

ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECT OF SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND WORK DISCIPLINE ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE WITH JOB SATISFACTION AS A MEDIATION VARIABLE

Yayu Humairoh¹, Moh.Sutoro², Basrowi³

^{1,2,3}Magister Management, Universitas Bina Bangsa, Indonesia

E-mail: m.sutoro@binabangsa.ac.id¹

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Abstract

Civil Servant Performance at the Population and Civil Registration Office of Serang Regency is an important aspect in supporting the effectiveness of public services. Improving the quality of service, discipline, and employee job satisfaction requires leadership support that is able to adapt to organizational conditions and needs. This study aims to analyze the influence of situational leadership and work discipline on employee performance, both directly and through job satisfaction as a mediating variable. The method used is a quantitative approach with an associative research type. The population and sample in this study amounted to 91 Civil Servants at the Population and Civil Registration Office of Serang Regency with a saturated sampling technique. Data collection was carried out through a questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. Data analysis was carried out using the Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) method with the help of the SmartPLS 4.0 application. The results of the study indicate that situational leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance and job satisfaction. Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction, but does not significantly affect employee performance. Job satisfaction does not significantly affect employee performance and is unable to mediate the relationship between situational leadership and work discipline on employee performance. These findings indicate that improvements in employee performance are predominantly influenced by the implementation of effective situational leadership.

Keywords: Situational Leadership, Work Discipline, Job Satisfaction, Employee Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Management is a systematic process of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling all organizational resources so that predetermined goals can be achieved effectively and efficiently. In public sector organizations, management is not only oriented towards achieving organizational targets, but also directed towards producing quality public services that are transparent, accountable, and responsive to community needs. The success of government organizations is largely determined by the management's ability to manage human resources as strategic assets that play a direct role in the provision of public services. Therefore, human resource management is a crucial aspect in realizing bureaucratic reform and improving the quality of governance (Habsy et al., 2024; Aprelyani, 2024).

One of the main indicators of successful human resource management is employee performance. Employee performance is the work results achieved by individuals in accordance with the tasks, responsibilities, and work standards established by the organization. In government organizations, employee performance serves as a benchmark for the success of public service delivery because it is directly related to the effectiveness of service to the public. Various studies show that improving employee performance is influenced by various internal and external organizational factors, including leadership, work discipline, motivation, work environment, and job satisfaction (Afriyani et al., 2023; Sanasa et al., 2024).

The Population and Civil Registration Office of Serang Regency is a regional government agency with a strategic role in providing population administration services to the public, such as issuing electronic Identity Cards (KTP), Family Cards (Kartu Keluarga), Birth Certificates, Death Certificates, and various other population documents. The high public demand for fast, precise, and accurate services requires Civil Servants at this agency to perform optimally. However, preliminary observations still reveal variations in employee performance, particularly in aspects of service quality, attendance discipline, and punctuality. This situation indicates that there are still factors

that need to be optimized to improve the quality of public services. One factor suspected of influencing employee performance is situational leadership. Situational leadership is a leadership style that adapts leader behavior to the level of readiness, abilities, and characteristics of subordinates, thereby increasing the effectiveness of task implementation. In addition to leadership, work discipline is also an important factor because it reflects employee compliance with regulations, working hours, and responsibilities in carrying out tasks. On the other hand, job satisfaction acts as a psychological condition that encourages employees to work optimally, thus potentially acting as a mediating variable between situational leadership, work discipline, and employee performance. Previous research has shown that situational leadership and work discipline have a positive effect on employee performance, while job satisfaction can strengthen this relationship (Rosidah & Husainah, 2025; Yuyun *et al.*, 2024).

Based on the survey A survey conducted on Civil Servants at the Serang Regency Population and Civil Registration Office found that most indicators of situational leadership, work discipline, job satisfaction, and employee performance were still in the adequate category. Leaders were deemed unable to fully adapt their leadership style to employee conditions, attendance discipline levels were inconsistent, and employee satisfaction with rewards and the work environment was still suboptimal. Furthermore, performance assessment data from 2023–2025 showed that service quality and attendance discipline indicators were still below organizational targets.

This phenomenon indicates a gap between organizational expectations in realizing excellent public services and empirical conditions in the field. Problems that are still found include delays in service completion, suboptimal communication between leaders and subordinates, low consistency of work discipline, and suboptimal employee job satisfaction. If these conditions are not immediately addressed, they have the potential to reduce employee productivity and the quality of population administration services to the public. Therefore, research on the influence of situational leadership and work discipline on employee performance with job satisfaction as a mediating variable is important to be conducted on Civil Servants at the Population and Civil Registration Service of Serang Regency. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of public sector human resource management science as well as provide practical input for agencies in improving the quality of public services.

Various studies have shown that situational leadership, work discipline, and job satisfaction are important determinants in improving employee performance. Afriyani *et al.* (2023) concluded that work discipline and work motivation have a positive effect on improving employee performance. Furthermore, Angelina and Supriadi (2023) found that job satisfaction, work motivation, and work discipline simultaneously improve employee performance. Research by Sanasa *et al.* (2024) also showed that innovative leadership and work discipline have a significant influence on employee performance. Similar results were presented by Rosidah and Husainah (2025), who proved that job satisfaction can mediate the influence of discipline and the work environment on employee performance. Furthermore, Sari *et al.* (2025) emphasized that leadership and work discipline influence employee performance through job satisfaction as a mediating variable, further strengthening the importance of integrating these three variables in efforts to improve employee performance in public sector organizations.

Various studies have shown that the relationship between situational leadership, work discipline, job satisfaction, and employee performance has been extensively studied. However, most studies either test the direct relationship between variables or use only one independent variable without integrating all variables into a single research model. Furthermore, the research subjects are generally conducted in the private sector, hospitals, or government agencies in other regions, so the results do not fully reflect the conditions of Civil Servants at the Serang Regency Population and Civil Registration Office, which has different characteristics of population administration services.

Novelty (novelty) This research is based on the development of a model that integrates situational leadership and work discipline as independent variables, employee performance as the dependent variable, and job satisfaction as a mediating variable in a comprehensive analytical framework. This research was also conducted on Civil Servants of the Population and Civil Registration Service of Serang Regency, which has the characteristics of a public service organization with high demands for quality population administration services. The results of this research are expected to enrich the study of public sector human resource management while providing practical recommendations for improving the quality of local government services.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Situational Leadership

Situational leadership is a leadership theory that emphasizes that a leader's effectiveness is determined by their ability to adapt their leadership style to the readiness, ability, and commitment of their subordinates. Leaders who combine directive and supportive behaviors according to employee conditions will increase organizational

effectiveness. In public sector organizations, the application of situational leadership has been shown to increase employee motivation, job satisfaction, and performance because leaders are more adaptable to changes in the work environment (Saputra & Subroto, 2023; Sofyan & Syaiful, 2024).

Work Discipline

Work discipline is the attitude and behavior of employees in complying with all regulations, procedures, and work standards established by the organization. High discipline reflects employee responsibility for carrying out their duties, thereby increasing productivity and service quality. In government organizations, work discipline is one indicator of the success of bureaucratic reform because it is related to punctuality, compliance with regulations, and effective work completion. Research shows that work discipline has a positive effect on improving employee performance (Basirun et al., 2022; Christanty et al., 2025).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is an emotional state that reflects an employee's level of satisfaction with their work, as a result of evaluating various aspects of the job, such as rewards, the work environment, relationships with superiors, and career development opportunities. Employees with high levels of job satisfaction tend to demonstrate greater motivation, loyalty, and commitment to the organization. Therefore, job satisfaction is often positioned as a mediating variable that strengthens the relationship between organizational factors and employee performance (Maulidiya, 2025; Nuzulia & Saputra, 2022).

Employee Performance

Employee performance is the work results achieved by individuals based on quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, and responsibility in carrying out tasks according to organizational targets. In public sector organizations, employee performance is a measure of the success of public service and the achievement of organizational goals. Performance is influenced by various factors, both individual and organizational, such as leadership, work discipline, competence, motivation, and job satisfaction. Integrated management of these factors will result in sustainable performance improvements (Silaningsih et al., 2025; Putri et al., 2026).

Thinking Framework

The Influence of Situational Leadership on Employee Performance

Situational leadership applied according to the employee's level of ability and readiness can increase the effectiveness of task implementation, clarify the division of labor, and encourage good communication between leaders and subordinates. Adaptive leaders can increase employee motivation, trust, and responsibility, thus impacting performance. Research by Saputra and Subroto (2023) and Jazilah et al. (2025) demonstrates that situational leadership has a positive and significant impact on employee performance.

H₁: Situational Leadership is Suspected to Have a Positive and Significant Influence on Employee Performance

The Influence of Work Discipline on Employee Performance

Work discipline reflects employee compliance with rules, operational standards, and responsibility in completing work. Employees with high levels of discipline tend to work more effectively and productively, and are able to optimally achieve organizational targets. Discipline also creates an orderly work culture, thereby improving service quality. Research by Basirun et al. (2022) and Christanty et al. (2025) shows that work discipline has a positive and significant impact on improving employee performance in both public and private sector organizations.

H₂: It is suspected that work discipline has a positive and significant impact on employee performance.

The Influence of Situational Leadership on Job Satisfaction

Situational leadership, which adapts its leadership style to the needs of employees, will create harmonious working relationships and increase job satisfaction. Leaders who provide direction, support, and recognition tailored to their subordinates' needs will increase their sense of appreciation, leading to higher employee job satisfaction. Research Yantony et al. (2024) And Sitanggang et al. (2025) proves that situational leadership has a positive and significant influence on employee job satisfaction.

H₃: It is suspected that situational leadership has a positive and significant influence on job satisfaction.

The Influence of Work Discipline on Job Satisfaction

Good work discipline can create an orderly, comfortable, and conducive work environment, making it easier for employees to carry out their jobs. Compliance with regulations and a clear division of tasks will reduce conflict and increase workplace comfort. These conditions encourage increased employee job satisfaction with the organization. Research by Rosidah and Husainah (2025) and Maulidiya (2025) shows that work discipline has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction.

H₄: It is suspected that work discipline has a positive and significant influence on job satisfaction.

The Influence of Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance

Job satisfaction reflects an employee's positive feelings about their work, work environment, rewards, and relationship with the organization. Satisfied employees demonstrate higher motivation, loyalty, commitment, and work enthusiasm, thereby increasing productivity and service quality. The higher the level of job satisfaction, the higher the resulting performance. Research by Angelina and Supriadi (2023) and Maulidiya (2025) proved that job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

H₅: It is suspected that job satisfaction has a positive and significant influence on performance. Officer

The Influence of Job Satisfaction in Mediating Situational Leadership on Employee Performance

Appropriately applied situational leadership can increase job satisfaction by providing direction, support, communication, and recognition to employees. Increased job satisfaction encourages employees to be more productive, responsible, and highly committed to the organization, thus optimizing performance. Thus, job satisfaction acts as a mechanism that strengthens the influence of situational leadership on employee performance. Research by Yuyun et al. (2024) and Sari et al. (2025) supports this mediation relationship.

H₆: It is suspected that job satisfaction has a positive and significant influence in mediating situational leadership on employee performance.

The Influence of Job Satisfaction in Mediating Work Discipline on Employee Performance

High work discipline will create an orderly, organized, and comfortable work environment, thereby increasing employee job satisfaction. Employees who are satisfied with their working conditions will have higher motivation and loyalty in carrying out their duties, which will impact performance improvement. Therefore, job satisfaction can be a mediating variable that strengthens the influence of work discipline on employee performance. The results of research by Rosidah and Husainah (2025) and Purwadi et al. (2025) show that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between work discipline and employee performance.

H₇: It is suspected that job satisfaction has a positive and significant influence in mediating work discipline on employee performance.

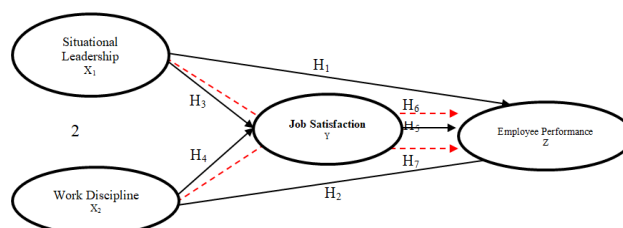


Figure 1. Thinking framework

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach to analyze the relationship between situational leadership, work discipline, job satisfaction, and employee performance. This approach was chosen because it can objectively measure the relationships between variables through statistical analysis and hypothesis testing based on numerical data (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Sugiyono, 2024).

Types of research

The type of research used is quantitative research with an explanatory research approach. Explanatory research aims to explain the causal relationship between independent variables, mediating variables, and dependent variables through testing formulated hypotheses. The independent variables in this study consist of situational leadership (X₁) and work discipline (X₂), the mediating variable is job satisfaction (Z), and the dependent variable is employee performance (Y).

Location and Time of Research

The research was conducted at the Population and Civil Registration Office of Serang Regency. The location was chosen because the agency is a public service organization with a strategic role in population administration, requiring effective human resource management. The research took place from November to December 2025, encompassing the development of research instruments, questionnaire distribution, data collection, data processing, analysis of research results, and the preparation of the research report.

Population and Sample

The population comprised all civil servants working at the Population and Civil Registration Service of Serang Regency. Due to the relatively limited population, this study employed a saturated sampling technique (census), where all members of the population were selected as respondents. This saturated sampling technique is considered capable of providing a more comprehensive picture of the organization's condition because the entire population is used as the research object (Sugiyono, 2024).

Data Collection Techniques

The research data consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through a questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Direct observation and documentation were also conducted to support the quantitative data. Secondary data were obtained from organizational documents, performance reports, regulations, and various scientific literature relevant to the research.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted using the Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach with the help of SmartPLS version 4 software. The analysis began with outer model testing which includes convergent validity, discriminant validity, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability, and Cronbach's Alpha. Next, inner model testing was carried out through R-square, f-square, Q-square, Goodness of Fit values, as well as hypothesis testing using path coefficient values, t-statistics, p-values, and testing the mediation effect through indirect effect analysis. The SEM-PLS method was chosen because it is able to analyze direct and indirect relationships between variables simultaneously and is suitable for use in research models involving mediating variables (Hair et al., 2024).

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research result

Data analysis was conducted using the Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method with the assistance of SmartPLS 4.0. The analysis stages include respondent characteristics, evaluation of the outer and inner models, and testing of validity, reliability, path coefficients, predictive ability, and relationships between variables based on the research hypothesis.

Respondent Characteristics

Respondent characteristics describe the profile of 91 employees of the Population and Civil Registration Service of Serang Regency based on gender, age, education, and length of service as sources of research data.

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Table 1. Respondent characteristics

Characteristics	Category	Amount	Percentage
Gender	Woman	22	24,18%
	Man	69	75,82%
Age	< 30 Years	12	13,19%
	30–40 Years	35	38,46%
	41–50 Years	33	36,26%
	>50 Years	11	12,09%
Education	SMA	18	19,78%
	Diploma	2	2,20%
	S1	66	72,53%
	S2	5	5,49%
Working Hours	<5 Years	12	13,19%
	5–10 Years	15	16,48%
	11–20 Years	33	36,26%
	>20 Years	31	34,07%
Total		91	100%

Source: Processed Primary Data (2026)

The majority of respondents were male (69 people) (75.82%), aged 30–40 years (38.46%), and had a bachelor's degree (72.53%). Based on length of service, most respondents had 11–20 years of experience (36.26%). These characteristics indicate that respondents have adequate experience and competence in providing perceptions of the research variables.

Outer Model Evaluation

Evaluation outer model conducted to determine the level of validity and reliability of the instruments used to measure the research constructs. Testing includes convergent validity, discriminant validity, And reliability test. The constructs used consist of Situational Leadership, Work Discipline, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Performance.

Convergent Validity Test (Convergent Validity)

Convergent validity testing is carried out through the value outer loading and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). An indicator is declared valid if it has a value outer loading greater than 0.70 and the AVE value is greater than 0.50.

Table 2. Loading Factor Test Results for All Variables

Variables	Indicator	Outer Loading	Information
Situational Leadership	KS1–KS8	0,740–0,972	Valid
Work Discipline	DK1–DK5	0,713–0,890	Valid
Job Satisfaction	KK1–KK5	0,793–0,961	Valid
Employee Performance	KP1–KP7	0,795–0,966	Valid

Source: SmartPLS 4.0 output (2026)

The test results show that all indicators have outer loading values above 0.70, thus meeting the convergent validity criteria. The highest indicators are found in KS2 (0.972), DK1 (0.890), KK3 (0.961), and KP1 (0.966). This indicates that all indicators are able to represent the constructs of Situational Leadership, Work Discipline, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Performance well.

Table 3. Hasil Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variables	AVE	$\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$
Situational Leadership	0,839	0,916
Work Discipline	0,713	0,844
Job Satisfaction	0,774	0,880
Employee Performance	0,822	0,907

Source: SmartPLS 4.0 output (2026)

The AVE test results in the table above show that all constructs have AVE values above 0.50. The highest AVE value was obtained by the Situational Leadership variable at 0.839, while the lowest value was found in the

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Work Discipline variable at 0.713. This indicates that each construct is able to explain more than 50% of the variation in its constituent indicators. Thus, all variables have met the requirements for convergent validity and can be used in structural model analysis.

Discriminant Validity

Testing discriminant validity done using values cross loading. An indicator is declared to meet discriminant validity if the indicator's loading value for its own construct is higher than the loading value for other constructs.

Table 4. Cross Loading Results

Construct	Highest Loading Value Range	Information
Situational Leadership	0,787–0,972	Valid
Work Discipline	0,713–0,890	Valid
Job Satisfaction	0,793–0,961	Valid
Employee Performance	0,795–0,966	Valid

Source: SmartPLS 4.0 output (2026)

Based on the table above, the test results cross loadings shows that each indicator has the highest correlation value with the construct it measures compared to other constructs. This indicates that the indicators are able to clearly differentiate each variable. Thus, all research constructs meet the criteria for discriminant validity, thus declaring the measurement model good.

Reliability Test

Table 5. Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha Results

Variables	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Information
Situational Leadership	0,975	0,972	Reliable
Work Discipline	0,914	0,898	Reliable
Job Satisfaction	0,942	0,926	Reliable
Employee Performance	0,967	0,963	Reliable

Source: SmartPLS 4.0 output (2026)

Based on the table above, all variables obtained Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70. Situational Leadership had the highest reliability value with a Composite Reliability of 0.975, while Work Discipline obtained the lowest value but still met reliability standards. These results indicate that all indicators have excellent internal consistency in measuring their respective constructs.

Inner Model Evaluation

Evaluation inner model conducted to determine the relationship between latent variables in the research model. Testing is carried out using the path coefficient value (path coefficient), significance value, and the model's ability to explain endogenous variables.

Table 6. Path Coefficient Results

Relationship between variables	Path Coefficient	T Statistics	P Values	Information
Situational Leadership → Employee Performance	0,867	8,717	0,000	Significant
Work Discipline → Employee Performance	0,088	0,975	0,330	Not Significant
Situational Leadership → Job Satisfaction	0,496	4,348	0,000	Significant
Work Discipline → Job Satisfaction	0,478	4,384	0,000	Significant
Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0,031	0,276	0,783	Not Significant

Source: SmartPLS 4.0 output (2026)

The table above shows that Situational Leadership has the most dominant influence on Employee Performance, with a coefficient value of 0.867 and a significance level of 0.000. Furthermore, Situational Leadership and Work Discipline also significantly influence Job Satisfaction. However, Work Discipline and Job Satisfaction do not significantly influence Employee Performance. These results form the basis for hypothesis testing and discussing the relationships between variables in the research model.

Evaluation of Model Prediction Ability (Predictive Relevance)

Evaluation of the model's predictive ability is carried out through the value R-Square (R^2) And Q-Square (Q^2). The R-square value is used to determine the extent to which exogenous variables explain endogenous variables,

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while the Q-square value is used to assess the model's predictive ability based on observed data. The higher the R^2 and Q^2 values, the better the model's ability to explain the relationships between variables.

Table 7. R-Square (R^2) Value Results

Endogenous Variables	R-Square	Category
Job Satisfaction	0,909	Strong (Substantial)
Employee Performance	0,956	Strong (Substantial)

Source: SmartPLS 4.0 output (2026)

The R-square value indicates that Situational Leadership and Work Discipline can explain 90.9% of Job Satisfaction. Meanwhile, Situational Leadership, Work Discipline, and Job Satisfaction explain 95.6% of Employee Performance. These results indicate that the model has very strong predictive and explanatory capabilities for the analyzed variables.

Table 8. Predictive Relevance (Q^2) Calculation Results

Endogenous Variables	R-Square	(1- R^2)
Job Satisfaction	0,909	0,091
Employee Performance	0,956	0,044
Multiplication (1- R^2_1)(1- R^2_2)		0,004
Q^2 value		0,996

Source: SmartPLS 4.0 output (2026)

The test results showed a Q-Square value of 0.996, indicating the model has excellent predictive ability. This value indicates that 99.6% of the variation in Job Satisfaction and Employee Performance can be explained by the model. Thus, the structural model has very high predictive relevance and is suitable for use in analyzing relationships between variables.

Effect Size (f^2)

Testing Effect Size (f^2) used to determine the magnitude of the contribution of each exogenous variable to the endogenous variable in the structural model. The f^2 value indicates the strength of the influence of one construct on another construct.

Table 9. Hasil Effect Size (f^2)

Relationship between variables	f^2	Category
Situational Leadership → Employee Performance	1,943	Big (Large Effect)
Work Discipline → Employee Performance	0,021	Small (Small Effect)
Situational Leadership → Job Satisfaction	0,444	Big (Large Effect)
Work Discipline → Job Satisfaction	0,412	Big (Large Effect)
Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0,002	Small (Small Effect)

Source: SmartPLS 4.0 output (2026)

The test results show that Situational Leadership has the greatest influence on Employee Performance with an f^2 value of 1.943. Situational Leadership also has a strong influence on Job Satisfaction, as does Work Discipline on Job Satisfaction. Meanwhile, the influence of Work Discipline and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance is relatively small in the research model.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is carried out using the method bootstrapping on SmartPLS 4.0 by looking at the value path coefficient, t-statistic, And p-value. The hypothesis is accepted when the value t-statistic greater than 1.96 and the value p-value less than 0.05.

Table 10. Results of Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship between variables	Path Coefficient	T Statistics	P Values	Results
H1	Situational Leadership → Employee Performance	0,867	8,717	0,000	Accepted
H2	Work Discipline → Employee Performance	0,088	0,975	0,330	Rejected
H3	Situational Leadership → Job Satisfaction	0,496	4,348	0,000	Accepted
H4	Work Discipline → Job Satisfaction	0,478	4,384	0,000	Accepted
H5	Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0,031	0,276	0,783	Rejected

Source: SmartPLS 4.0 output (2026)

Based on the table above, it is known that there are three accepted hypotheses and two rejected hypotheses. Situational Leadership is proven to have a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance and Job Satisfaction. Work Discipline is also proven to have a positive and significant influence on Job Satisfaction. However, Work Discipline is not proven to have a significant influence on Employee Performance, nor does Job Satisfaction have a significant influence on Employee Performance.

Table 11. Results of Indirect Effect Hypothesis Testing

Mediation Relationship	Path Coefficient	T Statistics	P Values	Results
Situational Leadership → Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0,015	0,266	0,790	Not Significant
Work Discipline → Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0,015	0,268	0,789	Not Significant

Source: SmartPLS 4.0 output (2026)

The results of the indirect influence test in Table 4.21 indicate that Job Satisfaction is unable to mediate the relationship between Situational Leadership and Work Discipline on Employee Performance. This is evident from the value of t -statistic which is below 1.96 and the value of p -value which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the increase in Employee Performance at the Population and Civil Registration Service of Serang Regency is more influenced by the direct influence of Situational Leadership than through the mechanism of Job Satisfaction as a mediating variable.

Discussion

The discussion of the results of this study aims to explain the relationships between variables based on the results of structural model testing using SmartPLS 4.0. Interpretation is carried out by comparing empirical findings regarding Situational Leadership, Work Discipline, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Performance with relevant theories and previous research results.

1. The Influence of Situational Leadership on Employee Performance

The test results show that Situational Leadership has a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance with a value of path coefficient of 0.867, t -statistic amounting to 8,717, and p -value of 0.000. These results indicate that the more effective a leader's ability to adapt their leadership style to the conditions and needs of employees, the higher the resulting performance level. Situational leadership allows leaders to provide direction, support, and delegation according to the level of employee ability and readiness, allowing work to be performed more optimally.

These findings reinforce Hersey and Blanchard's theory, which explains that leader effectiveness is determined by the ability to adapt leadership behavior to the characteristics of subordinates. These results also align with previous research conducted by Pratama and Nugroho (2023), which found that adaptive leadership positively impacts employee performance by improving motivation, communication, and work coordination. Therefore, the application of situational leadership at the Serang Regency Population and Civil Registration Office is a crucial factor in improving employee work effectiveness.

2. The Influence of Work Discipline on Employee Performance

Based on the results of the hypothesis testing, it is known that Work Discipline does not have a significant effect on Employee Performance with a value of path coefficient of 0.088, t -statistic of 0.975, and p -value of 0.330. These results indicate that employee discipline levels have not directly influenced performance improvement.

This may be because most employees already have relatively good levels of discipline, so differences in discipline between employees are not a major factor in determining performance achievement.

These results contradict Mangkunegara's (2021) opinion, which explains that work discipline is a factor supporting employee performance. However, these findings support research by Rahmawati and Hidayat (2024), which found that work discipline does not always impact performance if an organization has a clear work system, service standards, and effective supervision. In the context of government organizations, employee performance is influenced not only by discipline but also by leadership, competence, and adaptability to the job.

3. The Influence of Situational Leadership on Job Satisfaction

The results of the analysis show that Situational Leadership has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction with a value of path coefficient of 0.496, t-statistic amounting to 4,348, and p-value of 0.000. This finding indicates that a leader's ability to understand employee conditions and implement an appropriate leadership approach can increase job satisfaction. Employees will feel more valued if they receive appropriate direction, support, and attention from their leaders.

These results align with research by Sari and Kurniawan (2022), which states that a flexible leadership style can increase job satisfaction by creating harmonious working relationships between leaders and subordinates. Furthermore, situational leadership theory explains that leaders who adapt their leadership style to employee needs can create a comfortable work environment. Therefore, situational leadership is a crucial factor in building employee job satisfaction in public organizations.

4. The Influence of Work Discipline on Job Satisfaction

The test results show that Work Discipline has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction with a value of path coefficient of 0.478, t-statistic amounting to 4,384, and p-value of 0.000. These results indicate that the better an employee's work discipline, the higher their perceived job satisfaction. Discipline creates order in the workplace through adherence to rules, punctuality, and responsibility for assigned tasks.

These findings support research conducted by Putri et al. (2023), which states that work discipline contributes to increased job satisfaction because it creates an orderly and stable work environment. Furthermore, Robbins and Judge (2022) explain that working conditions with clear rules can increase employees' positive perceptions of the organization. Thus, work discipline is not only an instrument for controlling employee behavior but also a factor in fostering a comfortable work environment.

5. The Influence of Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance

The results of the study show that Job Satisfaction does not have a significant effect on Employee Performance with a value of path coefficient of 0.031, t-statistic of 0.276, and p-value of 0.783. These results indicate that employee satisfaction levels have not directly improved performance. This indicates that employees who are satisfied with their jobs do not necessarily produce higher performance without the support of other factors.

This finding contrasts with several organizational behavior concepts that explain job satisfaction as increasing employee productivity. However, this finding aligns with research by Wulandari and Prasetyo (2024), who found that job satisfaction is not always the primary factor in improving performance, particularly in government organizations with established work procedures and service standards. In the context of this research, employee performance is more influenced by situational leadership factors than by job satisfaction.

6. The Role of Job Satisfaction in Mediating the Effect of Situational Leadership on Employee Performance

The results of the indirect effect test indicate that Job Satisfaction is unable to mediate the relationship between Situational Leadership and Employee Performance. This is evident from the path coefficient value of 0.015, t-statistic of 0.266, and p-value of 0.790. These results indicate that the influence of leadership on performance occurs more directly without going through a mechanism to increase job satisfaction.

This finding differs from previous research by Lestari and Saputra (2023), which stated that job satisfaction can be a mediating variable between leadership and employee performance. However, this study's results indicate that in government organizations, leaders play a direct role in directing work, coordinating, and ensuring the achievement of service targets. Therefore, improved employee performance is more influenced by leadership effectiveness than by job satisfaction as an intermediary variable.

7. The Role of Job Satisfaction in Mediating the Effect of Work Discipline on Employee Performance

The test results show that Job Satisfaction is not able to mediate the influence of Work Discipline on Employee Performance with a coefficient value of 0.015, t-statistic of 0.268, and p-value of 0.789. This indicates that although work discipline can increase job satisfaction, this increase has not been directly translated into improved employee performance.

These results align with previous research by Handayani and Maulana (2025), which stated that the relationship between work discipline and performance can be influenced by other factors such as leadership, motivation, and competence. In public organizations, discipline serves more as a basis for compliance with work regulations, while improving performance requires other, more complex supporting factors. Therefore, efforts to improve employee performance at the Serang Regency Population and Civil Registration Office need to be directed more toward strengthening leadership, developing competence, and improving the effectiveness of work systems.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results analyzed using the method Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS), it can be concluded that situational leadership is the factor that has the most dominant role in improving employee performance. This is proven by the positive and significant influence of situational leadership on employee performance with a path coefficient value of 0.867, t-statistics of 8.717, and P values of 0.000.

Work discipline has a positive influence on employee performance, but does not show a significant influence because the path coefficient value is 0.088, t-statistics 0.975, and P Values 0.330. In contrast to performance, work discipline is proven to have a positive and significant influence on job satisfaction with a path coefficient value of 0.478, t-statistics 4.384, and P Values 0.000. In addition, situational leadership is also proven to be able to increase employee job satisfaction with a path coefficient value of 0.496, t-statistics 4.348, and P Values 0.000.

Other results show that job satisfaction does not significantly influence employee performance with a path coefficient value of 0.031, t-statistics of 0.276, and P Values of 0.783. Job satisfaction is also unable to act as a mediating variable in the relationship between situational leadership and work discipline on employee performance. Thus, the improvement of employee performance at the Population and Civil Registration Office of Serang Regency is more influenced by the effectiveness of situational leadership directly than through the mechanism of job satisfaction as an intermediary variable.

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