

The Effect of Work Discipline on Employee Performance: The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction

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Article history

Received: 15 June 2026

Revised: 21 July 2026

Accepted: 23 Agustus 2026

Published: 31 August 2026

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Abstract

This study examines the direct and indirect effects of work discipline on employee performance through job satisfaction at the Office of Navigation District Type A Class III Kendari. A quantitative explanatory design was applied to 99 civil servants using census sampling. Data were collected through a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS 4.0. The measurement model met convergent validity and reliability criteria, although discriminant validity indicated relatively high overlap among several constructs. The structural model showed that work discipline had positive and significant effects on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.839$; $p < 0.001$) and employee performance ($\beta = 0.485$; $p < 0.001$). Job satisfaction also positively affected employee performance ($\beta = 0.479$; $p = 0.001$). The indirect effect was significant ($\beta = 0.402$; $p < 0.001$), confirming partial mediation. These findings highlight the importance of combining consistent work discipline with supportive conditions that strengthen employee job satisfaction.

Keywords: Work Discipline, Job Satisfaction, Employee Performance

INTRODUCTION

Employee performance is a central concern in public-sector management because it reflects employees' ability to achieve work targets while demonstrating accountable and service-oriented behavior. In government organizations, performance is not limited to task completion; it also includes the consistency with which employees comply with institutional responsibilities, cooperate with colleagues, adapt to change, and provide public services. Accordingly, identifying behavioral and attitudinal factors associated with employee performance is important for strengthening organizational effectiveness.

Work discipline is one factor that may shape employee performance because it reflects employees' consistency in complying with working hours, organizational regulations, work standards, and established procedures. Discipline provides a behavioral framework that helps align individual actions with organizational expectations. Sutrisno (2019) describes work discipline as employees' willingness to comply with organizational rules and perform responsibilities appropriately, while Luthans et al. (2021) and Robbins and Judge (2022) emphasize behavioral consistency, compliance, and managerial mechanisms that support effective organizational functioning. Thus, work discipline is relevant not only as a control mechanism but also as a foundation for orderly and predictable work behavior.

Empirical findings regarding the relationship between work discipline and employee performance are generally positive, but not fully consistent. Ibrahim and Cahyadi (2024), Rosidah and

Nazifah (2025), Rahmawati and Sutarmin (2025), Damayanthi and Suparna (2025), Supini et al. (2026), Rifki (2026), Riza (2026), Usman et al. (2026b), and Azizah et al. (2026) reported positive and significant effects, whereas Suci Indah Sari et al. (2025) found a negative and insignificant relationship. This inconsistency suggests that the strength and direction of the relationship may depend on organizational context and on other attitudinal mechanisms operating between discipline and performance.

Job satisfaction provides a plausible attitudinal mechanism linking work discipline with employee performance. Job satisfaction reflects employees' evaluations of the work itself, incentives or allowances, working conditions, coworkers, and supervision. When rules and procedures are applied clearly and consistently, employees may experience greater certainty and fairness in their work environment, which can support more positive evaluations of their jobs. In turn, favorable job attitudes may encourage employees to maintain effort and responsibility in performing their duties.

Previous studies also support a positive association between job satisfaction and employee performance. Ibrahim and Cahyadi (2024), Rosidah and Nazifah (2025), Rahmawati and Sutarmin (2025), Damayanthi and Suparna (2025), Supini et al. (2026), Rifki (2026), Usman et al. (2026a), and Yanti and Usman (2026) reported positive and significant relationships. Nevertheless, these findings originate from different organizational settings, and their applicability to a formal navigation-service institution remains an empirical question.

A more specific research gap concerns whether job satisfaction mediates the relationship between work discipline and employee performance. Rosidah and Nazifah (2025), Rahmawati and Sutarmin (2025), Damayanthi and Suparna (2025), Supini et al. (2026), Rifki (2026), Elvrina et al. (2026), Riza (2026), Usman et al. (2026a), and Azizah et al. (2026) reported significant mediation, whereas Ibrahim and Cahyadi (2024) and Suci Indah Sari et al. (2025) found that job satisfaction did not significantly mediate the relationship. The inconsistent evidence indicates that the mediating mechanism remains unresolved and requires examination in other public-sector contexts.

This gap is particularly relevant for public-sector organizations, where employee behavior is strongly shaped by formal regulations, standard operating procedures, supervision, and institutional accountability. The Office of Navigation District Type A Class III Kendari provides a distinctive setting because employees perform formal public-service responsibilities within a highly regulated work environment. Evidence from other organizations cannot automatically be generalized to this institutional context. Therefore, this study contributes by testing an integrated mediation model of work discipline, job satisfaction, and employee performance in a public-sector navigation organization in Southeast Sulawesi.

Based on these theoretical arguments and inconsistent empirical findings, this study aims to examine: (1) the effect of work discipline on job satisfaction; (2) the effect of work discipline on employee performance; (3) the effect of job satisfaction on employee performance; and (4) the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between work discipline and employee performance. The study is expected to provide empirical evidence relevant to human resource management in public-sector organizations and to clarify the role of job satisfaction as an explanatory mechanism linking disciplined work behavior with employee performance.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative explanatory design with a cross-sectional survey approach to examine the relationships among work discipline, job satisfaction, and employee performance. The study was conducted at the Office of Navigation District Type A Class III Kendari. The population consisted of 99 employees, and all members of the population were included using census sampling; therefore, the final analysis was based on 99 respondents. Primary data were collected through a

structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The research variables were operationalized using indicators adapted from relevant regulations and established references. Work discipline was measured through six indicators: compliance with applicable regulations, working hours, work standards, uniform regulations, facility-use requirements, and standard operating procedures, referring to Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia No. 94 of 2021 and the conceptual references of Terry (2001) and Dessler (2020). Job satisfaction was measured through satisfaction with the work itself, incentives or allowances, working conditions, coworkers, and supervision, drawing on dimensions commonly represented in the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire and Job Descriptive Index as discussed by Robbins and Judge (2022). Employee performance was measured through employee work targets (Sasaran Kinerja Pegawai/SKP) and work behavior, referring to Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform Regulation No. 6 of 2022, Dessler (2020), and Flippo (2019).

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0, following Hair et al. (2021). The analysis proceeded in two stages. First, the measurement model was evaluated using outer loadings, Cronbach's alpha, ρ_A , composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity based on the Fornell–Larcker criterion, cross-loadings, and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT). Second, the structural model was assessed using R^2 , adjusted R^2 , effect size (f^2), path coefficients, and model-fit information. Hypothesis testing used bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples, a two-tailed test, and $\alpha = 0.05$. Mediation was assessed from the significance of the specific indirect effect, while the variance accounted for (VAF) was calculated to describe the proportion of the total effect transmitted through job satisfaction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Respondent Characteristics

A total of 99 respondents participated in this study. The characteristics of the respondents were described based on gender, age, educational level, and length of service. In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were male, accounting for 90.91% (90 respondents), while female respondents accounted for 9.09% (9 respondents).

Regarding age, the largest proportion of respondents was in the 41-50 years category, comprising 47 respondents (47.47%). This was followed by respondents aged 20-30 years, with 25 respondents (25.25%), and those aged 31-40 years, with 21 respondents (21.21%). The smallest proportion was respondents aged 51-54 years, with 6 respondents (6.06%).

In terms of educational attainment, most respondents held a bachelor's degree (S1), totaling 67 respondents (67.68%). Meanwhile, 28 respondents (28.28%) had completed senior high school or equivalent education, and 4 respondents (4.04%) held a master's degree (S2).

Based on length of service, the majority of respondents had worked for 2-10 years, accounting for 56 respondents (56.57%). A further 27 respondents (27.27%) had 11-20 years of service, while 16 respondents (16.16%) had worked for 21-33 years. Overall, the respondent characteristics indicate that the study involved predominantly male employees, with the largest age group being 41-50 years, predominantly bachelor's degree holders, and mostly having 2-10 years of work experience.

Table 1. *Characteristics of Respondents*

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	90	90.91
	Female	9	9.09
Age	20–30 years	25	25.25
	31–40 years	21	21.21
	41–50 years	47	47.47
	51–54 years	6	6.06
Education	Senior High School/Equivalent	28	28.28
	Bachelor's Degree (S1)	67	67.68
	Master's Degree (S2)	4	4.04
Length of Service	2–10 years	56	56.57
	11–20 years	27	27.27
	21–33 years	16	16.16
Total		99	100

Source: Primary data, processed in 2026.

Measurement Model

The measurement model was assessed using reliability–validity criteria, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. *Measurement Model Results*

Construct	Indicator	Outer Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	AVE
Work	X1.1	0.834	0.941	0.942	0.953	0.773
Discipline	X1.2	0.840				
	X1.3	0.910				
	X1.4	0.866				
	X1.5	0.922				
	X1.6	0.899				
Job	Y1.1	0.858	0.942	0.945	0.956	0.812
Satisfaction	Y1.2	0.918				
	Y1.3	0.951				
	Y1.4	0.920				
	Y1.5	0.855				
Employee	Y2.1	0.967	0.932	0.932	0.967	0.937
Performance	Y2.2	0.968				

Source: Primary data processed using SmartPLS, 2026.

All indicators had outer loadings above 0.70, ranging from 0.834 to 0.968. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.932 to 0.942, rho_A from 0.932 to 0.945, and composite reliability from 0.953 to 0.967. These values exceed commonly used thresholds and indicate strong internal consistency. The AVE values were 0.773 for Work Discipline, 0.812 for Job Satisfaction, and 0.937 for Employee Performance, providing evidence of convergent validity.

Overall, the measurement model therefore demonstrates satisfactory indicator reliability, internal consistency, and convergent validity. However, discriminant validity requires separate attention because several inter-construct associations are relatively high, as discussed below.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion, cross-loadings, and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT). Cross-loadings showed that each indicator loaded most strongly on its intended construct. However, the Fornell–Larcker criterion and HTMT produced more cautious evidence. The square root of AVE for Work Discipline was 0.879, slightly below its correlation with Employee Performance (0.887). In addition, HTMT values reached 0.943 for Job Satisfaction–Employee Performance and 0.946 for Work Discipline–Employee Performance, while Work Discipline–Job Satisfaction was 0.890. These results indicate substantial conceptual overlap among the

constructs, particularly with Employee Performance. Accordingly, the structural relationships remain interpretable, but conclusions regarding the distinctiveness of the constructs should be made cautiously.

The Fornell-Larcker criterion indicated a relatively high association between Work Discipline and Employee Performance. The square root of AVE for Work Discipline was 0.879, while its correlation with Employee Performance was 0.887. The HTMT results similarly showed high values for the relationships between Job Satisfaction and Employee Performance (0.943) and between Work Discipline and Employee Performance (0.946), while the HTMT value between Work Discipline and Job Satisfaction was 0.890. Taken together, the results provide mixed evidence regarding discriminant validity. Although the cross-loading results support the distinct measurement of the indicators, the Fornell-Larcker and HTMT results indicate a relatively high degree of overlap, particularly between Employee Performance and the other constructs. Therefore, the distinction between these constructs should be interpreted with caution.

Structural Model

The structural model was evaluated using the coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), and model fit indicators. Figure 1 presents the estimated PLS-SEM model, including the relationships among Work Discipline, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Performance, together with the R^2 values and path coefficients.

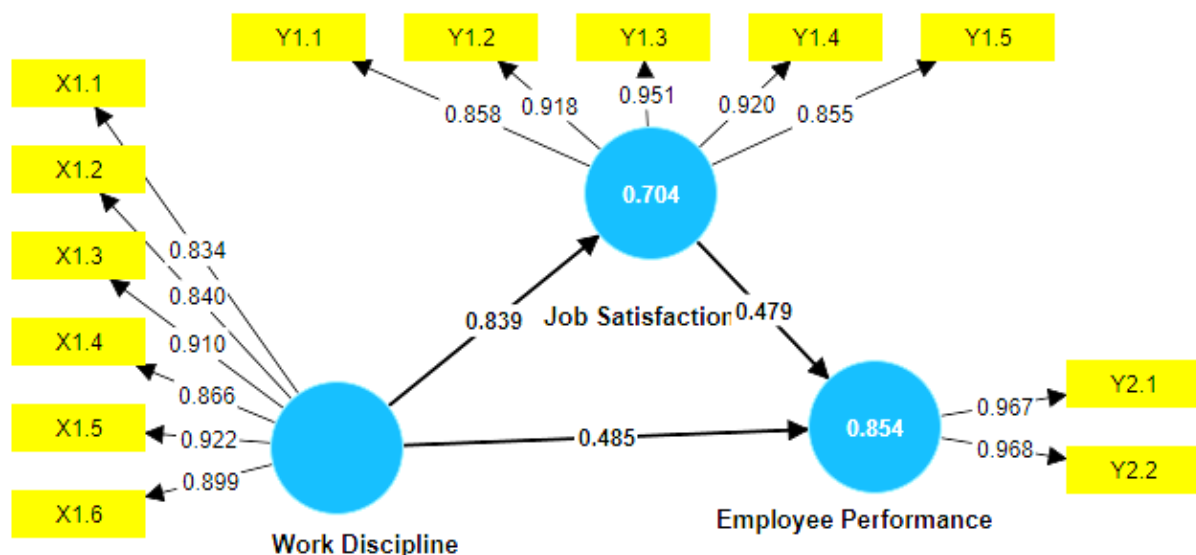


Figure 1. PLS-SEM Structural Model

The structural model shows substantial explanatory power. Work Discipline explains 70.4% of the variance in Job Satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.704$; adjusted $R^2 = 0.701$). Work Discipline and Job Satisfaction jointly explain 85.4% of the variance in Employee Performance ($R^2 = 0.854$; adjusted $R^2 = 0.851$). These values indicate that the model accounts for a large proportion of variance in the endogenous constructs within the observed sample.

Table 3. Coefficient of Determination

Endogenous Construct	R^2	Adjusted R^2
Job Satisfaction	0.704	0.701
Employee Performance	0.854	0.851

Source: Primary data processed using SmartPLS, 2026.

Effect-size analysis indicates large structural effects in the estimated model. The effect of Work Discipline on Job Satisfaction yielded $f^2 = 2.383$, while Work Discipline and Job Satisfaction produced f^2 values of 0.476 and 0.483, respectively, for Employee Performance. These results indicate that each predictor contributes meaningfully to the explained variance of its corresponding endogenous construct.

Table 4. *Effect Size (f^2)*

Structural Relationship	f^2	Effect Size
Work Discipline → Job Satisfaction	2.383	Large
Work Discipline → Employee Performance	0.476	Large
Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0.483	Large

Source: Primary data processed using SmartPLS, 2026.

Model-fit information provided additional support for the estimated model. The SRMR value was 0.046. The d_ULS value (0.194) was below its 95% reference value (0.229), and d_G (0.398) was below its 95% reference value (0.659). These indices suggest that the model reproduces the observed data reasonably well; nevertheless, model-fit statistics in PLS-SEM should be interpreted together with measurement quality and structural-model results rather than as stand-alone evidence of model adequacy.

Table 5. *Model Fit*

Model Fit Indicator	Original Sample	95%
SRMR	0.046	0.050
d_ULS	0.194	0.229
d_G	0.398	0.659

Source: Primary data processed using SmartPLS, 2026.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted using the bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples, a two-tailed test, and a significance level of 5%. The hypotheses were evaluated based on the path coefficient (β), t-statistic, and p-value. For the mediation hypothesis, the significance of the indirect effect was assessed through the specific indirect effect.

Table 6. *Hypothesis Testing Results*

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	T-statistic	P-value	Decision
H1	Work Discipline → Job Satisfaction	0.839	21.060	<0.001	Supported
H2	Work Discipline → Employee Performance	0.485	3.616	<0.001	Supported
H3	Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0.479	3.436	0.001	Supported
H4	Work Discipline → Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0.402	3.529	<0.001	Supported

Source: Primary data processed using SmartPLS, 2026.

Work Discipline had a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.839$; $t = 21.060$; $p < 0.001$), supporting H1. Work Discipline also had a positive and significant direct effect on Employee Performance ($\beta = 0.485$; $t = 3.616$; $p < 0.001$), supporting H2. Job Satisfaction positively and significantly affected Employee Performance ($\beta = 0.479$; $t = 3.436$; $p = 0.001$), supporting H3.

The mediation test showed a positive and significant specific indirect effect of Work Discipline on Employee Performance through Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.402$; $t = 3.529$; $p < 0.001$), supporting H4. Because both the direct and indirect effects remained significant and had the same positive direction, Job Satisfaction functions as a partial mediator.

The total effect of Work Discipline on Employee Performance was 0.887 ($t = 29.865$; $p < 0.001$). The VAF value was approximately 45.3%, indicating that a substantial share of the overall relationship operates through Job Satisfaction while a meaningful direct pathway remains.

Taken together, the hypothesis tests support all four proposed relationships. The results provide empirical evidence that disciplined work behavior is associated with employee performance both directly and indirectly through employees' job satisfaction.

Because the study uses a cross-sectional design, these statistically significant paths should be interpreted as directional associations within the specified model rather than definitive evidence of temporal causality.

Discussion

The Effect of Work Discipline on Job Satisfaction

The findings indicate that work discipline contributes positively to employee job satisfaction. This relationship suggests that employees' satisfaction is influenced not only by the rewards or conditions they receive from the organization but also by the extent to which their work is carried out within a clear and orderly framework. Consistent work practices can provide employees with certainty regarding their responsibilities, expectations, and procedures, thereby creating a more predictable working environment. Such conditions may encourage employees to develop more positive perceptions of their work and the organization.

This finding is consistent with Sutrisno (2019), who explains that work discipline reflects an internal attitude that encourages employees to comply with organizational regulations and carry out their responsibilities appropriately. Discipline, therefore, should not be understood solely as a mechanism of control, but also as a means of establishing orderly and consistent working conditions. Luthans et al. (2021) similarly associate discipline with behavioral consistency and compliance, while Robbins and Judge (2022) view discipline as a managerial mechanism for maintaining appropriate employee behavior and supporting organizational effectiveness. When organizational expectations are clear and employees can perform their duties within an orderly system, they may experience greater certainty and comfort in their work, which can strengthen job satisfaction.

The positive relationship found in this study also suggests that discipline can shape employees' perceptions of the broader work environment. A disciplined workplace provides consistency in how rules, procedures, and responsibilities are implemented. This consistency can reduce ambiguity in performing tasks and create a sense that work is managed in an organized manner. For employees, such conditions may contribute to more favorable evaluations of their daily work experience because they can perform their responsibilities with clearer expectations and fewer uncertainties.

The finding is consistent with previous empirical evidence reported by Rosidah and Nazifah (2025), Rahmawati and Sutarmin (2025), Damayanthi and Suparna (2025), Fadhel and Achmad (2025), Supini et al. (2026), Rifki (2026), Usman et al. (2026a), and Azizah et al. (2026), which generally demonstrate a positive relationship between work discipline and job satisfaction. The consistency of these findings reinforces the view that disciplined work practices can contribute to employees' positive evaluations of their work experience.

In the context of the Office of Navigation District Type A Class III Kendari, this relationship is particularly relevant because employees perform their responsibilities within a formal public-sector environment characterized by established regulations, procedures, and organizational responsibilities. In such a setting, discipline provides an important framework for maintaining order and consistency in daily work. When employees understand the expectations attached to their responsibilities and experience consistency in the implementation of organizational procedures, they are more likely to perceive their work environment positively. Thus, work discipline can contribute to job satisfaction by creating a structured and predictable environment that supports employees in carrying out their responsibilities effectively.

The Effect of Work Discipline on Employee Performance

The findings indicate that work discipline contributes positively to employee performance. This relationship suggests that employee performance is influenced not only by individual capability but also by the extent to which employees consistently follow organizational expectations in carrying out their responsibilities. Discipline provides a behavioral framework that encourages employees to complete their duties according to established requirements, maintain consistency in their work, and take responsibility for the outcomes of their tasks. In this sense, disciplined behavior becomes an important foundation for translating individual capacity into actual work performance.

This finding is consistent with the perspective of Sutrisno (2019), which emphasizes that work discipline reflects employees' willingness to comply with organizational regulations and perform their responsibilities appropriately. Luthans et al. (2021) also associate disciplined behavior with consistency and compliance in organizational settings, while Robbins and Judge (2022) explain that discipline functions as a managerial mechanism for maintaining appropriate employee behavior and supporting organizational effectiveness. These perspectives indicate that discipline does not merely regulate employee behavior but also establishes conditions that encourage employees to perform their duties in accordance with organizational expectations.

The positive relationship can be understood through the consistency that discipline creates in the execution of work. Employees who work within clearly established rules and procedures have a stronger behavioral framework for organizing their tasks and completing responsibilities. Consistency in following work requirements can reduce deviations from established procedures and support more reliable task execution. Over time, such consistency can contribute to the achievement of expected work outcomes. Discipline therefore serves as a behavioral mechanism that connects organizational standards with employees' actual performance.

The finding is in line with previous studies by Ibrahim and Cahyadi (2024), Rosidah and Nazifah (2025), Rahmawati and Sutarmin (2025), Damayanthi and Suparna (2025), Fadhel and Achmad (2025), Supini et al. (2026), Rifki (2026), Usman et al. (2026b), and Azizah et al. (2026), which reported a positive relationship between work discipline and employee performance. The consistency of these findings indicates that disciplined work behavior is an important factor in supporting employees' ability to fulfill organizational responsibilities and achieve expected performance.

In the context of the Office of Navigation District Type A Class III Kendari, the importance of work discipline becomes particularly evident because employees operate within a public-sector organization characterized by formal responsibilities and established work procedures. The implementation of duties requires employees to work consistently within organizational rules and procedures so that individual responsibilities can be aligned with institutional objectives. In such a setting, discipline helps ensure that work is carried out in an orderly and accountable manner. Consequently, employees who demonstrate consistent adherence to organizational expectations are more likely to maintain the quality and continuity of their work, thereby supporting overall employee performance.

This finding also reinforces the argument that improving employee performance in public organizations should not rely solely on developing employee competence or setting performance targets. Strengthening disciplined work behavior is equally important because it provides the behavioral foundation through which employees can consistently translate their responsibilities into measurable work outcomes.

The Effect of Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance

The findings indicate that job satisfaction contributes positively to employee performance. This relationship suggests that employees who hold favorable perceptions of their work are more likely to demonstrate positive attitudes and greater willingness to fulfill their responsibilities. Satisfaction can create a favorable psychological condition in which employees are more comfortable with their work and more willing to invest effort in completing their responsibilities. Consequently, positive evaluations of the work experience can be reflected in the quality and consistency of employee performance.

Job satisfaction represents employees' overall evaluation of their work experience. When employees perceive that their work is meaningful, their working environment is supportive, their relationships with coworkers are positive, and supervision is conducted appropriately, they are more likely to develop favorable attitudes toward their jobs. These attitudes can influence how employees respond to their responsibilities and organizational demands. Rather than viewing their duties merely

as formal obligations, satisfied employees may demonstrate greater willingness to maintain the quality of their work and contribute to organizational objectives.

This finding is consistent with the perspective of Robbins and Judge (2022), who explain that job satisfaction represents a positive feeling toward one's job resulting from an evaluation of its characteristics. A positive evaluation of the work environment can encourage employees to respond more favorably to their responsibilities. Similarly, Luthans et al. (2021) emphasize that positive employee attitudes are important in shaping workplace behavior and organizational outcomes. From this perspective, job satisfaction can become an important psychological condition that supports employees in maintaining their performance.

The finding is consistent with previous research reported by Ibrahim and Cahyadi (2024), Rosidah and Nazifah (2025), Rahmawati and Sutarmin (2025), Damayanthi and Suparna (2025), Fadhel and Achmad (2025), Supini et al. (2026), Rifki (2026), and Yanti and Usman (2026), which found a positive relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance. The consistency of these findings strengthens the argument that employee performance is influenced not only by behavioral and organizational requirements but also by employees' subjective evaluations of their work experience.

In the context of the Office of Navigation District Type A Class III Kendari, job satisfaction becomes particularly relevant because employees perform their responsibilities within an environment that requires sustained commitment and interaction with organizational procedures, supervisors, and coworkers. Positive experiences in carrying out daily responsibilities can encourage employees to maintain their involvement in their work and respond constructively to organizational demands. Conversely, when employees perceive their work environment positively, they may be more willing to maintain consistent effort and responsibility in completing assigned tasks.

The finding therefore suggests that improving employee performance requires attention not only to formal work requirements but also to the quality of employees' work experiences. Creating a supportive working environment, maintaining constructive relationships, providing appropriate recognition and rewards, and ensuring effective supervision can contribute to positive employee attitudes. These conditions can strengthen job satisfaction and, in turn, support employees in maintaining better performance.

The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction in the Work Discipline–Employee Performance Relationship

The findings indicate that job satisfaction serves as an important mechanism linking work discipline to employee performance. This finding suggests that the contribution of work discipline to employee performance does not occur solely through employees' direct compliance with organizational requirements. Rather, disciplined work practices can also shape employees' perceptions and experiences of their work, which subsequently influence how they perform their responsibilities. When organizational expectations are implemented consistently and employees are able to work within a clear and orderly framework, discipline can contribute to more favorable attitudes toward the work, which may then be reflected in employee performance.

This relationship can be understood from the interaction between behavioral and attitudinal aspects of work. Work discipline represents the behavioral side of the relationship, as employees are expected to comply with organizational requirements and perform their responsibilities consistently. Job satisfaction, on the other hand, reflects employees' psychological evaluation of their work experience. When disciplined work practices create clarity, order, and consistency in the work environment, employees may develop more positive attitudes toward their work. These positive attitudes can encourage greater willingness to maintain effort, responsibility, and commitment in completing assigned tasks. Thus, job satisfaction provides a psychological pathway through which disciplined behavior can be translated into better performance.

The finding is consistent with previous research showing that job satisfaction can mediate the relationship between work discipline and employee performance. Rosidah and Nazifah (2025),

Rahmawati and Sutarmin (2025), Damayanthi and Suparna (2025), Fadhel and Achmad (2025), Supini et al. (2026), Rifki (2026), Elvrina et al. (2026), Usman et al. (2026a), and Azizah et al. (2026) provide empirical evidence that the influence of work discipline on employee performance can operate through job satisfaction. The present finding therefore strengthens the view that the relationship between discipline and performance is not exclusively behavioral but also involves employees' attitudes toward their work.

The mediating role of job satisfaction is particularly meaningful because work discipline alone does not fully explain how employees translate organizational requirements into performance. Discipline establishes the behavioral conditions necessary for employees to perform their duties consistently, while satisfaction may determine how positively employees respond to those conditions. When employees perceive their work environment and organizational practices favorably, they are more likely to maintain positive attitudes and effort in performing their responsibilities. Job satisfaction therefore functions as a bridge between the organizational demands represented by work discipline and the behavioral outcomes reflected in employee performance.

In the context of the Office of Navigation District Type A Class III Kendari, this mechanism is relevant because employees are required to operate within formal regulations and established work procedures. Discipline provides the organizational structure needed to ensure that responsibilities are performed consistently, while job satisfaction can strengthen employees' willingness to respond positively to that structure. A work environment characterized by clear expectations, orderly procedures, supportive supervision, and positive working relationships can therefore encourage employees not only to comply with organizational requirements but also to maintain their performance over time.

The finding also shows that the role of job satisfaction is partial rather than complete, meaning that work discipline remains relevant to employee performance even when the satisfaction pathway is considered. This suggests that disciplined behavior has its own direct contribution to performance, while employee satisfaction provides an additional mechanism through which that contribution is strengthened. The relationship can therefore be understood as a combination of behavioral regulation and positive work attitudes, where discipline establishes consistency in work behavior and satisfaction supports employees' willingness to sustain that behavior in achieving organizational objectives.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that work discipline is positively and significantly associated with job satisfaction and employee performance, while job satisfaction is also positively and significantly associated with employee performance. The significant indirect effect confirms that job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between work discipline and employee performance. Thus, disciplined work behavior is linked to performance both directly and through more favorable employee evaluations of their work.

Practically, the Office of Navigation District Type A Class III Kendari should combine consistent enforcement of working hours, rules, work standards, and operating procedures with efforts to strengthen job satisfaction. Supportive supervision, appropriate working conditions, constructive coworker relations, and transparent incentives or allowances can complement disciplinary practices and help sustain employee performance.

This study has several limitations. It focuses on a single public-sector organization, uses a cross-sectional design, and relies on questionnaire-based perceptions, which limit broader generalization and causal inference. In addition, the relatively high HTMT values and the Fornell–Larcker result between Work Discipline and Employee Performance indicate potential construct overlap. Future studies should consider multi-organization samples, longitudinal or time-lagged designs, additional objective

performance indicators, and further refinement of construct measurement to strengthen discriminant validity.

DECLARATIONS

Author Contributions. *Ardiansyah Aganaim* contributed to the conceptualization of the study, data collection, data analysis, and preparation of the manuscript. *Samdin* contributed to the research methodology and interpretation of the findings. *La Hatani* contributed to the review and critical revision of the manuscript. *Usman* contributed to the supervision of the research, interpretation of the results, and final review of the manuscript. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Funding. This research received no specific funding from any public, private, or non-profit funding agency. The study was conducted independently by the authors.

Conflict of Interest. The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest related to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

Use of Artificial Intelligence. Artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used to a limited extent to assist with language editing, proofreading, and improving the clarity of the manuscript. AI tools were not used to collect or analyze data, generate research findings, or determine the conclusions. The authors remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, interpretation, and final content of the manuscript.

Ethical Approval and Informed Consent. This study involved civil servant respondents who participated by completing a research questionnaire. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and the use of the collected data for research purposes. Informed consent was obtained from the respondents prior to their participation. The study was conducted in accordance with applicable research ethics principles.

Data Availability. The data used in this study were collected through a questionnaire administered to civil servant respondents at the Office of Navigation District Type A Class III Kendari. Due to confidentiality and privacy considerations, the individual-level dataset is not publicly available. Aggregated or anonymized data may be made available by the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to applicable permissions and ethical considerations.

Acknowledgments. -

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