies can reduce dissatisfaction. (Malik & Naeem, 2013).

Beyond leadership and discipline, work motivation bridges these two factors within the Two-Factor Theory framework. Herzberg's model suggests that employees who receive proper motivation and recognition from leadership will be more engaged in their work, ultimately leading to improved performance (Lundberg et al., 2009). However, while leadership can provide intrinsic motivation, the absence of substantial hygiene factors—such as proper working conditions and organizational support—can diminish the effectiveness of motivational efforts (Priyanto, 2016). Research indicates that in environments where hygiene factors are neglected, even highly motivated employees may struggle to maintain productivity, demonstrating the necessity of balancing intrinsic and extrinsic motivators (Cahyono et al., 2016). Within this study, transformational leadership is a key motivator, while work discipline is an essential hygiene factor that ensures a stable and structured work environment. The integration of both elements, complemented by a strong motivational drive, is expected to contribute positively to employee performance. This perspective aligns with Herzberg's argument that while hygiene factors mitigate dissatisfaction, performance improvement arises when intrinsic motivators are emphasized alongside a well-regulated workplace structure (Fajrin, 2018). Through this research, a deeper exploration of how these factors interact will provide valuable insights into enhancing employee performance within public sector organizations.

Employee Performance

Employee performance is a crucial indicator in assessing the effectiveness of human resource management within an organization. It reflects an individual's productivity, efficiency, and quality of work in fulfilling their responsibilities (Hermawan, 2022). An employee's technical competencies do not solely influence performance but also organizational factors such as leadership style, work discipline, and motivation (Ihsan, 2019). Transformational leadership, in particular, has been widely studied for its impact on employee performance. Leaders who establish a clear vision and inspire subordinates tend to cultivate a work culture encouraging higher engagement and goal achievement (Putra & Sriathi, 2017). In addition, work discipline plays an essential role in ensuring that employees adhere to organizational standards, fostering consistency and efficiency in task execution (Simatupang, 2019). A structured work environment, where employees understand the expectations set by the organization, has been shown to contribute positively to individual and collective performance outcomes (Julianry & Radiman, 2018).

Work motivation is another crucial factor influencing employee performance, as motivated employees demonstrate outstanding commitment and resilience in meeting their job responsibilities (Arniah & Setiawan, 2024). Motivation is categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic factors, where intrinsic motivation arises from the inherent satisfaction of completing meaningful tasks, while extrinsic motivation is driven by external rewards such as salary and promotions (Sutanto, 2019). Research suggests that employees who perceive fairness in reward distribution and receive adequate recognition for their efforts tend to be more productive and engaged (Tegar, 2019). However, challenges persist, particularly in the public sector, where bureaucratic rigidity and limited reward structures often lead to decreased motivation and lower employee performance (Simatupang, 2019). Addressing these challenges requires organizations to adopt adaptive leadership strategies, implement a balanced approach to discipline, and foster a workplace environment that supports intrinsic and extrinsic motivators (Julianry & Radiman, 2018). This study examines how transformational leadership, work discipline, and motivation collectively influence employee performance, providing insights into strategies organizations can implement to optimize workforce effectiveness in the long term (Hermawan, 2022).

Transformative Leadership

Transformational leadership focuses on inspiring, motivating, and empowering individuals to exceed expectations and achieve higher performance. (Bass & Bass Bernard, 1985; Burns, 1978). This leadership approach is based on four key dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. (Putra & Sriathi, 2014). Leaders who exhibit idealized influence act as role models, earning the respect and trust of their subordinates. Meanwhile, inspirational motivation involves articulating a compelling vision that encourages employees to remain engaged. (Kadar, 2015). Intellectual stimulation fosters innovation by challenging employees to think critically and creatively in problem-solving processes. (Susanto, 2021). Finally, individualized consideration reflects the leader's ability to recognize employees' unique needs and aspirations, providing adequate support for their professional development. Herlina (2021) has shown that transformational leadership positively affects employee motivation and job performance by fostering an environment that enhances intrinsic motivation and work commitment. Employees who perceive their leaders as transformational tend to exhibit higher engagement and organizational loyalty, ultimately contributing to improved performance outcomes. (Ardiaz, 2017).

Within the framework of this study, transformational leadership is closely linked to work discipline and employee motivation, two essential factors influencing job performance (Wahyuni, 2020). Leaders who successfully integrate transformational principles into their management practices do not merely demand compliance but actively cultivate employees' emotional and psychological involvement in their work (Hasibuan, 2005). Inspirational motivation, for instance, can increase employees' willingness to maintain discipline, as they feel a sense of purpose and commitment to their organization (Putra & Sriathi, 2014). Moreover, intellectual stimulation encourages employees to take initiative and embrace continuous learning, reinforcing positive workplace behavior. However, despite its benefits, applying transformational leadership in public sector organizations often encounters

challenges, such as rigid bureaucratic structures and low employee adherence to workplace regulations. Employees in highly structured environments may struggle to adapt to leadership emphasizing innovation and autonomy, notably if the existing organizational culture prioritizes compliance over creativity (Herlina, 2021). Consequently, this study seeks to empirically examine the extent to which transformational leadership influences work discipline, enhances motivation, and ultimately contributes to improved employee performance. Organizations can design more effective leadership strategies to optimize productivity and the quality of public services by identifying the interaction between leadership style, discipline, and motivation.

Work Discipline

Work discipline is crucial in human resource management as it directly contributes to organizational productivity and employee performance. It refers to an individual's ability to comply with organizational rules, procedures, and standards while carrying out their responsibilities. (Putra & Sriathi, 2014). Employees with a high level of discipline tend to be more responsible, demonstrate strong work ethics, and contribute to achieving organizational goals efficiently. (Simatupang et al., 2021). Beyond mere compliance, discipline reflects employees' commitment to fostering a productive and efficient work culture. When employees understand the significance of discipline, they are more likely to exhibit consistency in task completion and adhere to quality standards set by the organization. (Yadnya et al., 2022). Effective leadership is also a determining factor in shaping employees' discipline. Transformational leaders, for instance, can establish a structured yet motivational work environment, ensuring that discipline is maintained without creating rigidity. (Effendi & Aslami, 2023). This approach aligns with studies emphasizing that transformational leadership fosters a balance between enforcing discipline and encouraging autonomy, thus preventing workplace dissatisfaction caused by excessive restrictions. (Haeruddin et al., 2023).

Work discipline is closely linked to employee motivation and significantly influences job performance. Employees who perceive fairness in applying organizational rules tend to be more disciplined because they recognize that established policies facilitate optimal performance rather than merely enforcing compliance. (Surya & Setyawati, 2021). Research has shown that a well-disciplined workforce contributes to increased efficiency, reduced absenteeism, and overall organizational effectiveness. (Muna & Isnawati, 2022) However, maintaining a high level of discipline remains challenging in public sector organizations due to rigid bureaucratic structures that sometimes limit flexibility and innovation. (Syach & Purnama, 2023). Employees in such environments may perceive strict regulations as restrictive rather than supportive, leading to lower engagement and decreased motivation. Given these challenges, this study explores how work discipline enhances employee performance while examining the role of transformational leadership and motivation in reinforcing discipline. By identifying the relationship between these factors, organizations can develop more effective human resource strategies that balance disciplinary enforcement with supportive work culture, ultimately leading to sustainable performance improvements.

Work Motivation

Work motivation is crucial in human resource management, serving as a primary driver for employees to achieve optimal performance. It is defined as the internal and external forces that influence an individual's behavior, attitude, and productivity within an organization (Hermawan, 2022). In contemporary management theories, work motivation is intrinsic and extrinsic (Julianry et al., 2017)). Intrinsic motivation stems from personal satisfaction derived from the work, such as achievement, recognition, and opportunities for growth (Hasana & Helmi, 2023). Employees who find their work meaningful and rewarding tend to exhibit higher commitment and engagement. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation involves external incentives such as salary, bonuses, rewards, and a conducive work environment. These two motivational factors significantly determine how well employees perform effectively and consistently. A balanced approach between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation fosters a sustainable work ethic, ensuring employees remain engaged and committed to their roles.

In this study, work motivation is closely linked to transformational leadership and work discipline, significantly influencing employee performance. (Hasana & Helmi, 2023). Leaders who provide clear direction and inspiration can motivate employees by fostering a strong vision and a supportive work environment. (Wijayanto et al., 2021) Transformational leadership plays a pivotal role in boosting intrinsic motivation. Leaders adopting this style can establish emotional connections with employees, present meaningful challenges, and create a workplace culture that encourages creativity and innovation. (Hermawan, 2022). Furthermore, work discipline contributes to maintaining high motivation levels, as employees working in structured environments with clear standards and procedures tend to feel more motivated due to the clarity of organizational expectations. (Simatupang et al., 2021). However, low levels of work motivation remain a significant challenge, particularly in the public sector, where rigid bureaucratic structures and limited reward systems often demotivate employees. (Herlina et al., 2021) Employees who perceive a lack of appreciation or limited career advancement opportunities are likelier to experience decreased motivation, negatively impacting their performance. Therefore, this study analyzes how work motivation mediates between transformational leadership, work discipline, and employee performance. Understanding these relationships enables organizations to develop more effective motivation strategies, incorporating financial incentives and intrinsic job satisfaction to drive long-term employee engagement and productivity.

Research Design and Methodology

Study Design

This study adopts a quantitative approach to explain the relationship between the research variables and test previously formulated hypotheses. The research employs a causal-explanatory design, which seeks to determine the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable through hypothesis testing. The study investigates the impact of transformational leadership, work discipline, and work motivation on employee performance. Multiple regression analysis is utilized to analyze the relationships between these variables and is conducted using IBM SPSS 24.

Sample Population and Research Subjects

The research population comprises employees at the Mariso Sub-District Office in Makassar City. The study was conducted over two months, from February to March 2023. The sample selection follows a structured approach to ensure representativeness, allowing for reliable generalizations based on the obtained data.

Data Collection Techniques and Instrument Development

The study employs a structured questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire measures transformational leadership, work discipline, motivation, and employee performance. Each variable is assessed using a series of statements rated on a Likert scale. To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, a validity test using Pearson's Product-Moment correlation method was conducted. The results indicate that all items meet the validity threshold, with calculated R-values (r-hit) exceeding the critical r-table value of 0.30, confirming that all items are valid.

Data Analysis Techniques

The study utilizes multiple regression analysis to examine the causal relationships between transformational leadership, work discipline, work motivation, and employee performance. The analysis is conducted using IBM SPSS 24, which allows for the estimation of the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable. Additionally, validity tests are performed to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the research instruments. The findings from this analysis provide empirical insights into the extent to which these factors influence employee performance within a government institution.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

The data presented in Table 1 indicates that out of the 133 employees at the Mariso Sub-District Office in Makassar City, 63 employees (47%) are female, while 70 employees (53%) are male. This distribution suggests that male employees constitute most of the workforce in this sub-district office. Furthermore, the data also provides insights into the educational background of the respondents. It shows that eight employees (6%) have completed only a high school education, while 50 (38%) hold a diploma. The most significant proportion of employees, 75 individuals (56%), have attained a bachelor's degree. This distribution highlights that most employees at the Mariso Sub-District Office possess a higher education qualification, with bachelor's degree holders forming the predominant group.

Table 1. Respondent Distribution

Category	Subcategory	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	63	47%
	Male	70	53%
	Total	133	100%
Education Level	High School	8	6%
	>Diploma	50	38%
	Bachelor's Degree	75	56%
	Total	133	100%

Source: Primary Data (processed), 2023

In addition to demographic and educational background data, the study examines respondents' perceptions of transformational leadership, work discipline, and employee performance. The detailed responses on these variables are presented in Table 1, which provides an overview of employees' perspectives on the effectiveness of transformational leadership within the organization. Understanding these perceptions is crucial for evaluating the role of leadership in influencing work discipline and performance outcomes.

The reliability of a measure shows the stability and consistency of an instrument that measures a concept. The reliability test is intended to test the same instrument at different times to give the same results. A construct or variable is reliable if it provides a Cronbach Alpha value ≥ 0.60 (Sugiyono, 2016).

Table 2. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
Transformational Leadership (X1)	0.752	Reliable
Work Discipline (X2)	0.856	Reliable
Work Motivation (X3)	0.826	Reliable
Employee Performance (Y)	0.836	Reliable

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2023.

It is evident that each research variable, including transformational leadership (X1), work discipline (X2), work motivation (X3), and employee performance (Y), has a Cronbach's Alpha value ≥ 0.60 . This confirms that all variables meet the reliability criteria, indicating that the measurement instruments used in the study consistently reflect the intended constructs. Since all Cronbach's Alpha values exceed the acceptable threshold of 0.60, the reliability test results demonstrate that the research variables are statistically reliable.

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing Results

No	Relationship Between Variables	Research Findings
1	Transformational Leadership → Employee Performance	Positive and Significant
2	Work Discipline → Employee Performance	Positive and Significant
3	Work Motivation → Employee Performance	Positive and Significant
4	Transformational Leadership, Work Discipline, and Work Motivation → Employee Performance	Positive and Significant

Source: Processed SPSS Data (2024)

The hypothesis testing results indicate that transformational leadership, work discipline, and work motivation all positively and significantly affect employee performance. Furthermore, when analyzed collectively, these three independent variables positively and significantly impact employee performance. These findings confirm that leadership style, adherence to organizational discipline, and employee motivation are crucial in enhancing overall employee performance.

Discussion

Transformational leadership on employee performance

The findings of this study indicate that transformational leadership has a positive and significant impact on employee performance. This suggests that employees demonstrate higher motivation, engagement, and productivity levels when transformational leadership is effectively implemented. Transformational leaders inspire their subordinates by establishing a clear vision, fostering trust, and encouraging innovation, all of which enhance job performance. Employees who perceive their leaders as supportive, visionary, and empowering will likely exhibit more substantial work commitment and improved performance outcomes. These results reinforce that leadership style shapes organizational employee behavior and productivity. The findings of this study align with transformational leadership theory, which suggests that leaders who exhibit idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration can drive significant improvements in employee performance. Bass and Avolio (1994) argue that transformational leaders foster an environment that enhances employee confidence, autonomy, and dedication to organizational goals. Burns (1978) further explains that transformational leadership motivates employees to exceed their expectations, improving overall performance. The results of this study confirm these theoretical perspectives, reinforcing the notion that effective leadership enhances employee performance by creating a motivating and empowering work environment.

Compared to previous studies, these findings are consistent with the research of Ramadhani & Indawati (2021) and Nurulita & Yoga (2022), who found that transformational leadership significantly and positively influences employee performance. Ramadhani & Indawati (2021) Emphasized that leaders who adopt transformational leadership practices create an organizational climate that fosters motivation and a high-performance culture. Similarly, Nurulita (2022) demonstrated that transformational leadership enhances employees' job satisfaction and performance through empowerment and individualized support. The consistency of these findings across different research contexts further supports the argument that transformational leadership is a critical determinant of employee performance. From a practical perspective, these findings hold significant implications for organizational management. Organizations should focus on developing transformational leadership competencies among managers and supervisors to maximize employee performance. Training programs should emphasize strategic visioning, effective communication, and employee empowerment to cultivate a workplace culture that fosters innovation and motivation. Organizations should implement mentorship and coaching initiatives to strengthen leaders' ability to inspire and engage employees. Organizations can create a high-performance work culture that enhances productivity, job satisfaction, and long-term success by fostering a leadership style that prioritizes motivation, recognition, and continuous professional development. Investing in transformational leadership development is essential for sustaining employee engagement, improving organizational effectiveness, and driving competitive advantage in an increasingly dynamic business environment.

Work discipline on employee performance

The findings of this study indicate that work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, meaning that the higher the level of work discipline, the better the employee's performance. This suggests that employees who adhere to organizational rules, maintain punctuality, and consistently follow work procedures demonstrate higher productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness. Work discipline ensures employees remain focused on their responsibilities, minimize errors, and consistently achieve performance targets. The results confirm that discipline shapes employee behavior, fosters accountability, and enhances individual and organizational performance. These findings align with the theory of work discipline, which emphasizes that employees who adhere strongly to workplace regulations and standards tend to be more productive and committed to their roles. According to Robbins and Judge (2017), work discipline creates a structured and predictable work environment, reducing inefficiencies and fostering a culture of professionalism. Employees who internalize discipline as a core value are more likely to maintain high levels of motivation and engagement, resulting in improved job satisfaction and performance outcomes. This study reinforces that organizations with clear and consistently enforced disciplinary policies are likelier to experience enhanced employee productivity and overall operational efficiency.

The results of this study are consistent with previous research, particularly the findings of Sunarsi et al. (2021), Susanti & Aesah (2022), and Farid (2022), all of whom reported that work discipline significantly positively impacts employee performance. Sunarsi (2021) found that employees with higher work discipline demonstrated greater efficiency, reduced absenteeism, and stronger adherence to company policies, all contributing to improved performance. Similarly, Susanti & Aesah (2022) Disciplined employees consistently meet performance targets and contribute to a structured and orderly work environment, leading to higher productivity. Meanwhile, Farid (2022) highlighted that although discipline significantly influences performance, its effectiveness may vary depending on organizational culture and leadership style. The alignment of these findings across different studies further supports the argument that work discipline is a key determinant of employee performance across various organizational contexts. From a practical perspective, these findings underscore the importance of implementing effective disciplinary measures to enhance employee performance. Organizations should establish clear rules, performance expectations, and fair enforcement mechanisms to foster a culture of accountability and professionalism. Leadership should actively reinforce discipline through consistent supervision, structured work policies, and reward-and-punishment systems that motivate employees to adhere to workplace standards. Training programs to instill discipline, time management, and self-regulation can further enhance employees' ability to meet performance expectations. By integrating discipline-focused management strategies, organizations can create a structured and efficient work environment that optimizes employee performance and contributes to long-term organizational success.

Work motivation on employee performance

The findings of this study indicate that work motivation has a positive and significant impact on employee performance, meaning that as work motivation increases, employee performance also improves. Highly motivated employees demonstrate tremendous enthusiasm, commitment, and efficiency in completing tasks. Motivation is a driving force that encourages employees to achieve organizational goals, maintain consistency in their performance, and strive for continuous improvement. A well-motivated workforce is more likely to exhibit high levels of job satisfaction, reduced absenteeism, and enhanced productivity, which are essential for achieving optimal performance. These results confirm that motivation is a key determinant of workplace behavior and employee effectiveness. The results of this study align with motivation theories, particularly Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Herzberg (1959) emphasizes that inherent motivators, such as recognition, responsibility, and opportunities for growth, play a crucial role in enhancing employee engagement and performance. Meanwhile, extrinsic motivators, such as salary, incentives, and job security, create a stable work environment supporting employee productivity. This study reaffirms that organizations must focus on intrinsic and extrinsic motivators to sustain high levels of employee performance. Employees who

perceive their efforts are valued and rewarded are more likely to be engaged, proactive, and committed to their responsibilities.

When compared to previous research, the findings of this study are consistent with those of Goni et al. (2021), Basalamah et al. (2022), and Jintar (2023), all of whom concluded that work motivation significantly influences employee performance. Goni (2021) found that motivated employees exhibit higher dedication, innovation, and efficiency, improving organizational outcomes. Similarly, Basalamah (2022) highlighted that a strong motivation system within an organization enhances employee work ethic and fosters a high-performance culture. Furthermore, Jintar (2023) emphasized that organizations that effectively implement motivation-based management strategies experience increased employee productivity and reduced turnover rates. The alignment of these findings across various research contexts strengthens the argument that motivation is a critical driver of employee performance across different organizational settings. From a practical perspective, these findings underscore the importance of developing effective motivation strategies to enhance employee performance. Organizations should implement comprehensive reward systems, career development opportunities, and recognition programs to maintain high motivation levels among employees. Leadership should create an engaging and supportive work environment where employees feel valued and empowered. Additionally, organizations can adopt performance-based incentives, professional development programs, and mentorship initiatives to sustain long-term motivation. By integrating these strategies, organizations can cultivate a motivated workforce that consistently delivers high performance, drives organizational success, and contributes to long-term sustainability.

Conclusion

This study concludes that transformational leadership, work discipline, and work motivation significantly influence employee performance at the Mariso Sub-District Office in Makassar City. The findings indicate that the better the transformational leadership practices are, the higher the employee performance will be, reinforcing the critical role of leadership in shaping workplace dynamics. Additionally, work discipline has a positive and significant impact on employee performance, demonstrating that employees who adhere to organizational rules and maintain high levels of discipline tend to achieve better results. Similarly, work motivation is a key factor in enhancing employee performance, as higher motivation levels lead to greater engagement, efficiency, and productivity. Furthermore, the combined influence of transformational leadership, work discipline, and work motivation substantially impacts employee performance, confirming that a well-managed workforce with strong leadership, discipline, and motivation contributes to higher organizational success.

This research contributes to theoretical and practical discussions in organizational behavior and human resource management. The study strengthens the argument that leadership style, workplace discipline, and employee motivation are fundamental determinants of performance, providing empirical evidence to support these theoretical propositions. In practical terms, these findings offer valuable insights for policymakers, managers, and organizational leaders seeking to enhance employee productivity. Organizations should prioritize leadership development programs emphasizing transformational leadership principles, implement transparent and fair disciplinary policies, and develop effective motivation systems to sustain employee engagement. Moreover, these findings suggest that human resource strategies integrate leadership training, structured workplace discipline, and motivational incentives to cultivate a high-performance work culture.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that open opportunities for future research. First, the study is limited to the context of the Mariso Sub-District Office in Makassar City, meaning that findings may not be fully generalizable to other organizational settings or sectors. Future research should explore similar relationships in industries, public institutions, and private organizations to validate and extend these findings. Second, this study primarily relies on quantitative methods, which provide statistical significance but may not fully capture the underlying reasons behind employee perceptions and behaviors. Future studies could incorporate qualitative approaches, such as interviews or case studies, to gain deeper insights into how leadership, discipline, and motivation influence employee performance. Additionally, researchers could examine moderating

variables, such as organizational culture or employee tenure, to better understand how these factors shape the effectiveness of transformational leadership, work discipline, and motivation in improving performance outcomes.

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