



## The Influence of Leadership and Work Discipline on Employee Performance at the River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP Palembang) NCEDs Mediated by Job Satisfaction

Muhammad Fajerin<sup>1</sup>, Sulaiman Helmi<sup>2\*</sup>, M Izman<sup>3</sup>, Sholahuddin<sup>4</sup>  
Bina Darma University, Palembang, Indonesia

**Corresponding Author:** Sulaiman Helmi [Sulaimanhelmi@binadarma.ac.id](mailto:Sulaimanhelmi@binadarma.ac.id)

---

### ARTICLE INFO

*Keywords:* Leadership, Work Discipline, Employee Performance, Job Satisfaction

*Received :* 29, March

*Revised :* 30, April

*Accepted:* 26, May

©2026 Fajerin, Helmi, Izman, Sholahuddin: This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze The Influence of Leadership and Work Discipline on Employee Performance at the River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (POLTEKTRANS SDP PALEMBANG) is Mediated by Job Satisfaction. This study uses a quantitative approach. The number of samples was 74 respondents. Data analysis was carried out using the *Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Square* (SEM-PLS). The results of the study show that Leadership does not have a direct and significant effect on the performance of SDP Poltektrans employees. Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee job satisfaction. Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee job satisfaction. Job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Job satisfaction mediates the full influence of leadership on employee performance. Job satisfaction mediates significantly the influence of work discipline on employee performance.

---

## **INTRODUCTION**

Educational institutions are one of the stakeholders of the mode of transportation through its role in providing competent and professional human resources. The Palembang River, Lake and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP Palembang) is one of the vocational education institutions under the Ministry of Transportation of the Republic of Indonesia, which is a change and development of the River and Lake Transportation Training Center which was established in 1984, then developed until in 2019 it changed to the Palembang River, Lake and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic. The Palembang River, Lake and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic is an Education Provider under the Transportation Human Resources Development Agency - Ministry of Transportation of the Republic of Indonesia located in South Sumatra Province. The Palembang River, Lake and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic in realizing the vision and mission of the agency implements the Financial Management Pattern of the Public Service Agency as per the Decree of the Minister of Finance Number 736/KMK.05/2016 which in its financing consists of Pure Rupiah (RM) and Public Service Agency (BLU). Based on Government Regulation Number 23 of 2005 concerning Financial Management of Public Service Agencies, what is meant by Public Service Agency is an agency within the government that is formed to provide services to the public in the form of providing goods and/or services that are sold without prioritizing profit-seeking and in carrying out their activities based on the principles of efficiency and productivity. The efforts made by the Palembang River, Lake and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic in producing professional transportation personnel are to organize education and training programs by optimizing human resources, finance, training facilities and infrastructure, as well as improving the quality of graduates who are expected not only to have academic intelligence but also to have emotional and spiritual intelligence.

Employees are human resources owned by the Palembang River, Lake and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP Palembang), which is then distinguished into State Civil Apparatus and Non-State Civil Apparatus, with a total of 152 employees. Employee performance is one of the key factors that play a role in determining the success of an organization, including in higher education institutions such as the Palembang River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP Palembang). As an institution that is responsible for producing professionals in the field of water transportation, the quality of employee performance at Poltektrans SDP Palembang greatly affects the services provided to students, the implementation of educational programs, and the achievement of institutional strategic goals. In the context of the Palembang SDP Polytechnic, employees are not only responsible for administrative tasks, but also involved in educational operations that require efficiency, effectiveness, and cross-departmental collaboration. The good performance of the employees will ensure the smooth operation of the institution and support the creation of qualified graduates. Conversely, suboptimal performance can hinder the educational and service process, which ultimately negatively impacts the institution's reputation.

Employee performance is a fundamental factor that determines the success of an organization, including vocational education institutions such as the River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP Palembang). As an educational institution responsible for producing professional human resources in the field of water transportation, the quality of its employees' performance greatly affects the quality of educational services, administrative services, and the achievement of the institution's vision and mission. Optimal employee performance will ensure the smooth academic process, service efficiency, and improved quality of graduates. On the other hand, low performance can hamper institutional operations and have an impact on the reputation and competitiveness of the Palembang SDP Polytechnic.

In reality, the Palembang SDP Polytechnic and Trans face several performance problems, including: there are still employees who are not disciplined in punctuality, low coordination across units, delays in completing academic administration, and not optimal use of technology in services. In addition, internal surveys show that some employees feel a high workload, lack leadership support, and have not received an adequate reward system. This condition shows an indication of a decrease in job satisfaction which can have an impact on employee performance.

One of the main factors that affect performance is leadership. An effective leadership style is able to provide direction, build motivation, and create a positive work environment. Previous research has shown that transformational leadership has a significant effect on improving employee performance (Avolio & Bass, 2021). Similar findings were also reported by Sartika & Hidayat (2022) that supportive leadership improves work morale and employee productivity in educational organizations. In the context of the SDP Polytechnic, the role of leaders is very important considering that employees have to face complex administrative demands, the need for technological adaptation, and the dynamics of transportation regulations that continue to develop.

In addition to leadership, work discipline also determines the quality of performance. Discipline is related to punctuality, adherence to procedures, and consistency in carrying out tasks. Research by Wanta et al. (2022) and Widyndari et al. (2022) confirms that work discipline has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. Disciplined employees tend to be more focused, responsible, and able to achieve targets more effectively. At the SDP Polytechnic, problems such as delays in data input, lack of order in administration, and non-optimal SOP compliance show that the discipline aspect needs to be strengthened.

Furthermore, job satisfaction plays a role as a mediating variable that connects leadership and discipline to employee performance. Robbins and Judge (2020) explain that employees who feel satisfied with their work will be more motivated, have high loyalty, and show better performance. Previous research by Putra & Rahmawati (2021) proves that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between leadership and employee performance significantly. Meanwhile, Anisah & Ningsih (2023) found that work discipline can increase job satisfaction, which ultimately has an impact on performance improvement.

In the Palembang SDP Polytechnic, the level of job satisfaction still faces challenges, including uneven workload, uneven rewards, and a work environment that is not fully conducive. If employee job satisfaction is low, then their motivation and performance may decrease. Therefore, it is important to examine how leadership and discipline can contribute to increased satisfaction, which in turn impacts employee performance.

Based on this description, research on the influence of leadership and work discipline on employee performance mediated by job satisfaction at the SDP Polytechnic is very relevant. This research is expected to be able to make theoretical and practical contributions in an effort to strengthen human resource management and improve employee performance comprehensively at the Palembang SDP Polytechnic.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***Leadership***

Leadership in an organization plays a crucial role in determining the effectiveness and performance of employees. Northouse (2021) defines leadership as the process of influencing a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. In the context of higher education institutions such as Poltektrans SDP, the leadership style applied by the leadership has a direct influence on employee performance. Various leadership styles that are commonly discussed in the literature include transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. Transformational leadership is a leadership style that focuses on the leader's ability to inspire and motivate subordinates to be able to exceed expected targets. Leaders with this style play an important role in developing employee potential and building a shared vision to realize organizational goals. Research by Bass and Riggio (2021) shows that transformational leadership has a positive effect on employee performance through increased motivation, commitment, and job satisfaction. In the context of the SDP Polytechnic, the application of this leadership style is believed to strengthen employee motivation and empowerment, thereby having an impact on improving overall performance.

### ***Work Discipline***

Work discipline is a procedure that corrects or punishes subordinates if they violate rules or procedures. Discipline is a form of employee self-control and regular implementation and shows the level of seriousness of the work team in an organization (Afandi, 2021).

Work discipline is one of the components that determines the good and bad of a person's work, employees who are disciplined in work do all their activities voluntarily without coercion in accordance with the rules and forms of employee responsibility, which is a guarantee of success in achieving goals in the company. Work discipline is the conscious behavior and readiness of an employee who is happy to meet the standards set in the sense that discipline is not formed by coercion, but must be based on awareness and willingness to obey the rules. Work discipline is also formed thanks to the sense of responsibility that everyone has (Hasyim *et al*, 2022).

The function of discipline is very important and important to achieve goals because without good discipline it is difficult to achieve maximum goals. Discipline is the feeling of obedience and adherence to principles that are considered important, such as performing duties in the office and ensuring that employees are present at the working hours that have been set by the company. With a higher level of education, employee performance will improve, and employees will strive wholeheartedly to achieve the Company's goals (Jepry, & Independent, 2022).

### ***Job Satisfaction***

Job satisfaction is one of the factors that has a significant influence on employee performance. Job satisfaction can be interpreted as a feeling that supports or does not support employees related to work or their own conditions. Job satisfaction itself is an individual's general attitude towards his or her work, such as interactions with colleagues or superiors (Nurhandayani, A., 2022). Employees who are satisfied with their work usually show higher levels of productivity and have strong loyalty to the organization (Robbins, S. P., & Judge, 2021). Job satisfaction can be defined as an employee's overall attitude towards their work, which reflects the extent to which there is a match between the award or achievement received and what they expect or consider worthy of being earned (Heru Kuncorowati, 2023)

### ***The Influence of Leadership and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance***

Research conducted by Avolio and Bass (2021) revealed that effective leadership has a positive relationship with employee performance. Leaders who are able to provide the right direction, motivate, and support employees can create a work atmosphere that encourages improved performance. At the SDP Polytechnic, the implementation of a transformational leadership style accompanied by increased employee job satisfaction has the potential to strengthen the overall performance of the institution. In addition, job satisfaction has also been proven to have a significant effect on employee performance. Diener and Seligman (2022) stated that employees who are satisfied with their work tend to be more productive, creative, and have high loyalty to the organization. In the context of Poltektrans SDP, employees who feel comfortable with the work environment and have harmonious interpersonal relationships will be more encouraged to provide the best work results.

### ***Officer Welfare***

In addition to leadership and job satisfaction, employee welfare also plays an important role in influencing employee performance at Poltektrans SDP. Employee well-being includes physical, emotional, and psychological dimensions, all of which have an impact on how an employee performs his or her duties. Employee welfare is closely related to productivity and work quality. Employees who feel physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy tend to be better able to get the job done well and deal with work pressure more effectively.

### ***Physical Well-Being***

Physical well-being is one of the important factors that support employee performance. Physically healthy employees tend to have lower attendance rates and the ability to work with higher efficiency (Diener & Seligman, 2022). At Poltektrans SDP, working conditions that support the physical health of employees, such as sports facilities, an ergonomic work environment, and access to health services, can improve employee performance.

### ***Emotional and Psychological Well-Being***

In addition to physical health, emotional and psychological well-being is also very important in determining employee performance. Employees who feel satisfied with their work life, and have a good work-life balance, tend to be more passionate about their duties. Diener and Seligman (2022) show that emotional well-being plays a role in increasing creativity, resilience, and decision-making ability. At Poltektrans SDP, providing adequate psychological support such as counseling programs or mental development will be very helpful in maintaining the emotional stability of employees.

### ***Employee Performance at Poltektrans SDP***

Employee performance is the result of the overall effort made by individuals in carrying out their duties in accordance with the standards that have been set. Mathis and Jackson (2021) define employee performance as individual effectiveness in fulfilling their job responsibilities, which includes work quality, output quantity, and reliability in the execution of tasks. At Poltektrans SDP, employee performance plays an important role in the successful implementation of quality transportation education programs and services. According to research by Judge and Bono (2020), employee performance is influenced by various factors, including work environment conditions, leadership, motivation, and well-being. When institutions are able to create a supportive work environment, implement effective leadership, and pay attention to employee welfare and job satisfaction, employee performance will improve significantly. In the context of Poltektrans SDP, this educational institution can achieve optimal performance by ensuring that all performance support elements are available and implemented properly.

### ***Employee Motivation and Performance***

Motivation is one of the key elements that affect employee performance. Robbins and Judge (2022) define motivation as a process that describes the level of intensity, direction, and perseverance of an individual in an effort to achieve a goal. Highly motivated employees usually show better productivity and are able to achieve optimal work results compared to those who are less motivated. Factors such as awards, recognition of achievements, and opportunities to develop a career also play a role in increasing a person's work motivation.

### ***The Effect of Motivation on Performance***

A recent study by Noe et al. (2022) shows that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation have a significant relationship with employee performance. Intrinsic

motivation, which comes from a sense of satisfaction and pride in the work done, often results in more consistent and sustainable performance than extrinsic motivations such as financial rewards. In the context of Poltektrans SDP, a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, such as recognition, bonuses, and self-development opportunities, can produce optimal performance from employees. According to a study conducted by Armstrong and Taylor (2023), fair rewards and a transparent performance evaluation system can also increase employee motivation. At Poltektrans SDP, implementing a performance-based incentive system can provide additional encouragement for employees to achieve better results. This is in accordance with research conducted by McShane and Von Glinow (2021), which affirms that a fair appreciation will strengthen employees' motivation and commitment to the organization.

### ***Employee Engagement***

Employee engagement is a psychological condition in which individuals show a high emotional and intellectual commitment to their work, which ultimately has a positive impact on their performance. Saks (2021) explained that employees who have a high level of involvement are usually more motivated to provide the best work results and establish harmonious relationships with colleagues and superiors. Meanwhile, according to Schaufeli (2022), employee involvement can be seen from three main aspects, namely cognitive, emotional, and behavioral, which reflect the extent to which employees understand, feel, and actively participate in their work.

### ***The Effect of Employee Involvement on Performance***

Employee engagement is directly related to better performance, innovation, and high job satisfaction (Macey & Schneider, 2022). At Poltektrans SDP, programs designed to increase employee engagement, such as competency development training, open discussions between management and employees, and individual performance recognition programs, can help increase employee commitment and productivity. Research by Shuck and Reio (2023) shows that employees who have high engagement tend to be more adaptive to change, more productive, and more innovative in completing tasks. In the context of the SDP Polytechnic, employee involvement is also related to the level of job satisfaction and loyalty to the institution, which will directly have an impact on improving the quality of educational services.

### ***The Influence of Organizational Culture on Employee Performance***

Organizational culture is also a factor that greatly affects employee performance. Organizational culture encompasses the values, norms, and practices that are applied in the workplace and are the foundation of employee behavior in carrying out their duties (Cameron & Quinn, 2021). At Poltektrans SDP, a good organizational culture will create a positive work environment, which supports collaboration, innovation, and compliance with institutional standards.

### ***Organizational Culture and Employee Performance***

According to a study by Hofstede (2022), a strong organizational culture is able to provide direction and motivation for employees, so that they can work more efficiently and productively. An organizational culture that encourages cooperation, mutual respect, and transparency in decision-making, contributes to improving employee performance. A conducive culture also creates a comfortable work atmosphere, where employees feel supported to develop their competencies and participate in innovations that are relevant to the organization. At Poltektrans SDP, an organizational culture that emphasizes the quality of transportation education and professional development services continues to be encouraged to ensure employees have high motivation and a sense of responsibility for their duties. A culture that prioritizes innovation and continuous learning will strengthen the quality of individual and institutional performance as a whole (Cameron & Quinn, 2021).

### ***Organizational Culture Development***

A recent study by Schein (2022) revealed that the process of developing organizational culture must be aligned with the organization's vision and mission, so that each employee has a clear understanding of their role in achieving the organization's goals. In other words, organizations that want to achieve optimal performance must ensure that the values of the organization's culture are implemented in daily practice by all levels of employees.

An organizational culture that is adaptive and open to change is needed in today's digital era. At the SDP Polytechnic, for example, the application of new technologies and innovations in the educational process requires an organizational culture that is flexible and responsive to the times. Organizations that are able to adapt quickly will be better prepared to face the challenges and changes that occur in the external environment (Schein, 2022).

### ***The Role of Training and Development in Improving Performance***

Training and development are one of the important aspects that can improve employee performance in various sectors, including education. According to Noe et al. (2022), effective training is able to improve employees' knowledge, skills, and competencies, which in turn has a direct impact on their performance. At Poltektrans SDP, continuous training and development programs can improve the quality of teaching and administrative services provided by employees.

### ***The Effect of Training on Employee Performance***

A study by Goldstein and Ford (2022) shows that training that is targeted and relevant to job needs will result in significant performance improvements. Training programs should be designed to strengthen the core competencies employees need, as well as provide new skills that support their future roles. In the context of Poltektrans SDP, training related to modern educational technology, data management, and effective communication techniques are needed to support the efficiency and quality of educational services.

Training not only improves technical skills, but also affects employee motivation and satisfaction. According to Tannenbaum et al. (2021), training that provides opportunities for employees to develop will increase their job satisfaction, which in turn improves overall performance. Employees who feel supported in their career development tend to be more committed and make maximum contributions to the institution.

### ***Employee Development Strategy***

Employee development also includes non-technical aspects, such as improving managerial skills, developing leadership, and the ability to innovate. According to research by Garavan et al. (2023), employee development that focuses on conflict management skills, transformational leadership, and strategic decision-making will strengthen teams at various levels of the organization. At Poltektrans SDP, this training is very relevant, considering the important role of employees in supporting effective education management and governance. In addition, it is important for institutions to conduct ongoing evaluations of the effectiveness of training programs. This evaluation will ensure that the programs implemented are indeed successful in improving employee performance and meeting the needs of the organization in facing future challenges (Tannenbaum et al., 2021).

### ***Transformational Leadership and Employee Performance***

Transformational leadership is a leadership style that emphasizes the leader's ability to inspire, motivate, and encourage employees to achieve a more optimal level of performance than expected. According to Bass and Riggio (2021), transformational leaders encourage employees to go beyond their personal interests and contribute to organizational goals. At Poltektrans SDP, transformational leadership has a crucial role in building a positive work environment, increasing innovation, and encouraging employee engagement.

### ***Characteristics of Transformational Leadership***

Transformational leadership is characterized by four key components: ideal influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individual attention (Bass & Riggio, 2021). Leaders who have the ideal influence will be role models for employees, while leaders who are able to provide inspiration will encourage employees to commit to the vision and mission of the organization. Intellectual stimulation helps employees to think critically and creatively, while individual attention shows that leaders care about employee needs and development. A study by Chen and Cheng (2022) reveals that transformational leadership styles have a significant positive effect on employee performance. In the context of Poltektrans SDP, the application of transformational leadership principles by leaders can encourage increased employee motivation and build a more innovative and collaborative work atmosphere. In addition, the application of this leadership style also contributes to increased job satisfaction, which ultimately has a positive impact on employee productivity.

### ***The Influence of Transformational Leadership on Innovation***

Transformational leadership also plays an important role in facilitating innovation in the organization. According to research by Gumusluoglu and Ilsev (2023), transformational leaders can create an environment that supports experimentation and creativity, so employees feel free to come up with new ideas. At Poltektrans SDP, where high-quality education and training are the main focus, leaders who drive innovation can help institutions to adapt to rapid changes in the world of education and technology. Innovation facilitated by transformational leadership has to do not only with the development of new curricula or teaching methods, but also includes the improvement of administrative processes that support educational services. Leaders who are able to inspire employees to think outside the box and find new ways to solve problems will create a more efficient and responsive organization (Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2023).

### ***The Relationship Between Employee Performance and Customer Satisfaction***

The performance of employees in educational institutions such as Poltektrans SDP cannot be separated from customer satisfaction, in this case students and parents of students. Good performance from employees will have a direct impact on students' learning experiences and parents' perceptions of the quality of education provided. According to Zeithaml *et al.* (2021), customer satisfaction is greatly influenced by the quality of service provided by employees.

### ***Service Quality and Employee Performance***

Service quality includes several elements, such as timeliness, responsiveness, and employee expertise in meeting customer needs. Research by Parasuraman *et al.* (2022) shows that employees who have performance

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research was carried out at the Polytechnic of River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation (Poltektrans SDP Palembang) using a quantitative approach. This approach was chosen to measure and analyze the relationships and objective influences between independent and dependent variables through numerical data-driven hypothesis testing. The data used is sourced from primary data obtained directly from respondents through the systematic dissemination of questionnaires to provide an empirical picture that can be generalized in the context of human resource management.

The variables in this study included four main aspects measured using the Likert Scale (1-5), ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. These variables include: Leadership (X1) which is measured through 7 indicators such as climate of mutual trust and concern for well-being; Work Discipline (X2) with indicators of rule compliance, time effectiveness, responsibility, and attendance; Job Satisfaction (Z) as an intermediate variable measured through relationships with superiors, awards, procedures, regulations, and the job itself; and Employee Performance (Y) as a dependent variable measured through quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, and independence.

The research population includes all employees of the Palembang SDP Polytechnic which totals 152 people, consisting of 93 civil servants and 59 PPPK people. The sampling technique used the cluster sampling method (part of *probability sampling*), where a representative sample of 74 people was obtained. The data collection technique is carried out entirely through questionnaire instruments designed based on previously determined variable operational indicators.

To process the collected data, the researcher used the Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis technique with Smart-PLS software version 3.0. The PLS-SEM method was chosen because it is non-parametric and is able to test measurement models (*outer models*) for validity/reliability as well as structural models (*inner models*) simultaneously even with a relatively small sample size. Hypothesis testing was carried out by comparing the t-calculated value to the t-table at a significance level of 5%. In addition, the strength of influence between variables is measured through the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) which indicates the extent to which independent variables are able to explain variations in dependent variables.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

The Palembang River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP) Palembang is a vocational state university under the Transportation Human Resources Development Agency (BPSDMP) of the Ministry of Transportation of the Republic of Indonesia and is located at Jalan Sabar Jaya No. 116, Mariana, Banyuasin I District, Banyuasin Regency, South Sumatra. The SDP Polytechnic has the main task of organizing vocational education, research, and community service programs in the field of land water transportation, especially rivers, lakes, and crossings as part of efforts to improve the quality of human resources in the national transportation sector.

Based on the data that has been collected, the respondents' answers are then recapitulated and analyzed to find out the descriptive picture of each research variable. The respondents' assessment in this study refers to the Likert scale assessment criteria with the following classification: score 1.00–1.79 including the very low category, score 1.80–2.59 including the low category, score 2.60–3.39 including the sufficient category, score 3.40–4.19 including the good category, and score 4.20–5.00 including the very good category.

Based on the results of the analysis of respondents' answers regarding leadership in employees of the River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP), in general, it can be concluded that leadership is in the very good category. This is shown by the average value of all leadership indicators that are above 4.00 on the Likert scale, which indicates that the leader is considered to have been able to carry out his role effectively in directing, fostering, and supporting employees in carrying out organizational duties and responsibilities.

The indicator with the highest average score is the statement "Leaders strive to create a comfortable work environment" with an average score of 4.45. These results show that the leadership of the SDP Polytechnic is considered to

have succeeded in creating a conducive, safe, and supportive work environment for employees. A comfortable work environment is an important factor in increasing employee motivation, morale, and productivity, so that it can encourage the achievement of institutional goals optimally.

On the other hand, the indicator with the lowest average score is the statement "Leaders consider the feelings of subordinates in making decisions" with an average score of 4.01. Although the score is still in the very good category, these results show that the aspects of empathy and sensitivity of leaders to the emotional state of subordinates are relatively lower than other leadership indicators. This may indicate that in some decision-making situations, leaders place more emphasis on rational considerations, organizational policies, and task demands rather than a personal approach to employees.

Overall, the results of this study show that the leadership at the SDP Polytechnic has gone very well, especially in creating harmonious working relationships, providing space for subordinates to express opinions, appreciating employee achievements, and appreciating the position and role of employees in the organization. However, improvements in the aspect of empathic communication and the involvement of subordinate feelings in the decision-making process still need to be a concern so that the relationship between leaders and employees is more harmonious, so that organizational performance can continue to be improved in a sustainable manner.

Based on the results of the descriptive analysis of the work discipline variables of employees of the River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP), it is known that the indicator with the highest average score is the statement "I am responsible for every task given" with an average score of 4.57. These results show that employees of the SDP Polytechnic have a very high level of responsibility in carrying out their duties and work that are their obligations. This high sense of responsibility reflects a professional attitude, commitment to work, and employee awareness of their role and contribution in supporting the achievement of organizational goals.

Meanwhile, the indicator with the lowest average score was the statement "I rarely arrive late for work" with an average score of 4.36. Although this value is still in the very good category, the results show that the aspect of punctuality of attendance is relatively lower than other indicators of work discipline.

This condition can indicate that there are still a small number of employees who are late to work, which may be influenced by external factors or certain operational conditions. Therefore, increasing supervision and strengthening commitment to time discipline still needs to be carried out so that employee work discipline can be more optimal.

Based on the results of a descriptive analysis of the job satisfaction variables of employees of the River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP), it can be concluded that job satisfaction is in the very good category. This is shown by the average value of all indicators that are above 4.00 on the Likert scale, which indicates that employees are satisfied with the work relationship, work system, and working environment conditions that apply in the institution.

The indicator with the highest average score was the statement "I have a good working relationship with my boss" with an average score of 4.43. These results show that the relationship between employees and superiors at the SDP Polytechnic has been harmoniously established, based on good communication, mutual respect, and positive cooperation, so as to be able to create a conducive work atmosphere.

Meanwhile, the indicator with the lowest average score is the statement "I feel comfortable with the applicable work regulations" with an average score of 4.12. Although it is still in the very good category, these results show that the level of comfort of employees with work regulations is relatively lower than other indicators. This can indicate the need for continuous evaluation and socialization of work policies so that the regulations implemented are easier to understand and accept by all employees.

Overall, the results of this study show that the job satisfaction of employees of the SDP Polytechnic has been achieved very well, especially in the aspect of work relations with superiors and satisfaction with the work itself, which in the end has the potential to make a positive contribution to improving employee performance and organizational effectiveness.

Based on the results of a descriptive analysis of the performance variables of the employees of the River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP), it can be concluded that the performance of employees is in the very good category. This is shown by the average value of all performance indicators that are above 4.00 on the Likert scale, which indicates that employees have been able to carry out their duties and responsibilities optimally in accordance with the standards set by the organization.

The indicator with the highest average score is the statement "I always try to provide quality work" with an average score of 4.49. These results show that SDP Poltektrans employees have a high commitment to the quality of work results, which is reflected in their thoroughness, seriousness, and responsibility in completing their work.

Meanwhile, the indicator with the lowest average score is the statement "I am able to get the job done without relying much on others" with an average score of 4.27. Although still in the very good category, these results show that the level of employee work independence is relatively lower than other performance indicators. This can indicate that in the implementation of certain tasks, employees still need coordination and cooperation with colleagues and superiors, which in the context of educational and bureaucratic organizations is a reasonable condition.

Overall, the results of this study show that the performance of Poltektrans SDP employees has gone very well, especially in terms of the quality of work results, timeliness, target achievement, and the effectiveness of resource use, which ultimately supports the achievement of organizational goals in a sustainable manner.

Early Models

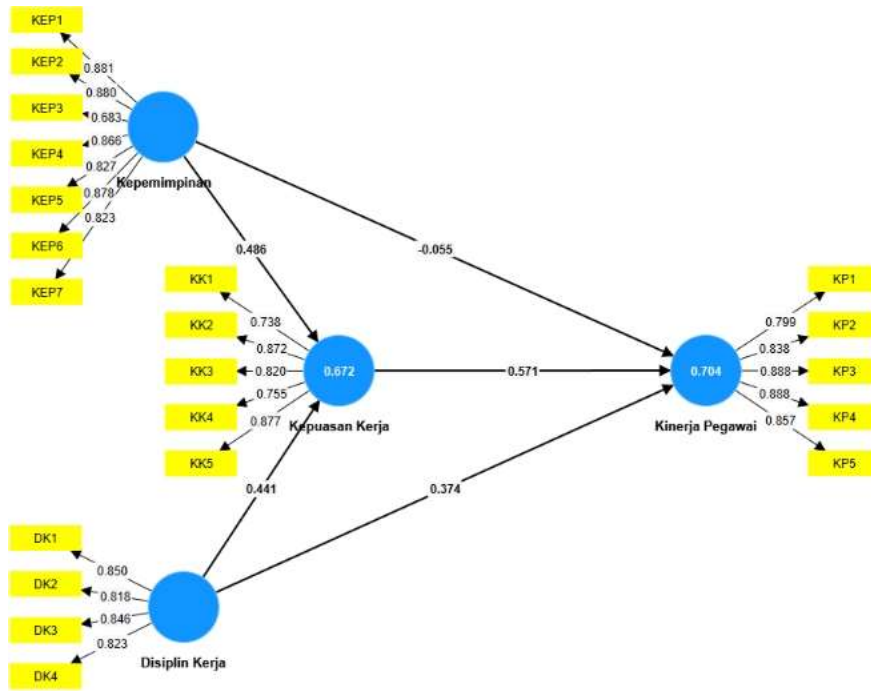


Figure 1. Early Models

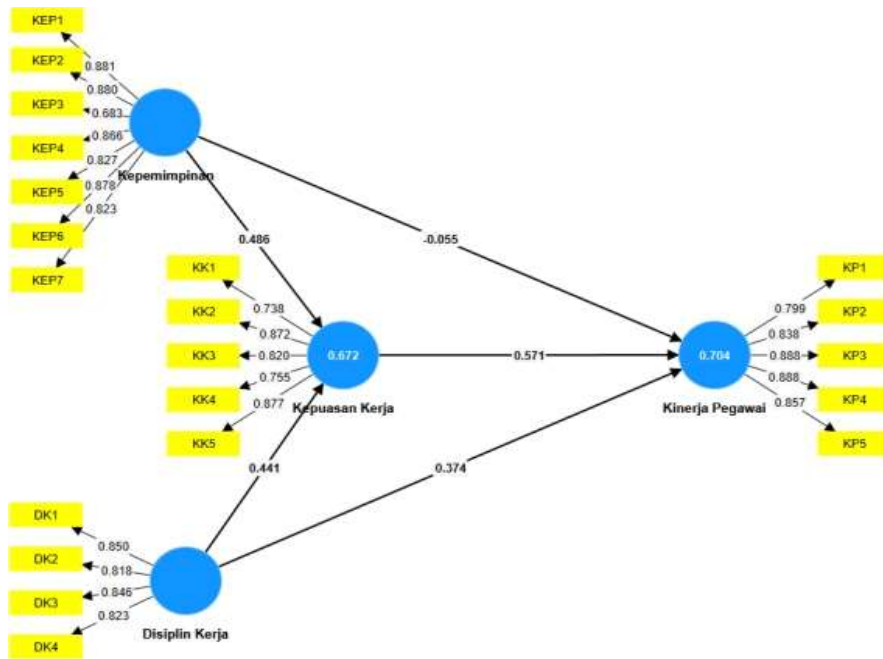


Figure 2. Model Final

Hypothesis testing in SEM-PLS is carried out through a *bootstrapping* procedure to assess the significance of the influence between constructs in the structural model. The parameters used in decision-making include T-statistical values ( $> 1.96$  for a significance level of 5%), P-values ( $< 0.05$ ), and confidence intervals that should not cross zero if the relationship is declared significant. In addition, a bias value close to zero indicates a stable parameter estimation. Based on these criteria, the following are the results of testing the direct influence between variables.

Hypothesis testing in SEM-PLS is carried out through a bootstrapping procedure to assess the significance of the influence between constructs in the structural model. Parameters used in decision-making include T-statistics values ( $> 1.96$  for a significance level of 5%), P-values ( $< 0.05$ ), and confidence intervals that should not cross zero if the relationship is declared significant. In addition, a bias value close to zero indicates a stable parameter estimation. Based on these criteria, the following are the results of testing the direct influence between variables.

Indirect influence testing in SEM-PLS was carried out to find out whether the mediating variable was able to bridge the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables. This analysis used a bootstrapping procedure with the same significance criteria as the direct influence, namely T-statistics  $> 1.96$  and P-values  $< 0.05$ , as well as confidence *intervals* that did not cross zero. To determine the type of mediation (partial or full), the results of indirect influence were compared with the significance of the direct influence that had been tested previously.

## DISCUSSION

### ***H1: The Influence of Leadership on Employee Performance***

The test results showed that leadership did not have a significant effect on the performance of employees of the River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP). This is indicated by a *t-statistic* value of 0.968 with a *p-value* of 0.333, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. The value of the path coefficient of -0.006 with a *confidence interval* range of -0.322 to 0.065 that passes the value of zero indicates that the influence of leadership on employee performance is not statistically strong enough. Thus, the hypothesis that leadership has a direct effect on the performance of Poltektrans SDP employees is unacceptable.

### ***H2 : The Effect of Work Discipline on Employee Performance***

The results of the hypothesis test showed that work discipline had a significant effect on the performance of employees of the River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP), with a *t-statistic* value of 2.975 and a *p-value* of 0.003, which is smaller than the significance level of 0.05. These findings indicate that the higher the level of work discipline of employees, the better the performance produced in the implementation of their duties and responsibilities.

### ***H3 : The Influence of Leadership on Job Satisfaction***

The test results showed that leadership had a significant effect on the job satisfaction of employees of the River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP). This is evidenced by a *t-statistic* value of 4.878 with a *p-value* of 0.000, which is smaller than the significance level of 0.05. The path coefficient value of 0.267 indicates a positive influence direction, while the  $R^2$  value of 0.650 indicates that leadership is able to explain the variation in job satisfaction of SDP Poltektrans employees by 65%, while the rest is influenced by other factors outside the research model.

#### ***H4 : The Effect of Work Discipline on Job Satisfaction***

Based on the results of hypothesis testing, it is known that work discipline has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction of employees of the River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP). This is evidenced by a *t-calculated* value of 4.618 with a significance level of 0.000, which is smaller than the value of  $\alpha = 0.05$ . Thus, the hypothesis that work discipline has an effect on job satisfaction is accepted. The path coefficient value of 0.231 shows that work discipline has a positive influence on job satisfaction, which means that the higher the level of employee work discipline, the higher the level of job satisfaction felt. Meanwhile, an  $R^2$  value of 0.611 indicates that work discipline is able to explain the variation in job satisfaction by 61.1%, while the rest is influenced by other factors outside the research model.

#### ***H5 : The Effect of Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance***

The test results showed that job satisfaction had a positive and significant effect on the performance of employees of the River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP). This is indicated by a *t-statistic* value of 4.723 with a *p-value* of 0.000, which is smaller than the significance level of 0.05. The path coefficient value of 0.356 indicates the direction of positive influence, while the  $R^2$  value of 0.833 indicates that job satisfaction has a very large contribution in explaining the variation in the performance of SDP Poltektrans employees. These findings confirm that a high level of job satisfaction will drive a significant improvement in employee performance.

#### ***H6 : The Influence of Leadership on Employee Performance Mediated by Job Satisfaction***

Based on the test results, it is known that leadership affects the performance of employees of the River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP) through job satisfaction as a mediation variable. This is indicated by a *t-calculated* value of 3.260 with a significance level of 0.001, which is smaller than  $\alpha = 0.05$ . The indirect influence path coefficient value of 0.144 indicates a positive influence direction, while the  $R^2$  value of 0.484 indicates that leadership and job satisfaction together are able to explain the variation in the performance of SDP Polytechnic employees by 48.4%, while the rest is explained by other variables outside the research model. Thus, job satisfaction has been proven to play a role as a *full mediator* in the relationship between leadership and performance of SDP Poltektrans employees.

#### ***H7 : The Influence of Work Discipline on Employee Performance Mediated by Job Satisfaction***

The test results showed that work discipline had a significant effect on the performance of employees of the River, Lake, and Crossing Transportation Polytechnic (Poltektrans SDP) through job satisfaction as a mediating variable, with a *t-statistic* value of 2.948 and a *p-value* of 0.003, which was below the significance level of 0.05. The *indirect effect* value of 0.121 with a *confidence interval* of 0.018–0.454 confirms that job satisfaction plays a mediating variable in the relationship between work discipline and the performance of SDP Poltektrans

employees. These findings indicate that work discipline not only affects employee performance directly, but also has an indirect impact through increasing employee job satisfaction.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the results of the research and discussions that have been conducted, it can be concluded that the dynamics of employee performance at the SDP Polytechnic are greatly influenced by the interaction between work discipline, leadership, and job satisfaction. Directly, work discipline has proven to be a key factor that has a positive and significant effect on improving performance through high compliance with rules and responsibility. In contrast, leadership was found to have no direct influence on performance, but instead played a strategic role in improving job satisfaction through a fair and supportive leadership style. This is emphasized by the finding that job satisfaction functions as a *full mediator* for the influence of leadership on performance, as well as a significant mediator for the influence of work discipline on performance.

Overall, this study shows that job satisfaction is a crucial element that bridges organizational behavior variables with real work outcomes. While work discipline can drive performance directly, the effectiveness of leadership in driving productivity depends heavily on its ability to create a sense of satisfaction and security for employees first. Thus, the continuous improvement of employee performance at the SDP Polytechnic can be achieved by combining the application of consistent discipline and leadership that is able to build a conducive work climate, so as to create job satisfaction which will ultimately optimize employee contributions to the organization.

## **ADVANCED RESEARCH**

Future research should expand this model by incorporating additional variables such as organizational commitment, motivation, employee engagement, or organizational culture to provide a deeper understanding of employee performance determinants. Longitudinal or comparative studies across different institutions are also recommended to enhance generalizability and examine the consistency of job satisfaction's mediating role in diverse organizational contexts.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

The author expresses gratitude to God Almighty for the completion of this research, which cannot be separated from the support of various parties. Sincere gratitude is expressed to the Director and the entire academic community of the Palembang SDP Polytechnic for their permission and cooperation, as well as to the supervisors who have provided valuable direction. Special appreciation is also extended to his beloved family for his prayers and support, colleagues for his togetherness, and respondents who have helped provide research data. Hopefully the help and kindness of all parties will get abundant replies and this research can provide real benefits for the development of the organization.

## REFERENCES

- Adhari, I. Z. (2020). *Optimizing Employee Performance Using Knowledge Management & Work Motivation Approach*. Pasuruan: CV Qiara Media.
- Afandi, A. (2021). The Influence of Competence and Discipline on Performance with Work Ethic as a Mediation Variable in Lubuk Sikaping District. *Applied Journal of Minangkabau Government*, 1(1), 33–46.
- Alber Tanjung, A. F. (2023). The Influence of Leadership on Job Satisfaction. *JIM: Student Scientific Journal of History Education*, 8(2), 506–518.
- Avolio, B. J., & Bass, B. M. (2021). *Transformational Leadership*. New York: Psychology Press.
- Armstrong, M., & Taylor, S. (2023). *Armstrong's handbook of human resource management practice* (16th ed.). Kogan Page.
- Berliana Febrianti, Ni Nyoman Sawitri, Dovina Navanti, & Hapzi Ali, M. A. K. (2024). The Influence of Leadership Style, Organizational Culture and Work Motivation on Employee Performance at the Bekasi Religious Court Class 1A. *JEBI: Journal of Economics and Business*, 2(8), 1028–1042.
- Chotamul Fajri, Adinda Amelya, & Suworo, S. (2022). The Effect of Job Satisfaction and Work Discipline on Employee Performance of PT. Indonesia Applicad. *JIP-Scientific Journal of Education*, 5(1), 369–373.
- Doni Marlius, R. A. M. (2024). The Influence of Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance of PT Semen Padang HR Department. *Journal of Economic Development*, 17(2).
- Gunarto, M., & Cahyawati, D. (2022). Analysis of Alumni Loyalty in Private Universities Using the SEM-PLS Model Approach. *Journal of Organization and Management*, 18(1), 46–59.
- Hasyim, W., Putra, M., & Wijayati, A. (2022). The Influence of Work Discipline and Work Environment on Job Satisfaction with Organizational Commitment as Intervening Variables. *Journal of Economics and Business*, 10(2), 583–589.
- Heru Kuncorowati, L. S. (2023). The Influence of Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment on Employee Performance. *Edunomics*, 8(1).
- Irna Iwah, Andi Irfan, & J. J. (2023). The Influence of Leadership on Employee Performance at the Village Office in Tommo District, Mamuju Regency. *Nuances Journal*, 1(3), 238–245.
- Jaya Muda Hulu, & Progresif Buulolo, A. S. G. (2021). The Influence of Leadership and Compensation on Employee Work Motivation at the Mazoka Sub-district Office, South Nias Regency. *Scientific Journal of South Nias Students*, 4(2), 36–45.
- Jepry, & Mardika, N. H. (2022). The Effect of Discipline and Motivation on Employee Performance at PT. Pana then Sindo Express. *EMBA Journal*, 8(1), 1977–1987.
- Kuruway, M. (2021). The Influence of Leadership, Motivation and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance at the Regional Secretary Office of Mappi Regency. *Journal of Information Systems Management Economics*, 3(1).

- Nida, S., Husainah, N., Maswanto, M., & Ananto, T. (2024). The Influence of Leadership, Competence, Work Motivation on Job Satisfaction and Implications on Employee Performance. *MRBEST*, 2(2), 14–27.
- Nugroho, A., & Pratiwi, S. (2022). The Role of Job Satisfaction in Mediating the Influence of Leadership on the Performance of Public Sector Employees. *Journal of Administrative Sciences*, 9(1), 55–66.
- Nurhandayani, A. (2022). The influence of work environment, job satisfaction, and workload on performance. *Journal of Digital Economics and Business (Ekobil)*, 1(2), 108-110.
- Pamungkas, H. A. D., & Firdausy, C. M. (2025). *The influence of leadership on employee job satisfaction with trust in leaders as a mediating variable at PT ABC*. *Journal of Business Management and Entrepreneurship*, 9(1).
- Partika, P. D., Ismanto, B., & Rina, L. (2020). The Effect of Work Stress, Work Discipline and Job Satisfaction on the Performance of Employees of Tlatar Boyolali Water Park. *Journal of Beneficia*, 5(2), 308–323.
- P.S. Sugiyono. (2020). *Qualitative Research Methods*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Pranitasari, D. (2021). An analysis of the work discipline of the employees. *Accounting and Management*, 18(01).
- Prasetyawati, N., & Rakhmawati, A. (2022). The Role of Job Satisfaction in Mediating Leadership Influence on Employee Performance. *Journal of Management and Organization*, 13(2), 87–95.
- Primadi Candra Susanto, Dewi Ulfah Arini, Lily Yuntina, & Josua Panatap Soehaditama, N. (2024). Quantitative Research Concepts: Population, Sample, and Data Analysis. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Sciences*, 3(1).
- Purwadi, M. R., Sari, V. N., & Sari, M. W. (2025). The Influence of Leadership Style and Work Discipline on Employee Performance with Job Satisfaction as an Intervening Variable in the Bukittinggi Mayor's Office. *ECO MARGIN*, 9(1), 55-70.
- Putra, A., & Rahmawati, D. (2021). The Influence of Leadership and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance. *Journal of Administration and Organization*, 15(1), 45–56.
- Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2020). *Organizational Behavior*. Pearson.
- Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2021). *Organizational Behavior* (19th ed.). Pearson.
- Sappe Almakah, D., Hasan, S., & Yuliani, T. (2025). The Influence of Work Discipline, Motivation, and Work Environment on Job Satisfaction. *Journal of Edueco*, 8(1).
- Sari, D., & Rahmawati, F. (2021). The Influence of Leadership on Employee Performance with Job Satisfaction as a Mediation Variable. *Journal of Management and Organization*, 12(2), 134–145.
- Sartika, Y., & Hidayat, A. (2022). The Influence of Transformational Leadership on Employee Performance in Educational Organizations. *Journal of Education and Economics*, 14(3), 233–242.
- Sulaiman, A., & Raharjo, S. (2023). Leadership Style, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Performance: An Empirical Study. *Journal of Business Administration Sciences*, 9(1), 45–56.

- Sulistiyono, S., Suswati, E., & Nasir, J. A. (2025). The Effect of Compensation and Work Discipline on Job Satisfaction and Its Impact on Employee Performance. *Indonesian Journal of Education*, 6(4), 1741-1752.
- Tatimu, N. C. P. P. A. A. (2021). The Effect of Job Satisfaction on the Performance of PT Pos Indonesia Manado Office Employees. *Productivity*, 2(2).
- Wanta, F. T., Trang, I., & Taroreh, R. (2022). The Effect of Work Discipline on Employee Performance. *EMBA Journal*, 10(2), 321-330.
- Widyandari, A. A. I. L., Parwita, G. B. S., & Rismawan, P. A. E. (2022). The Influence of Work Ability, Work Motivation and Work Discipline on Employee Performance at PT BPRS Anti Pala. *VALUES Journal*, 3(1), 79-85.
- Widyandari, N., et al. (2022). Work Discipline and Its Impact on Employee Performance. *Journal of Management Science*, 5(1), 76-89.
- Yuliana. (2022). The Influence of Leadership on Employee Performance at the Gandus Sub-district Office, Palembang City. *ALIGNMENT Journal*, 5(1).
- Yuliani, T., Ariani, M., Yusuf, T. . ., Hadiyatno, D. ., Arywibowo, I. ., & Ajeng Hardianto, A. (2023). The Influence of Leadership and Work Discipline on Performance through Job Satisfaction in Members of the Directorate of Drug Investigation of the East Kalimantan Police. *Journal of Geoeconomics*, 14(2), 187-197. <https://doi.org/10.36277/Geoekonomi.V14i2.305>
- Yukl, G. (2020). *Leadership in organizations* (9th ed.). Pearson.
- Zhang, Y., & Li, Q. (2022). Organizational Commitment and Employee Performance: The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction. *Human Resource Development International*, 25(2), 167-183.