

Analysis of Leadership and Organizational Culture on the Performance of Civil Servants Mediated by Work Discipline as an Intervening Variable in the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the direct and indirect influence of leadership and organizational culture on employee performance by considering work discipline as an intermediate variable. This research will be conducted in 2025 at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province. The study population included all civil servants totaling 185 people, with a sample of 65 employees determined using the Slovin formula and purposive sampling techniques. The data used was primary-quantitative, obtained through the distribution of questionnaires. This study applies an associative-quantitative approach with the SEM-PLS (Structural Equation Modeling - Partial Least Squares) analysis method and uses the SmartPLS 3 application for data processing. The results of the study revealed that leadership and organizational culture directly have a positive and significant effect on work discipline, so the H1 and H2 Hypotheses were accepted. However, directly, leadership and organizational culture do not have a significant influence on employee performance, causing the H3 and H4 Hypotheses to be rejected. On the contrary, work discipline has been shown to have a positive and significant influence on employee performance, so the H5 Hypothesis is accepted. Other findings show that organizational culture is the most contributing factor to the formation of work discipline, while work discipline is the main factor that affects employee performance. Furthermore, leadership and organizational culture indirectly, through work discipline, have a positive and significant impact on employee performance, so that the H6 and H7 Hypotheses can be accepted. Overall, leadership and organizational culture were able to explain 72.6% of work discipline variables, while the combination of leadership, organizational culture, and work discipline contributed 73.3% in shaping employee performance.

Keywords: Leadership, Organizational Culture, Work Discipline, Employee Performance, SEM-PLS.

Introduction

The performance of Civil Servants (PNS) plays a very important role in improving the quality of public services and the effectiveness of government agencies (Amelia & Setyawati, 2023). Good performing civil servants strengthen public trust, encourage work efficiency, and support economic growth and social stability (Andrian & Cholil, 2023). Therefore, competency development, continuous training, and fair performance evaluation need to continue (Amelia & Setyawati, 2023).

Work discipline is also an important factor that supports performance improvement, including adherence to rules and work commitments (Kamila & Haerah, 2024; Ichsan et al., 2020). Without discipline, optimal performance is difficult to achieve (Susanti et al., 2023), because discipline encourages responsibility, efficiency, and productivity (Yousida et al., 2024). Disciplined civil servants also help maintain public service standards and achieve organizational targets (Susanti et al., 2023; Yousida et al., 2024).

Effective leadership is the key to forming a culture of discipline and high performance among civil servants (Paroli, 2024). Leaders who are communicative and visionary can foster obedience and work spirit through example and support for self-development (Cahyani & Susetyo, 2024; Tauwi et al., 2024; Pramesti & Nurhidayati, 2024).

Organizational culture is also highly influential, especially a culture that emphasizes professionalism and accountability (Lutfi et al., 2024; Ulvayanti et al., 2024). When organizational culture encourages collaboration and innovation, the motivation and performance of civil servants increases (Hidayati, 2023). An appreciative culture helps strengthen loyalty and work spirit (Putri & Saripuddin, 2024; Rahman et al., 2024).

According to Government Regulation No. 30 of 2019, the performance of civil servants is the result of work based on SKP and work behavior (Rajab et al., 2022). Performance is influenced by factors such as personality, motivation, leadership, organizational culture, and discipline (Kasmir, 2018). This is reinforced by research by Rahmawati & Vitaharsa (2024), Patimah et al. (2024), Peny (2023), and Hidayati (2023) which found that leadership, organizational culture, and work discipline have a positive effect on performance.

Work discipline itself, based on Government Regulation No. 94 of 2021, is the ability of civil servants to obey obligations and stay away from prohibitions (Dewi, 2022). Sutrisno (2019) said that discipline factors include intrinsic factors such as personality and motivation, as well as extrinsic factors such as leadership. This is in line with research by Hanina et al. (2024), Nurzaman (2024), Kholifah et al. (2023), and Ndolu et al. (2022) which shows that leadership and organizational culture have a significant effect on work discipline.

Based on data on the assessment of Employee Work Goals (SKP) from 2021 to 2023 at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province, employee performance in general shows suboptimal results. The achievement of duties and functions of the position (TUSI) every year only ranges from 69% to 77%, which puts employee performance in the category of "Quite Good" to "Good," but still far from the performance agreement target of 90%-95%. This reflects a persistent gap between targets and realization, indicating that performance achievement strategies need to be thoroughly re-evaluated to be more effective.



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Meanwhile, in the aspect of work behavior, although indicators such as service orientation, integrity, commitment, and cooperation are mostly in the "Good" category, discipline indicators are consistently a significant weak point. The value has never reached the minimum target number and has even continued to decline, namely 73% (2021), 69% (2022), and 68% (2023). This shows that improving disciplined behavior is an urgent need, because low discipline also contributes to overall performance that is not optimal and is the main obstacle in achieving employee work effectiveness.

Based on the results of a pre-survey conducted on 20 employees, it was found that there were indications of low employee performance at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province. Most employees are not able to provide work results as expected by the leadership, do not show a positive attitude towards the workload, and are less effective in utilizing work time and completing tasks on time. This shows that the quality of the work produced is often unsatisfactory, undergoes many revisions, and there are delays in work that hinder organizational productivity.

Discipline issues are also an important aspect that affects employee performance. The observation results show that many employees are not at work during working hours, spend time outdoors even outside the office, and only return when they are absent from home. The presurvey supports these findings, where only a small percentage of employees demonstrate high discipline, such as arriving on time, complying with regulations, maintaining integrity, and being responsible for their duties. This indicates that the level of work discipline of employees is relatively low and requires special attention.

In addition to performance and work discipline, leadership is also a factor that contributes to low employee performance. Based on the results of pre-surveys and observations, many employees feel that they lack support and direction from leaders, especially in terms of motivation, communication, and ability development. The ineffectiveness of leaders in motivating and directing employees causes work relationships to become disharmonious and reduce employee morale. Leaders are also considered unfair and lack of concern for the working conditions and processes of employees, thus negatively impacting their motivation and discipline.

The last problem that also affects employee performance is the weak organizational culture. An undisciplined work culture has become commonplace and accepted by the work environment, even by leaders. Presurveys show that only a small percentage of employees feel that their leaders can be used as role models, and not many feel encouraged to improve their skills and innovate in the workplace. This indicates that a healthy organizational culture has not been formed optimally. Therefore, further research on the influence of leadership and organizational culture on performance through work disciplines is very relevant to be carried out for overall improvement.

Literature Review

The Influence of Leadership on Work Discipline and Employee Performance



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Leadership plays an important role in shaping work discipline and improving employee performance (Primadhani & Pitoyo, 2024). Effective leaders provide clear direction, enforce rules, and be an example (Paroli, 2024). Good communication and support from superiors encourage employee motivation and discipline (Akbar & Jaenab, 2024). A fair system of rewards and sanctions also strengthens compliance with the rules (Yuliawati et al., 2023). Inspiring leaders can improve productivity and work quality (Hidayati, 2023; Peny, 2023; Nizamuddin & Robain, 2024; Patimah et al., 2024). Kasmir (2018) and the research of Sari et al. (2025), Nurzaman (2024), and Patimah et al. (2024) support that leadership has a significant effect on performance. Sutrisno (2019) mentions leadership as an extrinsic factor in the formation of discipline, in line with the findings of Primadhani & Pitoyo (2024), Akbar & Jaenab (2024), and Yuliawati et al. (2023).

The Influence of Organizational Culture on Work Discipline and Employee Performance

Organizational culture shapes employee behavior guidelines and supports discipline (Akbar & Jaenab, 2024). A culture that emphasizes rules and responsibilities encourages employees to be disciplined (Yuliawati et al., 2023), while permissive culture decreases motivation (Primadhani & Pitoyo, 2024). A healthy culture increases motivation, collaboration, and productivity (Rahmawati & Vitaharsa, 2024; Patimah et al., 2024; Nizamuddin, 2023; Peny, 2023; Putri & Saripuddin, 2024). Kasmir (2018) stated organizational culture as an important factor in performance. Research by Pratama & Badruddin (2025), Putri & Saripuddin (2024), and Hidayati (2023) reinforces the positive influence of culture on performance. According to Sutrisno (2019), organizational culture is also an extrinsic factor that affects work discipline, as evidenced by Primadhani & Pitoyo (2024), Akbar & Jaenab (2024), and Yuliawati et al. (2023) that organizational culture affects work discipline.

The Influence of Work Discipline on Employee Performance

Work discipline creates order and responsibility in the implementation of duties (Hidayati, 2023). Disciplined employees are more punctual, meticulous, and productive (Susanti et al., 2023). Discipline also minimizes mistakes and increases efficiency, while indiscipline lowers quality and triggers conflict (Yousida et al., 2024). A culture of discipline encourages employees to develop and contribute optimally (Ichsan et al., 2020). Kasmir (2018) cited discipline as one of the main factors that affect performance, which is strengthened by research by Rahmawati & Vitaharsa (2024), Patimah et al. (2024), Peny (2023), and Hidayati (2023) which proves that discipline affects performance.

The Influence of Leadership on Employee Performance Through Work Discipline

Effective leadership has an impact on performance through improving discipline (Hanina et al., 2024). Assertive and caring leaders set high standards, motivate employees, and create a positive environment (Ndolu et al., 2022; Nurzaman, 2024). The discipline instilled by leaders encourages responsibility and productivity. The theories from Sutrisno



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(2019) and Kasmir (2018) support that leadership and discipline affect performance. Research by Hanina et al. (2024), Nurzaman (2024), and Ndolu et al. (2022) strengthens the indirect influence of leadership through discipline on performance.

The Influence of Organizational Culture on Employee Performance Through Work Discipline

An organizational culture that emphasizes the value of discipline and responsibility supports orderly work behavior (Kholifah et al., 2023; Nurzaman, 2024). Discipline embedded in a positive culture maintains punctuality and quality of work, as well as increases employee commitment to the organization (Ndolu et al., 2022). According to Sutrisno (2019), organizational culture is an external factor that affects work discipline. Kasmir (2018) also emphasized the role of culture and discipline in improving employee results and work behavior. The results of research conducted by Hanina et al., (2024), Kholifah et al., (2023), and Ndolu et al., (2022) prove that organizational culture through work discipline is indirectly able to improve employee performance

Methods

This study uses an associative-quantitative approach with the aim of analyzing the direct and indirect influence of independent variables on bound variables through intermediate variables, using quantitative data in the form of numbers collected through questionnaires. The research was conducted at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province located on Jalan Gatot Subroto No. 261, Medan City.

The population in this study is all civil servants consisting of 185 employees. The number of samples is determined by the Slovin formula with an error tolerance of 10%, so that the number of samples taken is 65 employees. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N e^2} = \frac{185}{1 + 185(0.10^2)} = \frac{185}{1 + 185(0.01)} = \frac{185}{2,85} = 64,91 = 65 \text{ (pembulatan)}$$

Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Partial Least Square (PLS) in SmartPLS 3.0 software. According to Abdillah & Jogiyanto (2022), SEM-PLS is a statistical method for modeling complex relationships between latent variables (not directly observable), which combines path and factor analysis. Ghozali & Kusumadewi (2023) further explain that PLS is a robust method, as it does not rely on many assumptions.

Table 2. Research Variables

Variable	Definition	Indicators	Scale
Leadership (X1)	Leadership is an influential process in determining the organization, motivating the behavior of followers to achieve goals, influencing to improve the group and its culture. Squirrel (2018)	1. Communication 2. Behaviour 3. Ability 4. Self-Development Squirrel (2018)	Likert



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Variable	Definition	Indicators	Scale
Organizational Culture (X2)	A philosophy based on the view of life as values that become traits, habits, and driving forces, cultivating in the life of a group of people or organizations that is reflected in attitudes and behaviors, beliefs, ideals, opinions and actions that are manifested as work or work. Moekijat (2019)	1. Leader Behavior 2. Putting the Company's Mission First 3. Learning Process 4. Motivate Moekijat (2019)	Likert
Work Discipline (Z)	A person's willingness and willingness to comply and obey the rules that apply around him. Sutrisno (2019)	1. Attendance 2. Obedience to the Rules 3. Attitude 4. Responsibilities in Duty Sutrisno (2019)	Likert
Employee Performance (Y)	The results of work and behavior that have been achieved in completing the tasks and responsibilities given in a certain period. Cashmere (2018)	1. Quality of Work 2. Working Quantity 3. Period 4. Cost-effectiveness Cashmere (2018)	Likert

Result

Respondent Characteristics

Table 3. Identity Characteristics of Research Respondents

Category	Characteristic	Frequency	Percent (%)	Total	Total (%)
Respondent Gender	Man	34	52,3	65	100,0
	Woman	31	47,7		
	Under 25 Years Old	0	0,0		
	26 - 30 Years	7	10,8		
Respondent Age	31 - 35 Years	12	18,5	65	100,0
	35 - 40 Years	10	15,4		
	40 - 45 Years	15	23,1		
	46 - 50 Years	10	15,4		
	51 - 55 Years Old	8	12,3		
	Over 55 years old	3	4,6		
	High School/Vocational School	4	6,2		
	Diploma-3	5	7,7		
Final Education	Diploma-4 / Strata 1	41	63,1	65	100,0
	Strata-2	13	20,0		
	Strata-3	2	3,1		
	Less than 6 Years	4	6,2		
	6 - 10 Years	15	23,1		
Tenure	11 - 15 Years	19	29,2	65	100,0
	16 - 20 Years	11	16,9		
	21 - 25 Years	12	18,5		
	More than 25 Years	4	6,2		
	II/a	0	0,0		
	II/b	1	1,5		
	II/c	4	6,2		
	II/d	4	6,2		
Position Groups	III/a	10	15,4	65	100,0
	III/b	14	21,5		
	III/c	11	16,9		
	III/d	11	16,9		



Category	Characteristic	Frequency	Percent (%)	Total	Total (%)
Marital Status	IV/a	10	15,4	65	100,0
	II/b	1	1,5		
	II/c	4	6,2		
	Unmarried	9	13,8		
	Marry	56	86,2		

The results of the analysis of respondents' characteristics showed that the majority of employees had a good level of education, adequate work experience, and age composition that was in the productive category. This can be a supporting factor for the effectiveness of leadership and organizational culture in improving employee performance, with work discipline as a factor that mediates the relationship.

Characteristics of respondents' answers to each statement item

Table 4. Respondent Response Characteristics for Leadership Variables (X1)

NO	STATEMENT	STS	TS	N	S	SS
Communication						
1	Leaders are able to establish good communication with employees	3 (4,6%)	5 (7,7%)	7 (10,8%)	25 (38,5%)	25 (38,5%)
2	Leaders are able to provide orders and instructions that are easy for employees to understand	3 (4,6%)	5 (7,7%)	5 (7,7%)	28 (43,1%)	24 (36,9%)
Behaviour						
3	Leaders have good behavior and are friendly with employees	1 (1,5%)	4 (6,2%)	4 (6,2%)	37 (56,9%)	19 (29,2%)
4	Leadership always acts fairly to every officer under him	2 (3,1%)	3 (4,6%)	5 (7,7%)	29 (44,6%)	26 (40,0%)
Ability						
5	Leaders have an excellent leadership spirit	2 (3,1%)	4 (6,2%)	6 (9,2%)	26 (40,0%)	27 (41,5%)
6	Leaders have reliable abilities and skills in the field of work being handled	3 (4,6%)	3 (4,6%)	2 (3,1%)	30 (46,2%)	27 (41,5%)
Self-Development						
7	Leaders are able to have a positive influence on employees so as to motivate employees to be better	2 (3,1%)	2 (3,1%)	5 (7,7%)	26 (40,0%)	30 (46,2%)
8	Leaders give freedom and trust to employees to express opinions, criticisms, and suggestions.	2 (3,1%)	3 (4,6%)	4 (6,2%)	28 (43,1%)	28 (43,1%)

These results show that leadership within the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province is considered quite good, especially in the aspects of communication, behavior, ability, and self-development.

Table 5. Respondent Response Characteristics for Organizational Commitment Variables (X2)

NO	STATEMENT	STS	TS	N	S	SS
Leader Behavior						
1	Leadership provides support to all employees	1 (1,5%)	4 (6,2%)	8 (12,3%)	21 (32,3%)	31 (47,7%)
2	Agency leaders can be used as a good example	1 (1,5%)	6 (9,2%)	6 (9,2%)	31 (47,7%)	21 (32,3%)
Prioritizing the Agency's Mission						



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NO	STATEMENT	STS	TS	N	S	SS
3	The leadership encourages every employee to work to realize the vision and mission of the agency	0 (0,0%)	3 (4,6%)	5 (7,7%)	27 (41,5%)	30 (46,2%)
4	Each agency employee is able to work together to realize the agency's vision and mission	3 (4,6%)	1 (1,5%)	4 (6,2%)	31 (47,7%)	26 (40,0%)
Learning Process						
5	Agencies are trying to develop the capabilities of human resources	1 (1,5%)	5 (7,7%)	9 (13,8%)	30 (46,2%)	20 (30,8%)
6	Employees feel that their abilities continue to develop while working in the agency	2 (3,1%)	4 (6,2%)	5 (7,7%)	30 (46,2%)	24 (36,9%)
Motivate						
7	Employees are motivated to continue learning and developing their skills at work	2 (3,1%)	3 (4,6%)	9 (13,8%)	28 (43,1%)	23 (35,4%)
8	Leadership motivates employees to continue to excel	1 (1,5%)	5 (7,7%)	5 (7,7%)	30 (46,2%)	24 (36,9%)

These results show that the organizational culture in this agency is quite strong in supporting employee performance. However, there are several aspects that can still be improved, especially in terms of leadership as an example and optimization of human resource development.

Table 6. Respondent Answer Characteristics for Work Discipline Variable (Z)

NO	STATEMENT	STS	TS	N	S	SS
Attendance						
1	Employees have an excellent history of attendance at work	0 (0,0%)	7 (10,8%)	4 (6,2%)	29 (44,6%)	25 (38,5%)
2	Employees have a history of low work attendance	3 (4,6%)	6 (9,2%)	13 (20,0%)	26 (40,0%)	17 (26,2%)
Obedience to the Rules						
3	Employees always obey all regulations that apply in the agency seriously	1 (1,5%)	3 (4,6%)	6 (9,2%)	30 (46,2%)	25 (38,5%)
4	Employees obey the social norms that apply in the agency	3 (4,6%)	3 (4,6%)	7 (10,8%)	32 (49,2%)	20 (30,8%)
Attitude						
5	Employees always behave in accordance with the social norms that apply in the agency	1 (1,5%)	5 (7,7%)	4 (6,2%)	41 (63,1%)	14 (21,5%)
6	Employees respect all the rights and obligations of other colleagues	1 (1,5%)	4 (6,2%)	5 (7,7%)	27 (41,5%)	28 (43,1%)
Responsibilities in Duty						
7	Employees continue to carry out their duties and responsibilities even though there is very little supervision	3 (4,6%)	2 (3,1%)	8 (12,3%)	26 (40,0%)	26 (40,0%)
8	Employees always complete their duties and responsibilities on time	2 (3,1%)	2 (3,1%)	10 (15,4%)	29 (44,6%)	22 (33,8%)

The results of this study show that the work discipline of employees at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province is at a fairly good level, especially in the aspect of compliance with regulations and work attitudes. However, the aspects of absenteeism and work delay still need more attention to improve overall work effectiveness and discipline.

Table 7. Respondent Answer Characteristics for Employee Performance Variables (Y)

NO	QUESTION	STS	TS	N	S	SS
Quality of Work						



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NO	QUESTION	STS	TS	N	S	SS
1	Employees strive to consistently improve the quality of their work	1 (1,5%)	2 (3,1%)	5 (7,7%)	24 (36,9%)	33 (50,8%)
2	Employees provide quality work that meets the standards and expectations set.	1 (1,5%)	3 (4,6%)	5 (7,7%)	26 (40,0%)	30 (46,2%)
Working Quantity						
3	Employees strive to achieve the target quantity of work set.	1 (1,5%)	1 (1,5%)	6 (9,2%)	27 (41,5%)	30 (46,2%)
4	Employees have the ability to produce the quantity of work that suits the demands.	0 (0,0%)	6 (9,2%)	6 (9,2%)	24 (36,9%)	29 (44,6%)
Period						
5	Employees are able to complete work tasks within the set time limit.	0 (0,0%)	3 (4,6%)	5 (7,7%)	31 (47,7%)	26 (40,0%)
6	Employees have the ability to work efficiently and respect the set time frame.	1 (1,5%)	2 (3,1%)	4 (6,2%)	31 (47,7%)	27 (41,5%)
Cost-effectiveness						
7	Employees have the responsibility to ensure the efficient use of resources in the completion of work.	1 (1,5%)	2 (3,1%)	5 (7,7%)	30 (46,2%)	27 (41,5%)
8	Employees consider the cost effectiveness factor in the implementation of work tasks.	0 (0,0%)	4 (6,2%)	3 (4,6%)	25 (38,5%)	33 (50,8%)

Data shows that the performance of employees in this organization is quite good, especially in terms of work quality and cost-effectiveness. Although a small percentage of respondents still find it difficult to complete work according to the quantity or within a set time frame, the majority of employees have a high awareness of their work responsibilities. This shows that a good work culture has been implemented in the organization, although improvements are still needed in certain aspects to achieve more optimal performance.

Statistical Analysis Results of the SEM-PLS Method Model

Measurement Model (Outer Model)

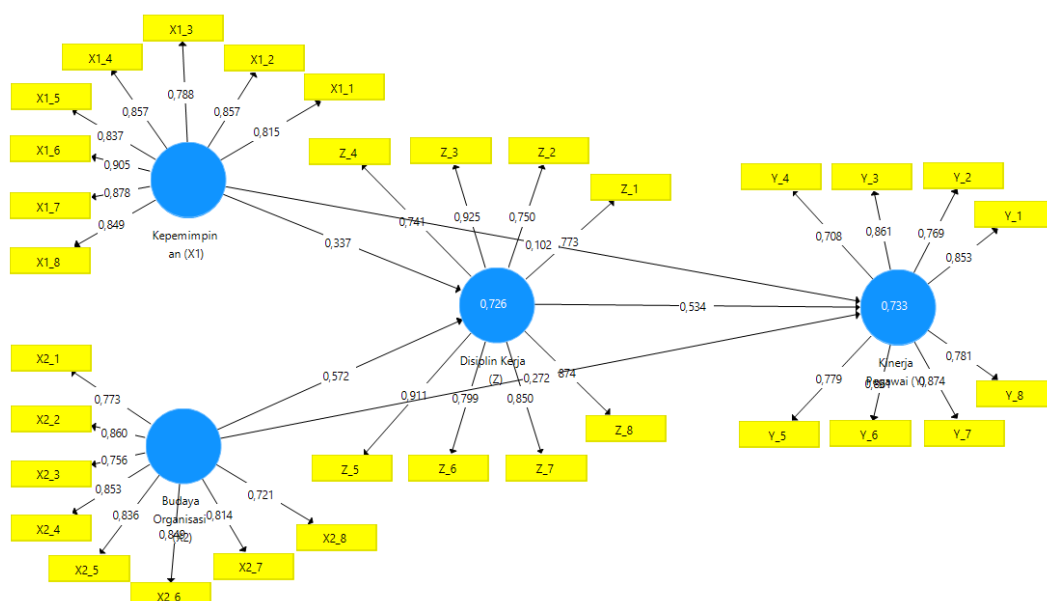


Figure 1. Outer Model

Validity Test



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Convergent Validity with Loading Factor (Outer Loadings)

Table 8. Value Loading Factor (Outer Loadings)

Statement Items	Leadership (X1)	Organizational Culture (X2)	Work Discipline (Z)	Employee Performance (Y)
1	0,815	0,773	0,773	0,853
2	0,857	0,860	0,750	0,769
3	0,788	0,756	0,925	0,861
4	0,857	0,853	0,741	0,708
5	0,837	0,836	0,911	0,779
6	0,905	0,849	0,799	0,861
7	0,878	0,814	0,850	0,874
8	0,849	0,721	0,874	0,781

All indicators have values above 0.70, which means they meet the minimum recommended limit for convergent validity. The indicators with the highest values were Z_3 (0.925) and Z_5 (0.911) in the Work Discipline variable, indicating that these indicators are very strong in representing their constructs. Overall, these results show that all indicators have a significant contribution to each of the variables measured. (Shadida & Rahayu, 2024).

Discriminant Validity with Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Table 9. Fornell-Larcker Criterion Results

Variable	Organizational Culture (X2)	Work Discipline (Z)	Leadership (X1)	Employee Performance (Y)
Organizational Culture (X2)	0,809			
Work Discipline (Z)	0,802	0,831		
Leadership (X1)	0,742	0,761	0,849	
Employee Performance (Y)	0,787	0,805	0,710	0,813

The results of the Fornell-Larcker Criterion show that all variables in the model have good discriminant validity. Each construct is more closely related to its own indicators than to the other variables in the model. This means that each variable can be measured uniquely and does not have significant overlap with the others. Thus, the research model used can be said to have a good measurement structure and strong discriminant validity (Abdillah & Jogiyanto, 2022).

Reliability Test

Table 10. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Leadership (X1)	0,945	0,954
Organizational Culture (X2)	0,924	0,938
Work Discipline (Z)	0,935	0,946
Employee Performance (Y)	0,926	0,939

The results of the reliability test showed that all variables in the study had Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.7 and Composite Reliability above 0.8, indicating that the research instruments had an excellent level of internal consistency. The Leadership variable (X1) had the highest reliability with Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.945 and Composite Reliability of



0.954, while the variables Organizational Culture (X2), Work Discipline (Z), and Employee Performance (Y) also showed excellent results. Thus, all constructs in the model can be considered reliable and able to provide consistent results in measurements (Shadida & Rahayu, 2024).

Structural Model (Inner Model)

The results of the Outer Model based on the results of data processing with SmartPLS 3 can be seen in the following image:

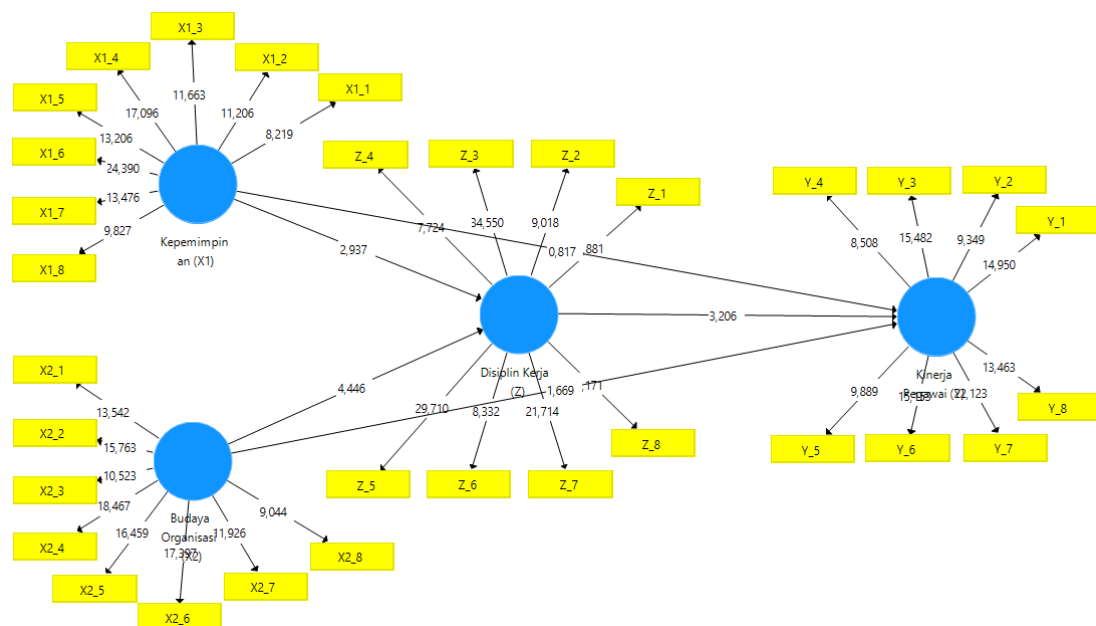


Figure 2. Inner Model

Coefficient of Determination or R Square (R²)

Table 11. R Square Value Results

Variable	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Work Discipline (Z)	0,726	0,717
Employee Performance (Y)	0,733	0,719

The results of the R Square (R²) analysis showed that the Work Discipline (Z) variable had an R² value of 0.726, which means that 72.6% of the variability of Work Discipline could be explained by independent variables in the model, while the rest was influenced by other factors outside the study (Abdillah & Jogiyanto, 2022).

Meanwhile, the Employee Performance variable (Y) has an R² value of 0.733, which indicates that 73.3% of the variation in Employee Performance can be explained by variables in the model, while the rest is influenced by other factors (Ghozali & Kusumadewi, 2023).

Predictive Relevance (Q²)

Table 12. Predictive Relevance (Q²) Results



Variable	SSO	SSE	Q ² (=1-SSE/SSO)
Leadership (X1)	520,000	520,000	
Organizational Culture (X2)	520,000	520,000	
Work Discipline (Z)	520,000	274,212	0,473
Employee Performance (Y)	520,000	292,888	0,437

Because both values are $Q^2 > 0$, this model has good predictive ability in explaining variations in the variables of Work Discipline (Z) and Employee Performance (Y). A positive Q^2 value greater than 0.35 also indicates that the model has high predictive relevance. The higher the Q^2 value, the better the model's predictive ability. Thus, this model is quite valid in describing the relationships between variables in research (Abdillah & Jogiyanto, 2022).

Path Coefficient

Test Hypothesis with t-Statistic and P Values for Direct Influence

Table 13. t-Statistic and P Values Results for Direct Influence

Structural Models	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Conclusion
Leadership (X1) -> Work Discipline (Z)	0,337	2,937	0,003	Accepted
Leadership (X1) -> Employee Performance (Y)	0,102	0,817	0,414	Rejected
Organizational Culture (X2) -> Work Discipline (Z)	0,572	4,446	0,000	Accepted
Organizational Culture (X2) -> Employee Performance (Y)	0,272	1,669	0,096	Rejected
Work Discipline (Z) -> Employee Performance (Y)	0,534	3,206	0,001	Accepted

Original Sample (O) values = 0.337, *t-statistic* = 2.937, and *P-values* = 0.003. Since the *t-statistic* > 1.96 and the *P-values* < 0.05, the hypothesis is accepted. This means that leadership has a positive and significant influence on work discipline. The better the leadership in the organization, the higher the level of employee work discipline (Shadida & Rahayu, 2024).

Original Sample (O) value = 0.102, *t-statistic* = 0.817, and *P-values* = 0.414. Since the *t-statistic* < 1.96 and the *P-values* > 0.05, the hypothesis was rejected. This means that leadership does not have a significant influence on employee performance directly (Shadida & Rahayu, 2024).

Original Sample (O) values = 0.572, *t-statistic* = 4.446, and *P-values* = 0.000. Since the *t-statistic* > 1.96 and the *P-values* < 0.05, the hypothesis is accepted. This shows that organizational culture has a positive and significant influence on work discipline. An organizational culture that has a strong organizational culture can improve employee discipline (Shadida & Rahayu, 2024).

Original Sample (O) values = 0.272, *t-statistic* = 1.669, and *P-values* = 0.096. Since the *t-statistic* < 1.96 and the *P-values* > 0.05, the hypothesis was rejected. Thus, organizational culture does not have a significant effect on employee performance directly (Shadida & Rahayu, 2024).

Original Sample (O) values = 0.534, *t-statistic* = 3.206, and *P-values* = 0.001. Since the *t-statistic* > 1.96 and the *P-values* < 0.05, the hypothesis is accepted. This shows that work discipline has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. The higher the work discipline, the employee performance will also increase (Shadida & Rahayu, 2024).

Test Hypothesis with t-Statistic and P Values for Direct Influence



Table 14. t-Statistic and P Values Results for Indirect Influence

Structural Models	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Conclusion
Leadership (X1) -> Work Discipline (Z) -> Employee Performance (Y)	0,180	2,455	0,014	Accepted
Organizational Culture (X2) -> Work Discipline (Z) -> Employee Performance (Y)	0,305	2,334	0,020	Accepted

Indirect influence shows that both leadership and organizational culture have an influence on employee performance through work discipline as a mediating variable. The results of the analysis showed that the Leadership (X1) → Work Discipline (Z) → Employee Performance (Y) pathway had an *Original Sample* (O) of 0.180, t-statistic of 2.455, and P-values of 0.014. Since the P-Value is smaller than 0.05, this relationship is significant, so it can be concluded that leadership contributes to improving employee performance indirectly through improved work discipline (Ghozali & Kusumadewi, 2023).

Meanwhile, the Organizational Culture (X2) → Work Discipline (Z) → Employee Performance (Y) pathways also had a significant influence with *Original Sample* (O) of 0.305, t-statistic of 2.334, and P-values of 0.020. This shows that a strong organizational culture can improve work discipline, which ultimately has a positive impact on employee performance. Thus, the role of work discipline as a mediator has proven to be important in connecting leadership and organizational culture with employee performance (Ghozali & Kusumadewi, 2023).

All indirect influences have a *positive Original Sample* (O) value, which means that all indirect influences have a positive effect (Shadida & Rahayu, 2024).

Discussion

The Influence of Leadership on Work Discipline

The results of the analysis showed that leadership had a positive and significant effect on work discipline, with an *Original Sample* value of 0.337, t-statistic of 2.937 (>1.96), and a P-value of 0.003 (<0.05), so that the H1 hypothesis was accepted. This means that leadership directly improves the work discipline of civil servants in the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province positively and significantly.

These findings support the theory of Sutrisno (2019) which states that leadership is included in external factors that affect work discipline. This research is also in line with the results of studies by Primadhani & Pitoyo (2024), Akbar & Jaenab (2024), and Yuliawati et al. (2023), which found a positive and significant influence between leadership and work discipline.

Effective leadership through clear communication, example, good work management, and guidance to employees can create a culture of discipline, increase compliance with rules, punctuality, and good attendance (Rahayu, 2020).

Based on the results of observations, a number of leaders, including the head of the work team, although not all, have shown a fairly active role in building employee discipline. They provide clear directions, become role models in carrying out their duties, and conduct



consistent supervision. A communicative and supportive leadership style creates a professional work environment and encourages employees to work according to their rules and responsibilities. Firmness and fairness in making decisions also arouse respect and motivation in employees to show good performance.

The Influence of Organizational Culture on Work Discipline

Structural analysis showed that organizational culture had a significant effect on work discipline, with an Original Sample of 0.572, t-statistic of 4.446, and a P-value of 0.000. The H2 hypothesis was accepted, proving that organizational culture directly has a positive and significant effect on the work discipline of civil servants in the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province.

These results support the theory of Sutrisno (2019) and are in accordance with the studies of Primadhani & Pitoyo (2024), Akbar & Jaenab (2024), and Yuliawati et al. (2023), which stated that organizational culture positively influences work discipline.

An organizational culture that reflects the values of discipline, fairness, and consistency from leaders will encourage employees to behave similarly (Lutfi et al., 2024). Understanding the organization's vision and mission, coupled with learning through training and appreciation systems, helps increase responsibility, compliance, and discipline at work (Ulvayanti et al., 2024).

Based on the results of observations, a strong and consistent organizational culture in the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province has formed a pattern of disciplined behavior among employees. Values such as responsibility, punctuality, and adherence to rules have begun to be ingrained in the daily habits of most junior employees. A work environment that upholds ethics, openness, and commitment also encourages employees to act disciplined. In addition, the example of leaders and respect for disciplined behavior strengthen the internalization of organizational culture that supports employee performance.

The Influence of Leadership on Employee Performance

The results of the analysis showed that leadership had an Original Sample (O) value of 0.102 with a positive direction, but not significant ($t\text{-statistic} = 0.817 < 1.96$; $p\text{-value} = 0.414 > 0.05$). This means that the H3 hypothesis is rejected: direct leadership does not have a significant effect on the performance of employees in the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province.

These results contradict the theory of Kashmir (2018) and previous studies such as by Sari et al. (2025), which stated that leadership has a positive effect on performance. This insignificance can be explained through suboptimal leadership indicators: less effective communication, weak leadership examples, less responsive decision-making, and lack of employee self-development efforts. These weaknesses make leadership not have a direct



impact on performance indicators such as quality, quantity, or work effectiveness (Rahayu et al., 2024).

Based on the results of observations, there are still weaknesses in the implementation of leadership functions evenly across all parts of the agency. Some leaders are not optimal in providing motivation, communication is still one-way, and less responsive to individual employee needs. In addition, efforts to develop employee competencies have not been the main focus so that employees' abilities are slow to develop. Examples have not been consistently implemented, so not all employees feel inspired. This condition makes leadership not have a direct impact on improving performance, although it still plays a role in encouraging work discipline.

The Influence of Organizational Culture on Employee Performance

The organizational culture had an Original Sample (O) value of 0.272 with a positive, but not significant direction ($t\text{-statistic} = 1.669 < 1.96$; $p\text{-value} = 0.096 > 0.05$). Therefore, the H4 hypothesis is rejected and the organizational culture directly does not have a significant influence on the performance of civil servants in the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province.

These findings are not in line with the theory of Kasmir (2018) or research by Pratama & Badruddin (2025), which states that organizational culture influences employee performance. This insignificance can be attributed to the weak application of organizational values and norms, the lack of firmness in the rules, and the role of leaders who have not been maximized in instilling organizational culture. In addition, variations in employees' adaptability to organizational culture are also the cause why organizational culture has not been able to encourage direct performance improvement (Yuliawati et al., 2023).

Based on on-site observations, although organizational culture has the potential to encourage discipline, there are still various weaknesses in its implementation. Organizational values and norms have not been consistently applied in daily work activities across all work teams. The variation in employee understanding of organizational culture and lack of firmness in enforcing rules makes this culture not always the main reference in behavior, especially for senior employees. In addition, a lack of more structured socialization, supervision, and reward hinders the implementation of a more optimal culture. This causes the organizational culture to not be able to encourage significant improvements in the quality, quantity, time effectiveness, and work productivity of employees.

The Influence of Work Discipline on Employee Performance

The results of the structural model analysis showed that work discipline had a positive influence with an Original Sample (O) value of 0.534. A $t\text{-value}$ of 3.206 (more than 1.96) and a $P\text{-value}$ of 0.001 (less than 0.05) indicate that the H5 hypothesis is accepted. This means that work discipline directly has a positive and significant effect on the performance of civil servants in the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province.



These findings support the theory of Kasmir (2018) as well as studies from Rahmawati & Vitaharsa (2024), Patimah et al. (2024), Peny (2023), and Hidayati (2023), which state that work discipline plays an important role in improving employee performance.

Discipline indicators such as regulatory compliance, punctuality, responsibility, and consistency contribute directly to increased productivity and work quality. Disciplined employees tend to be more efficient, focused, and able to maintain good work standards (Rahayu, 2018). Thus, work discipline is an important factor in supporting employee performance significantly (Rahayu et al., 2024).

Based on observations made, it is shown that compliance with attendance, working hours, and rules, responsibility for tasks, and consistency in completing work on time create an orderly work routine, reduce errors, and increase efficiency. Disciplined employees are also more focused and motivated in achieving performance targets. A work environment that supports a disciplined culture also strengthens employees' commitment to work optimally, so that it has a direct impact on improving the quality and productivity of their work.

The Influence of Leadership on Employee Performance through Work Discipline

The structural model shows that leadership has an indirect influence on employee performance through work discipline, with an Original Sample (O) value of 0.180, t-statistic of 2.455, and P-values of 0.014. These values show that the H5 hypothesis is accepted, meaning that leadership significantly affects employee performance indirectly through improved work discipline.

This study confirms that effective leadership, through the mechanism of work discipline, is able to encourage the performance of civil servants in the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province. The H6 hypothesis was proven to be correct. These findings are also supported by research results from Hanina et al. (2024), Nurzaman (2024), and Ndolu et al. (2022) who stated that leadership has an effect on performance if supported by work discipline.

Leadership indicators, such as effective communication, motivation, exemplary, and decision-making, play a role in improving work discipline. Employees tend to follow disciplined and assertive leaders, thus creating a structured work culture (Rahayu, 2020). High work discipline, demonstrated through punctuality, adherence to rules, and responsibility, contributes greatly to employee productivity and work outcomes. Therefore, leadership that encourages discipline is very important in improving overall performance.

Based on the observations made, leadership affects performance indirectly through improving work discipline because leaders who are firm, communicative, and provide examples are able to form disciplined work behavior among employees. Leaders encourage adherence to rules, punctuality, and work responsibility, which gradually becomes a positive habit. This discipline that is formed then has an impact on improving efficiency, consistency, and quality of employee performance. Although leadership does not directly touch the performance aspect, through instilling disciplinary values, leaders succeed in creating a conducive work environment to achieve optimal productivity and work results.



The Influence of Organizational Culture on Employee Performance through Work Discipline

The results of the structural model show that organizational culture affects employee performance indirectly through work discipline, with an Original Sample (O) value of 0.305, t-statistic of 2.334, and P-values of 0.020. This shows that the H6 hypothesis is accepted. This means that organizational culture has a direct and significant effect on the performance of civil servants in the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province.

This research proves that a good organizational culture, with discipline as an intermediary, is able to improve the performance of ASN in the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province. The H7 hypothesis has been proven to be true and is also supported by the results of research conducted by Hanina et al. (2024), Kholifah et al. (2023), and Ndolu et al. (2022) which states that organizational culture affects performance if it is supported by work discipline.

Organizational culture indicators such as work values, norms, reward systems, and internal communication play an important role in shaping employee discipline. Values such as integrity and cooperation encourage employees to obey the rules. Appreciation for disciplined employees will increase their motivation, and open communication clarifies the organization's expectations. Work discipline formed from a positive culture will increase effectiveness, productivity, and quality of work results. Therefore, strengthening organizational culture is an important strategy in creating a conducive work environment and supporting employee performance improvement.

Based on the results of observations, organizational culture affects performance indirectly through improving work discipline because values such as responsibility, integrity, and commitment have been embedded in employees' routines. A work culture that emphasizes adherence to rules and ethics shapes disciplined behaviors, such as showing up on time, completing tasks according to standards, and maintaining professionalism. The discipline formed from the internalization of this culture then contributes to increasing the effectiveness and quality of work. Although organizational culture does not directly encourage performance, it still creates a foundation of work behavior that supports productivity, so that employee performance increases significantly through discipline.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that leadership and organizational culture have a positive and significant influence on employee work discipline, but do not directly affect their performance. On the contrary, work discipline has been proven to have a direct significant effect on employee performance. In addition, both leadership and organizational culture have an indirect effect on performance through the role of work discipline mediator. This means that improving discipline is a key factor in connecting leadership and organizational culture with the work of employees at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Sumatra Province.



In line with these findings, it is recommended that organizations improve leadership effectiveness through a more communicative, equitable, and supportive approach, as well as encourage leaders to be role models in work discipline. Organizations also need to strengthen a positive work culture with training and activities that instill organizational values. To increase the cultural impact on performance, organizational values should be integrated into the performance appraisal system. Additionally, it is important to encourage discipline as a top priority with clear reward and sanction policies, as well as create a work environment that supports the consistent application of discipline through effective supervision and communication.

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