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THE INFLUENCE OF WORK DISCIPLINE AND COMPETENCE ON JOB SATISFACTION MEDIATED BY EMPLOYE PERFORMANCE AMONG PUBLIC AND PRIVATE KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS IN BANTEN PROVINCE

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the influence of work discipline and competence on job satisfaction, with employee performance as a mediating variable, among public and private kindergarten teachers in Banten Province. Performance issues posed challenges for organizations, requiring strategies such as improving discipline, competence, and satisfaction. The hypotheses proposed that work discipline and competence positively and significantly affected job satisfaction and performance, while job satisfaction positively influenced performance. Employee performance was also expected to mediate the effects of work discipline and competence on job satisfaction. A quantitative approach was applied using Slovin's formula, involving 200 respondents from 401 ASN kindergarten teachers. Data were analyzed through path analysis. Results showed: (1) work discipline significantly affected job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.334$; $t = 3.177$); (2) competence significantly affected job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.442$; $t = 4.830$); (3) work discipline significantly affected performance ($\beta = 0.441$; $t = 3.636$); (4) competence had no significant effect on performance ($\beta = 0.086$; $t = 0.887$); (5) performance significantly affected job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.444$; $t = 4.995$). Employee performance mediated the effects of work discipline ($\beta = 0.254$; $t = 3.082$; $p < 0.05$) and competence ($\beta = 0.235$; $t = 2.717$; $p < 0.05$) on job satisfaction. These findings indicate that improving discipline and competence, supported by optimal performance, enhances job satisfaction among ASN kindergarten teachers in Banten Province.

Keywords: *Work Discipline, Competence, Employee Performance, Job Satisfaction, ASN Teachers, Early Childhood Education, Banten Province.*

INTRODUCTION

Teachers are the main pillars in shaping the quality of human resources through the educational process. The success of education greatly depends on the optimal performance of teachers, which encompasses professional abilities, adherence to work standards, and commitment to educational goals. At the kindergarten (TK) level, the role of teachers becomes even more strategic, as early childhood education serves as the foundation for building character, attitudes, and basic skills that will influence a child's development in subsequent stages.

At the national level, improving teacher performance remains a key focus of government policy, especially in basic and pre-basic education. In Banten Province, data from Dapodik (2025) records a total of 3,090 kindergarten teachers in both public and private institutions, consisting of 401 civil servant (ASN) teachers and 2,689 non-ASN teachers, spread across eight regencies/municipalities. Detailed data on TK status, accreditation, and the number of teachers are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Data on Public and Private Kindergarten Teachers in Banten Province

No	Regency/City	TK Status		Accreditation			Number of Teachers PNS	Number of Teachers Non PNS	Total Teachers
		Public	Private	A	B	C			
1	Tangerang Regency	16	63	21	32	26	58	258	316
2	South Tangerang City	6	96	16	45	41	34	304	338
3	Tangerang City	5	91	13	41	42	35	299	334
4	Pandeglang Regency	43	103	19	56	71	99	477	576
5	Lebak Regency	10	83	6	32	55	43	279	322
6	Serang Regency	15	107	21	85	96	46	392	438
7	Serang City	12	108	15	51	54	47	383	430
8	Cilegon City	8	76	14	38	32	39	297	336
Total		115	727	125	380	417	401	2689	3090

Although the number of kindergarten teachers in Banten Province is quantitatively sufficient, their performance quality remains uneven. Field observations reveal issues such as delays in starting lessons, non-compliance with work regulations, low alignment of competencies with standards, and limited motivation and loyalty to the institution.

Teacher performance is influenced by various internal factors, such as work discipline, competence, and job satisfaction. Work discipline relates to adherence to organizational rules and regulations, which impacts the effectiveness of task execution (Kalsum et al., 2018; Suryani & Irawan, 2018). Competence encompasses the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable teachers to perform their professional roles optimally (Andi & Novita, 2016). Job satisfaction reflects the extent to which individuals feel comfortable, satisfied, and motivated in their work (Badrun, 2021).

Several previous studies have shown a positive and significant relationship between work discipline, competence, job satisfaction, and employee performance (Wau et al., 2021; Abyan et al., 2021; Paparang et al., 2021). However, other findings report insignificant or inconsistent effects (Fitria et al., 2015; Yulianty et al., 2021; Fauziek & Yanuar, 2021). These discrepancies indicate the presence of a research gap that warrants further investigation.

Table 2. Research Gap on the Effect of Work Discipline on Employee Performance

Research Gap	Findings	Researchers	Research Results
Differences in opinions and findings regarding the effect of work discipline on employee performance	Significant effect	Jelaskan Wau, et al, (2021)	Work discipline has a positive effect on employee performance
		Harianto and Saputra, (2020)	Discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance
	No effect	Fitria, *et al*., (2015)	Work discipline has no effect on performance
		Nasution and Pasaribu (2020)	Work discipline has no effect on performance

In addition, aspects of career advancement and employment systems also influence teacher motivation and performance. Pramudianto et al. (2022) found a positive effect of career advancement on employee performance. However, in practice, kindergarten teachers, both public and private, often face limited welfare, minimal career development opportunities, and uncertainty regarding

employment status (Daniel, 2009; Bianca et al., 2013). This situation reinforces the urgency of research that integrates an analysis of work discipline, competence, and job satisfaction in improving teacher performance.

Based on this gap, this study has two main objectives. First, to analyze the influence of work discipline and competence on job satisfaction of ASN kindergarten teachers in Banten Province. Second, to examine the role of performance as a mediating variable in the relationship between work discipline, competence, and job satisfaction. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on public kindergarten teachers in the Banten region, which involves a comparison between public and private schools, and the use of a mediation model to understand the relationships between variables more comprehensively.

Theoretically, the results of this study are expected to enrich the human resource management literature in the early childhood education sector, particularly regarding factors influencing teacher performance and job satisfaction. Practically, the research findings can serve as a basis for local governments, school administrators, and policymakers in designing strategies to improve teacher performance thru strengthening work discipline, enhancing competence, and increasing job satisfaction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Job Satisfaction

Sutrisno (2014) states that job satisfaction is important to study as it benefits individuals, institutions, and society. At the individual level, understanding the causes of job satisfaction encourages increased happiness, while in educational institutions, it serves as a strategy to foster creativity and improve employee attitudes. Mangkunegara (2013) emphasizes that job satisfaction reflects supportive or unsupportive feelings toward one's job and personal condition, whereas Sopiah (2008) views it as an emotional response to work situations, either positive, indicating satisfaction, or negative, indicating dissatisfaction.

Work Discipline

According to Rivai and Sagala (2013), work discipline serves as a means for managers to encourage behavioral change among employees and to enhance their awareness and willingness to comply with organizational rules and social norms. Sutrisno (2011) and Hasibuan (2013) emphasize that discipline reflects an individual's willingness to adhere to prevailing regulations and provisions, while Erdiansyah (2016) views it as the obligation to follow organizational rules. Rozalia et al. (2015) assert that the higher the level of employee discipline, the more optimal their performance will be.

Competence

According to Wibowo (2016), competence refers to an individual's ability to complete tasks based on skills, experience, and work attitudes that align with job demands. Edison et al. (2016) emphasize that competence encompasses knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable individuals to perform tasks accurately and effectively. McClelland, as cited in Rivai (2013), defines competence as a fundamental characteristic within a person that is directly related to performance and can predict behavior and work outcomes. In line with this, Triastuti (2019) asserts that competence is inherent in an individual and influences work effectiveness.

Employee Performance

According to Rivai and Sagala (2013), employee performance reflects the overall condition of an institution within a specific period as a result of managing its available resources. Mangkunegara (2013) emphasizes that employee performance refers to employees' work achievements, both in quality and quantity, in accordance with their responsibilities. Similarly, Harianto and Saputra (2020) define it as the work accomplishments achieved by employees based on the tasks they have completed. Fahmi (2013) adds that employee performance also represents the achievements of an organization, whether profit-oriented or not, within a given period.

METHOD

Research methods

This study applies a quantitative approach based on the positivist paradigm to test hypotheses and examine relationships between variables (Sugiyono, 2016). A descriptive-associative design was used, combining descriptive analysis of single variables with associative analysis to explore relationships among multiple variables. Data were collected through structured instruments from purposively selected respondents and analyzed statistically to produce objective findings.

Research Location and Informants

The research was conducted in Banten Province, located at Jl. Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani No. 1, Curug, Sukajaya, Curug District, Serang City, Banten 42171. The main informants were 200 civil servant teachers (*Guru PNS*) serving in both public and private kindergartens across Banten Province. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select respondents who were considered representative and capable of providing relevant and in-depth information for the research objectives.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected using two main techniques:

1. Observation

   Direct observation was conducted on the research objects to record relevant phenomena related to the study variables. This technique allowed the researcher to obtain first-hand information about the actual conditions in the field, ensuring that the data collected reflected real situations.

2. Questionnaire

   A set of structured, written questions was distributed to respondents to capture their opinions and experiences related to the research topic. The questionnaire was designed to be clear and concise, enabling respondents to provide accurate answers that could be quantified and analyzed statistically.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to present variable characteristics in tables, numbers, and percentages, and inferential statistics with Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS 3.2.7. The PLS-SEM approach was chosen for its predictive capabilities, tolerance for non-normal data, and minimal assumptions. The analysis covered both latent variables (work discipline, competence, employee performance, and job satisfaction) and their reflective manifest indicators, following the modeling and evaluation steps outlined by Ghozali and Latan (2014). The relationships among these variables and their respective indicators are illustrated in the research model shown in Figure 1, where D (X1) = Work Discipline, K (X2) = Competence, KP (Z) = Employee Performance, and KEP (Y) = Job Satisfaction.

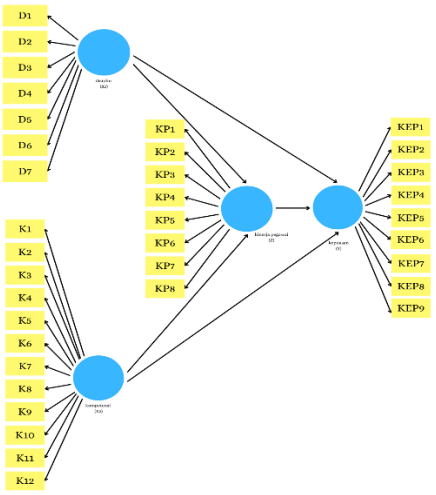

Figure 1. Research model illustrating the relationships between latent variables and their reflective indicators

Validity and Reliability of Data

To ensure the quality of the research instrument, validity and reliability testing was conducted directly using SmartPLS 3.2.7 within the SEM-PLS framework. As the model was reflective, the

outer model evaluation was applied to assess how well each group of indicators represented their respective latent variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive analysis of the research variables shows that for the variable Work Discipline, the indicator with the highest value is behavior in the workplace (95.0), reflecting high professionalism and task orientation. The lowest value is found in the indicator of how to relate to other institutions (75.0), which is due to a clear division of tasks, making external interaction not always necessary. For the Competency variable, the highest score was found in openness to results (167.4), indicating work transparency, while the lowest score was in job characteristics (159.8), although still in the good category. For the Employe Performance variable, the highest score was found in the indicator of independence in work (168.6), while the lowest score was in compliance with laws and regulations (163.0). Meanwhile, the Job Satisfaction variable received the highest score in the health insurance indicator (168.0) and the lowest in attitude toward work (161.4).

Evaluation of the Measurement Model (Outer Model)

Convergent validity testing was conducted to determine the extent to which the indicators in this study are able to reflect the constructs being measured. The results in Table 3 show that all indicators have a loading factor value above 0.70, thus meeting the criteria for convergent validity.

Table 3. Results of the Outer Loading Model of Research Indicators on Variables

	Competence (X2)	Job Satisfaction (Y)	Employe Performance (Z)	Work Discipline (X1)
K1	0.921			
K2	0.932			
K3	0.921			
K4	0.976			
K5	0.953			
K6	0.846			
K7	0.906			
K8	0.906			
K9	0.959			
K10	0.933			
K11	0.927			
K12	0.902			
KEP1		0.856		
KEP2		0.899		
KEP3		0.778		
KEP4		0.808		
KEP5		0.766		
KEP6		0.837		
KEP7		0.910		
KEP8		0.867		
KP1			0.961	

KP2			0.930	
KP3			0.895	
KP4			0.928	
KP5			0.951	
KP6			0.866	
KP7			0.815	
KP8			0.917	
D1				0.900
D2				0.934
D3				0.910
D4				0.965
D5				0.967
D6				0.942
D7				0.959

Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs are above 0.50, as shown in Table 4, which means that more than half of the variance in the indicators can be explained by the latent constructs (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 4. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Work Discipline (X1)	0,869
Competence (X2)	0,844
Employe Performance (Z)	0,789
Job Satisfaction (Y)	0,737

Discriminant validity tests were also conducted to ensure that each construct has clear differences compared to other constructs. Based on the results in Table 5, the square root of the AVE (shown on the diagonal) is higher than the correlations between constructs, thus meeting the Fornell–Larcker criterion.

Table 5. Results of Discriminant Validity Analysis

	Competence (X2)	Job Satisfaction (Y)	Employe Performance (Z)	Work Discipline (X1)
K1	0.839	0.112	0.016	0.107
K2	0.823	0.026	0.043	0.001
K3	0.895	0.068	0.146	0.023
K4	0.883	0.085	0.034	0.013
K5	0.812	0.143	0.108	0.045
K6	0.867	0.294	0.228	0.090
K7	0.836	0.295	0.110	0.003
K8	0.852	0.075	0.003	0.017
K9	0.821	0.038	0.017	0.021
K10	0.844	0.038	0.021	0.003
K11	0.871	0.045	0.094	0.017
K12	0.831	0.025	0.042	0.021
KEP1	0.323	0.808	0.253	0.094
KEP2	0.260	0.801	0.003	0.042

KEP3	0.038	0.884	0.017	0.017
KEP4	0.045	0.772	0.021	0.021
KEP5	0.025	0.822	0.094	0.094
KEP6	0.094	0.833	0.042	0.042
KEP7	0.036	0.805	0.017	0.061
KEP8	0.174	0.897	0.027	0.047
KP1	0.235	0.194	0.818	0.050
KP2	0.199	0.227	0.899	0.139
KP3	0.127	0.114	0.891	0.014
KP4	0.061	0.158	0.884	0.003
KP5	0.042	0.003	0.809	0.017
KP6	0.038	0.017	0.811	0.021
KP7	0.045	0.021	0.841	0.094
KP8	0.025	0.094	0.878	0.042
D1	0.023	0.042	0.128	0.834
D2	0.042	0.018	0.099	0.882
D3	0.003	0.050	0.021	0.853
D4	0.017	0.054	0.050	0.897
D5	0.021	0.091	0.030	0.811
D6	0.094	0.042	0.069	0.818
D7	0.042	0.040	0.103	0.871

From the reliability test results, the Composite Reliability for all constructs has a value above 0.70 (see Table 6), indicating that the internal consistency of the research instrument is excellent.

Table 6. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability Values

Construct Reliability and Validity	
Variabel	Composite Reliability
Work Discipline(X1)	0,877
Competence (X2)	0,913
Employee Performance (Z)	0,875
Job Satisfaction (Y)	0,878

Additionally, the Cronbach's Alpha value for all variables also exceeded 0.70 (see Table 7), which strengthens the evidence that this research instrument is reliable and suitable for hypothesis testing (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Table 7. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability Values

Construct Reliability and Validity	
Variabel	Crombach’s alpha
Work Discipline (X1)	0,816
Competence (X2)	0,870
Employee Performance (Z)	0,842
Job Satisfaction (Y)	0,801

Thus, all research indicators and variables have met the criteria for convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability, so the measurement model (outer model) is declared suitable for use in the next analysis stage.

Evaluation of the Structural Model (Inner Model)

The R-squared value indicates that Job Satisfaction can be explained by Work Discipline, Competence, and Employe Performance by 52.3%, while Employe Performance is explained by Work Discipline and Competence by 51.4%. The Q-squared values for Job Satisfaction (0.923) and Employe Performance (0.395) indicate high predictive relevance. The Goodness of Fit (GoF) value of 0.420 falls into the large category (>0.36), indicating that the model is suitable for use.

Hypothesis Testing

The results of the path analysis indicate the following:

1. Work Discipline → Job Satisfaction

   Has a significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.334$; $t = 3.177$; $p < 0.05$). This finding supports Mangkunegara's (2013) theory that high discipline creates job satisfaction because tasks can be completed on time and according to target. These results are consistent with the research of Harianto and Saputra (2020) and Nurhikmah et al. (2025), who found a significant positive relationship between Work Discipline and Job Satisfaction.
2. Competence → Job Satisfaction

   Has a significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.442$; $t = 4.830$; $p < 0.05$). This finding supports the concept of Abyan et al. (2021) that Competence, which includes knowledge, skills, and work attitudes, plays a role in creating Job Satisfaction. The research by Junizar et al. (2025) also supports this finding.
3. Work Discipline → Employee Performance

   Has a significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.441$; $t = 3.636$; $p < 0.05$). This indicates that discipline is the foundation for improved performance, consistent with Robbins (2007) who emphasizes that work effectiveness and efficiency are highly dependent on disciplined behavior.
4. Competence → Employee Performance

   Has no significant effect ($\beta = 0.086$; $t = 0.887$; $p > 0.05$). Nevertheless, the positive direction of the relationship indicates the potential for consistently developed competence to improve future performance. As stated by Yulianty et al. (2021), competence requires synergy with other factors such as motivation and leadership.
5. Employee Performance → Job Satisfaction

   Has a significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.444$; $t = 4.995$; $p < 0.05$). This finding confirms that optimal performance drives job satisfaction, as explained by Luthans (2006), that achieving good work results increases employee satisfaction.

The Influence of Employe Performance Mediation

Indirect effect analysis shows that Employe Performance partially mediates the influence of Work Discipline on Job Satisfaction (VAF = 43.20%) and Competence on Job Satisfaction (VAF = 34.71%). This means that increasing Work Discipline and Competence will have a greater impact on Job Satisfaction if accompanied by an increase in Employe Performance. This finding supports the opinions of Amanda (2016) and Ardansyah & Wasilawati (2014) that good discipline and adequate competence will be more effective if integrated thru improved performance.

Overall, the results of this study provide empirical evidence that job satisfaction among public and private kindergarten teachers in Banten Province is directly influenced by work discipline and competence, and indirectly thru employe performance. Improving the quality of human resources thru discipline training, strengthening competence, and optimizing performance is an important strategy for creating a productive and satisfying work environment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that: (1) Work discipline has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction (H1 accepted); (2) Competence has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction (H2 accepted); (3) Work discipline has a significant positive effect on employee performance (H3 accepted); (4) Competence has no significant effect on employee performance (H4 rejected); (5) Employee performance has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction (H5 accepted); (6) Employee performance mediates the effects of work discipline and competence on job satisfaction.

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