

The Influence of Work Ethic and Organizational Commitment on Employee Performance and the Role of Work Discipline as a Mediating Variable

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ARTICLE INFO

Received:
30 December 2025
Revised:
09 February 2026
Accepted:
09 February 2026
Published:
01 March 2026

ABSTRACT

This study examines the effects of work ethic and organizational commitment on employee performance, with work discipline serving as a mediating variable among employees at Senyum World Hotel in Batu City. A quantitative explanatory survey approach was applied, using a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire distributed to employees with at least 1 year of work experience. Data analysis was conducted using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS version 4.0. The results indicate that work ethic and work discipline have a significant positive effect on employee performance. Organizational commitment does not directly influence performance but significantly affects work discipline. Furthermore, work discipline does not mediate the relationship between work ethic and employee performance, yet it fully mediates the relationship between organizational commitment and employee performance. These findings suggest that organizational commitment contributes to performance only when it is translated into disciplined work behavior. This study is limited to a single hotel, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings, but it provides practical implications for hotel management to prioritize strengthening work discipline to enhance employee performance.

Keywords: Work Ethic; Organizational Commitment; Work Discipline; Employee Performance



Cite this as: Rahmawati, W., Survival, S., & Mas, N. (2026). The Influence of Work Ethic and Organizational Commitment on Employee Performance and the Role of Work Discipline as a Mediating Variable. *International Journal of Accounting and Management Research*, 7(1), 44–53. <https://doi.org/10.30741/ijamr.v7i1.1870>

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry is a sector that relies heavily on service quality and the performance of its human resources. As competition grows tighter, hotels are required to maintain high service standards to meet guest expectations. This situation makes employee performance not only a measure of productivity but also an indicator of overall operational quality. In practice, performance is shaped by several internal factors, including work ethic, organizational commitment, and how these values are reflected in daily behavior. These elements are interconnected and form the foundation for consistent and professional service delivery. Therefore, understanding how these

factors influence employee performance becomes increasingly relevant in an industry that demands stability and excellence in service.

The conditions at Senyum World Hotel in Batu City present a context-specific empirical phenomenon that is relevant for testing the applicability of established theories within a single organizational setting. Internal records indicate that employees generally exhibit favorable levels of work ethic, organizational commitment, and work discipline. Nevertheless, employee performance has not yet reached the expected standards, despite a gradual upward trend observed between 2022 and 2024. This situation reflects a discrepancy between positive work attitudes and actual performance outcomes at the operational level. Moreover, the findings reveal that high work discipline alone has not consistently resulted in optimal performance, while the effects of work ethic and organizational commitment do not fully conform to prevailing theoretical assumptions. Rather than aiming to develop new theoretical constructs, this study explicitly positions itself as a contextual replication that examines how established relationships among work ethic, organizational commitment, and work discipline manifest within the specific environment of a single hotel. By highlighting inconsistencies between theory and field conditions, this research contributes empirical refinement by demonstrating the contextual boundaries of existing models in the hospitality industry. A substantial body of prior research has examined the role of work ethic, organizational commitment, and work discipline in influencing employee performance across various organizational contexts. Studies on work ethic consistently suggest that positive work attitudes, such as perseverance, responsibility, and intrinsic motivation, support improved performance quality.

Empirical evidence reported by Ardiantono et al. (2022), Zebua (2021), and Br Pintubatu and Wilian (2024) demonstrates that work ethic is positively associated with disciplined behavior and contributes to the formation of favorable employee outcomes. Similarly, research on organizational commitment, including studies by Fachrudī et al. (2021), Umrah et al. (2022), and Amelia et al. (2024), indicates that employees' emotional and professional attachment to their organization encourages consistent behavior and responsibility in carrying out work roles. Recent studies further emphasize the importance of work discipline as a critical behavioral determinant of performance. Research by Zaman and Mas (2023) and Mulyapradana et al. (2024) confirms that disciplined work behavior has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. These findings are reinforced by other studies, such as those conducted by Arimbi et al. (2022), Swastika et al. (2025), and Songyanan and Kasbuntoro (2024), which highlight work discipline as one of the most decisive factors affecting performance, particularly in operationally intensive environments such as the hospitality industry. In addition, several studies have identified work discipline as a mediating mechanism linking work ethic and organizational commitment to performance outcomes, as reported by Zebua (2021), Malau and Sitanggang (2024), and Ardilla et al. (2025). Collectively, this body of research suggests that work ethic, organizational commitment, and work discipline are interrelated constructs that jointly shape employee behavior and performance.

Although prior studies have examined work ethic, organizational commitment, and work discipline, much of the existing research has focused on non-hospitality contexts and has often treated these variables as independent predictors of performance. Consequently, limited attention has been paid to the underlying psychological and behavioral mechanisms that connect work attitudes to performance outcomes. Organizational commitment, as a latent psychological attitude, reflects employees' emotional attachment and sense of obligation toward the organization, but it does not automatically translate into measurable performance. In service-oriented settings such as hotels, performance is more directly shaped by manifest work behaviors, particularly work discipline, which governs employees' consistency, compliance with service standards, and adherence to operational procedures. Therefore, work discipline can be understood as a behavioral channel through which latent attitudes, including organizational commitment and work ethic, are converted into observable performance outcomes. This perspective underscores the need for an integrated

analytical approach that explains not only whether these variables are related but also how attitudinal factors are transformed into performance-relevant behaviors within the dynamic operational environment of the hospitality industry.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

Employee performance in service-oriented organizations is shaped by the interaction between internal work attitudes and observable work behaviors. Prior empirical studies indicate that work ethic and organizational commitment function as latent orientations that guide how employees perceive, value, and approach their work, while performance outcomes are realized through consistent behavioral execution. Work ethic reflects employees' diligence, responsibility, perseverance, honesty, discipline, and commitment to task completion, as conceptualized by Salamun et al. (1995). Meanwhile, organizational commitment represents a psychological attachment to the organization encompassing affective, continuance, and normative dimensions, which influence employees' willingness to remain and contribute to organizational goals (Allen & Meyer, 1997). However, these attitudinal factors do not automatically translate into performance outcomes without the presence of disciplined work behavior. Work discipline, as defined by Rivai and Sagala (2011), represents observable compliance with organizational expectations, reflected in attendance, adherence to rules, compliance with work standards, alertness, and work ethics. In the hospitality industry, where service quality depends heavily on punctuality, consistency, and adherence to standardized procedures, work discipline becomes a critical mechanism through which internal attitudes are transformed into measurable performance outcomes. Employee performance is subsequently assessed through the dimensions of quality, quantity, timeliness, cost-effectiveness, independence, and interpersonal impact, as proposed by Bernardin and Russell (2013). Therefore, work discipline is theoretically positioned as both a direct determinant of employee performance and a mediating mechanism linking work ethic and organizational commitment to performance.

Hypotheses:

- H1: Work ethic has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.
- H2: Organizational commitment has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.
- H3: Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.
- H4: Work ethic has a positive and significant effect on work discipline.
- H5: Organizational commitment has a positive and significant effect on work discipline.
- H6: Work discipline mediates the effect of work ethic on employee performance.
- H7: Work discipline mediates the effect of organizational commitment on employee performance.

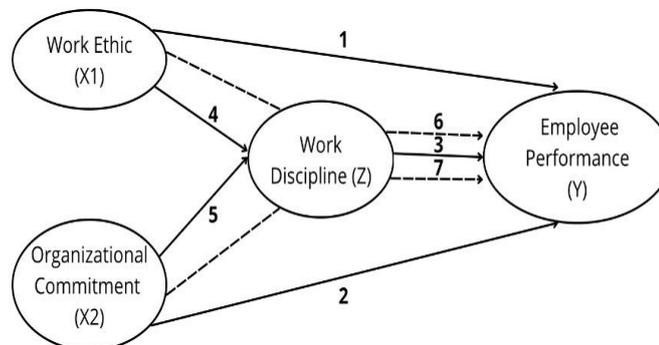


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Research

By consolidating these variables into one analytical framework, the study aims to strengthen theoretical perspectives while offering practical implications for improving employee performance within the hospitality sector.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative explanatory method, as described by Sugiyono (2023), to investigate cause-and-effect relationships between variables through statistical analysis. This approach was selected to explain how work ethic and organizational commitment influence employee performance, with work discipline functioning as a mediating variable among employees of Senyum World Hotel in Batu City. The explanatory design is appropriate because the variables in this study are latent constructs that interact within a structural model and require empirical testing through quantitative data. The subjects of this study are all staff members of Senyum World Hotel in Batu City who have worked for more than one year, as they are considered to have sufficient experience and understanding of work ethic, organizational commitment, work discipline, and employee performance. The research object focuses on examining the relationships between work ethic and organizational commitment affecting employee performance, while work discipline serves as a mediating factor. The study was conducted at Senyum World Hotel, located at Jl. Ir. Soekarno No.144, Batu City, East Java, as the hotel provides an adequate number of employees relevant to the research focus.

Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire administered to employees of Senyum World Hotel Batu. Responses to each item were recorded using a 5-point Likert scale. The instrument consisted of four main constructs, each operationalized according to established theoretical frameworks: (1) Work Ethic (X_1) was measured using indicators proposed by Salamun (1995), which include hard work, discipline, honesty, responsibility, diligence, and perseverance. These indicators reflect fundamental attitudes that demonstrate employees' dedication and commitment to performing their tasks. (2) Organizational Commitment (X_2) followed the three-component model of Allen & Meyer (1997): affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. This framework is widely used to assess employees' psychological attachment to their organization. (3) Work Discipline (Z) was assessed using indicators adapted from Rivai & Sagala (2011), including attendance, compliance with work regulations, adherence to work standards, alertness, and work ethics. These indicators evaluate behavioral consistency in following organizational rules and procedures. (4) Employee Performance (Y) was measured using the six dimensions proposed by Bernardin & Russell (2013): quality, quantity, timeliness, cost-effectiveness, independence, and interpersonal impact. These dimensions represent key aspects of individual performance outcomes. All indicators were used to represent the latent constructs comprehensively and were evaluated within the measurement model before structural analysis.

Instrument quality was evaluated through a PLS-SEM procedure to ensure both validity and reliability. Reliability related to internal consistency was measured using Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha. Convergent validity was assessed based on the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), where all constructs satisfied the recommended criteria of CR values above 0.70 and AVE values exceeding 0.50, as suggested by Hair et al. (2021). Discriminant validity was established by applying the Fornell-Larcker method. Ideal loading factor values exceed 0.70; however, loadings between 0.50 and 0.70 may be retained if they do not reduce the construct's overall reliability and validity. Indicators with loadings below 0.50 must be removed from the model, as they are considered insufficient in representing the latent construct (Ghozali & Latan, 2020). Data analysis was conducted using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS 4.0, following two main steps: 1. Measurement Model Evaluation, including assessments of indicator loadings, CR, AVE, and discriminant validity;

2. Structural Model Evaluation, performed through a bootstrapping technique, was applied to test the statistical significance of both direct and indirect relationships. Model explanatory power and predictive capability were assessed using R^2 , effect size (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2), following the established PLS-SEM methodological standards.

Mediation analysis was applied to identify the intervening role of work discipline in the relationship between work ethic, organizational commitment, and employee performance. The analysis employed the bootstrapping procedure, allowing indirect effects to be evaluated through t-statistics and p-values, consistent with mediation testing guidelines in PLS-SEM as described by Ghazali (2021) and Hair et al. (2021). An indirect effect was considered significant when it met the statistical thresholds established within the structural model. The study complied with research ethics by requiring voluntary participation and ensuring respondent anonymity and confidentiality. All collected data were used for academic purposes and analyzed in aggregate to protect participant privacy.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the research findings along with their theoretical and practical implications. The results were obtained using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis with SmartPLS version 4.0. The analysis procedure includes the evaluation of the measurement model, the structural model, and mediation testing to examine the role of work discipline in the relationships between work ethic, organizational commitment, and employee performance. The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented to provide an overview of the sample profile involved in this study. These characteristics include gender, age, highest level of education, and length of service, which are important for understanding the background of the employees at Senyum World Hotel in Batu City. A summary of the respondents' demographic characteristics is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics by Gender

Characteristics	Category	Amount	Percentage %
Gender	Male	91	72,8%
	Female	34	27,2%
	Amount	125	100%
Age	< 25 years	29	23,2%
	25-34 years	61	48,8%
	35-44 years	19	15,2%
	> 45 years	16	12,8%
	Amount	125	100%
Highest Level of Education	SMP	1	0,8%
	SMA/SMK	85	68%
	D3	8	6,4%
	S1	31	24,8%
	Amount	125	100%
Length of Service	1-2 years	40	32%
	3-4 years	32	25,6%
	> 4 years	53	42,4%
	Amount	125	100%

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

The study involved 125 respondents who were employees of Senyum World Hotel in Batu City. Based on gender characteristics (Table 1), the majority of respondents were male, totaling 91 individuals (72.8%), while 34 respondents (27.2%) were female. This distribution indicates that the

workforce at Senyum World Hotel is predominantly male, which may reflect the gender composition of operational roles within the hospitality industry. Regarding age characteristics, most respondents were in the 25–34 years age group, accounting for 61 respondents (48.8%), followed by those aged under 25 years with 29 respondents (23.2%). Respondents aged 35–44 years comprised 19 individuals (15.2%), while those aged above 45 years totaled 16 respondents (12.8%). This distribution suggests that the majority of employees are in their productive working age, which is relevant for examining work behavior, discipline, and performance.

Based on educational background (Table 1), most respondents held a senior high school/vocational school (SMA/SMK) qualification, totaling 85 respondents (68%). This was followed by 31 respondents (24.8%) with a bachelor's degree (S1), 8 respondents (6.4%) with a diploma (D3), and 1 respondent (0.8%) with a junior high school (SMP) background. These findings indicate that the workforce is largely composed of employees with secondary education, which may influence work discipline and performance in operational hotel settings. In terms of length of service (Table 1), the largest proportion of respondents had worked for more than four years, totaling 53 respondents (42.4%). This was followed by employees with 1–2 years of service (40 respondents or 32%) and those with 3–4 years of service (32 respondents or 25.6%). The predominance of long-tenured employees suggests that most respondents have substantial experience and familiarity with organizational rules and work standards, which supports the reliability of their responses.

Measurement Model Evaluation

The measurement model was evaluated to assess construct reliability and validity. The results indicate that all constructs achieved Composite Reliability values above the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming satisfactory internal consistency. Moreover, AVE values across all constructs were greater than 0.50, reflecting adequate convergent validity. Therefore, all constructs were considered appropriate for further structural model analysis.

Table 5. Outer Model Loadings and AVE

Construct	Composite Reliability	AVE	Decision
Work Ethic	0,885	0,510	Valid
Organizational Commitment	0,887	0,520	Valid
Work Discipline	0,885	0,530	Valid
Employee Performance	0,875	0,510	Valid

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

In addition to assessing discriminant validity, the overall adequacy of the measurement model was evaluated through goodness-of-fit indicators. The Fornell–Larcker criterion demonstrates that the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct exceeds its correlations with other constructs, indicating satisfactory discriminant validity. This result, together with the acceptable goodness-of-fit measures, suggests that the measurement model fits the empirical data well and that each construct is empirically distinct within the model.

Structural Model Evaluation

Structural model evaluation reveals both significant and non-significant relationships among the study variables. Path significance was assessed using the bootstrapping procedure in PLS-SEM, with t-values > 1.96 and p-values < 0.05 as the decision criteria.

Table 6. Direct Path Coefficients

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1: Work Ethic → Employee Performance	1,001	47,667	< 0,001	Supported

H2: Organizational Commitment → Employee Performance	- 0,017	0,586	0,558	Not Supported
H3: Work Discipline → Employee Performance	0,014	2,000	0,046	Supported
H4: Work Ethic → Work Discipline	0,005	0,417	0,667	Not Supported
H5: Organizational Commitment → Work Discipline	0,993	43,174	< 0,001	Supported

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

The structural model evaluation indicates that several hypothesized relationships are statistically significant; however, the magnitude of certain path coefficients requires careful interpretation. Specifically, the path coefficient from Work Ethic to Employee Performance ($\beta = 1.001$) and from Organizational Commitment to Work Discipline ($\beta = 0.993$) appear unusually high for social science research. Rather than being interpreted as literal effect sizes, these coefficients suggest a very strong explanatory relationship between the constructs. Such results may reflect high conceptual proximity among the variables, particularly given that work ethic and organizational commitment represent internal work attitudes, while work discipline functions as their behavioral manifestation in an operational context. Additionally, the use of PLS-SEM, which prioritizes variance explanation over parameter estimation, can yield inflated path coefficients when constructs share closely related dimensions. To address this concern, multicollinearity diagnostics were examined, and the results indicate that collinearity remains within acceptable thresholds, suggesting that the model does not suffer from severe multicollinearity or overfitting. Therefore, although the coefficients are extreme in magnitude, they do not undermine the structural validity of the model but instead highlight the strong interdependence of attitudinal and behavioral constructs in the hospitality work environment. These findings should be interpreted as evidence of a tightly integrated behavioral mechanism rather than as isolated causal effects. The findings indicate that work ethic and work discipline positively influence employee performance, supporting prior studies by Ardiantono et al. (2022), Zebua (2021), and Br Pintubatu and Wilian (2024), which emphasize the role of work attitudes and disciplined behavior in enhancing performance. In contrast, organizational commitment does not have a direct effect on employee performance but significantly influences work discipline, in line with the findings of Fachrudi et al. (2021) and Qamaruddin et al. (2021). This pattern suggests that organizational commitment contributes to performance primarily through disciplined behavior rather than through a direct motivational pathway.

Interestingly, although work ethic is theoretically positioned as a foundation of disciplined behavior, the empirical results show that the relationship between work ethic and work discipline is not statistically significant. Rather than contradicting the theory, this finding highlights an important contextual nuance within the hospitality industry. Work ethic represents a personal value orientation that guides how employees perceive work, whereas work discipline in hotel operations is largely shaped by formal systems, standardized procedures, and managerial control. In such environments, disciplined behavior tends to be compliance-based, driven by rules, supervision, and service standards, rather than value-based internalization. This explains why a strong personal work ethic does not necessarily translate into higher disciplinary behavior, while organizational commitment through alignment with organizational norms plays a more decisive role in shaping discipline. Consequently, this non-significant relationship provides a meaningful contribution by demonstrating that the link between work ethic and discipline is context-dependent rather than universal.

Mediation Analysis

The mediating role of work discipline was examined using indirect effect analysis to assess the relationships between work ethic, organizational commitment, and employee performance.

Table 7. Mediating Result

Path	Indirect Effect	t-value	p-value	Mediating Type
Work Ethic → Work Discipline → Employee Performance	0,000	1,400	0,162	No Mediation
Organizational Commitment → Work Discipline → Employee Performance	0,014	2,044	0,041	Full Mediation

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

The results indicate that work discipline does not mediate the effect of work ethic on employee performance, but fully mediates the relationship between organizational commitment and employee performance, suggesting that commitment influences performance primarily through disciplined work behavior.

The findings demonstrate that work ethic and work discipline have a significant influence on employee performance, consistent with previous studies by Ardiantono et al. (2022), Zebua (2021), and Br Pintubatu and Wilian (2024). These results are further supported by more recent empirical evidence indicating that work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance (Songyanan & Kasbuntoro, 2024; Nafsiyah et al., 2024; Swastika et al., 2025). This relationship can be explained by the role of work ethic in shaping employees' internal motivation and sense of responsibility, which encourages them to approach tasks with greater seriousness and commitment. In parallel, work discipline represents the concrete expression of these internal attitudes through punctuality, adherence to procedures, and compliance with service standards. In operationally intensive environments such as the hospitality industry, performance outcomes are highly dependent on consistent and visible work behaviors. Therefore, the significant effect of work ethic and work discipline on employee performance reflects not only alignment with prior empirical findings but also the practical mechanism through which positive work attitudes are translated into effective and measurable performance.

In contrast, organizational commitment does not directly affect employee performance but has a significant influence on work discipline, consistent with the findings of Fachrudi et al. (2021) and Qamaruddin et al. (2021). Furthermore, mediation analysis indicates that work discipline fully mediates the relationship between organizational commitment and employee performance, in line with the studies of Zebua (2021) and Malau and Sitanggang (2024), suggesting that commitment contributes to performance only when it is translated into disciplined work behavior. This finding should be interpreted within the specific context of the study, which focuses on a single hotel with relatively homogeneous respondent characteristics, predominantly male employees with secondary-level education occupying operational roles. In such settings, organizational commitment is more likely to be expressed through compliance with rules, schedules, and service procedures rather than through autonomous performance initiatives. Therefore, the mediating role of work discipline is particularly relevant for operational-level hotel employees and should not be generalized uncritically to managerial positions or the hospitality industry at large.

CONCLUSION

This study provides empirical evidence that work ethic and work discipline significantly affect employee performance at Senyum World Hotel in Batu City. The results indicate that work ethic directly affects employee performance, with work discipline making a significant contribution to performance outcomes. These results highlight the importance of consistent, responsible, and rule-compliant work behavior in achieving optimal employee performance in the hospitality sector. Furthermore, the study reveals that organizational commitment does not directly influence employee performance, but exerts an indirect effect through work discipline. The findings confirm that work

discipline acts as a full mediator between organizational commitment and employee performance. This suggests that organizational commitment contributes to performance only when it is translated into disciplined work behavior. From a theoretical perspective, this research strengthens prior empirical findings by emphasizing the role of work behavior as a critical mechanism linking work attitudes and organizational commitment to performance. The proposed model underscores work discipline as a key explanatory variable in understanding how organizational commitment affects employee performance. Practically, the findings suggest that hotel management should not only foster work ethic and organizational commitment but also ensure their implementation through clear and consistent disciplinary systems. Managerial efforts such as enforcing work rules, continuous supervision, and discipline-oriented employee development are essential to improving performance outcomes. Future research is encouraged to investigate other variables that may affect employee performance, including leadership approaches, organizational values, and reward systems, as well as to apply the proposed research model to different service sectors to improve the generalizability of the findings.

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