e-ISSN: 2745-9535
No. 105/E/KPT/2022
Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat
Editorial Office: Jl. Soekarno-Hatta, Rembuksari No. 1A, Malang, East Java, Indonesia, 65113
Contact: Phone: +62 (341) 478494 e-mail: jpm@asia.ac.id
The journal is published by Institut Teknologi dan Bisnis Asia Malang
Website: https://jurnal.stie.asia.ac.id/index.php/jpm
Member of: A/JEBI
Indexed in: Google Crossref neliti GARUDA Journal Dimensions

The Impact of Work Discipline on Work Productivity Among Employees Of The 3 Ilir Service Unit at Perumda Tirta Musi Palembang

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Volume
7
Issue
2
Edition
November
Page
387-394
Year
2026

Article History

Submission: 27-06-2026
Review: 29-06-2026
Accepted: 01-07-2026

Keyword

Work Discipline;
Work Productivity;
Perumda Tirta Musi Palembang;

How to cite

Itryah, & Susanti, L. (2026). The Impact of Work Discipline on Work Productivity Among Employees of the 3 Ilir Service Unit at Perumda Tirta Musi Palembang. Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat, 7(2), 387-394. https://doi.org/10.32815/jpm.v7i2.3028

Abstract

Purpose: This community service program aimed to examine the impact of work discipline on employee productivity at the 3 Ilir Service Unit of Perumda Tirta Musi Palembang.

Method: A qualitative approach was employed using semi-structured interviews with three purposively selected informants: the Assistant Manager of Customer Service and Meter Reading, the Meter Reading Supervisor, and a Meter Reading Field Officer.

Practical Applications: The findings indicate that strengthening work discipline through consistent supervision, adherence to standard operating procedures, performance evaluation, and continuous training can improve employee productivity, operational efficiency, service quality, and customer satisfaction.

Conclusion: Work discipline positively influences employee productivity. Employees consistently demonstrated attendance, compliance with organizational regulations and work standards, vigilance, and ethical behavior, enabling tasks to be completed accurately, efficiently, and on time. Overall, fostering a strong culture of work discipline supports higher productivity and enhances the quality of public services in public sector organizations.

Introduction

The Perumda Tirta Musi Palembang is a regional government-owned enterprise responsible for providing clean water and managing domestic wastewater services for the people of Palembang. Based on Regional Regulation No. 10 of 2022, the company's primary responsibility is to ensure the provision of safe and healthy drinking water while prioritizing high-quality public services. As the number of customers continues to increase, employee productivity has become a crucial factor in maintaining effective and efficient service delivery. Consequently, employees are expected to perform optimally to ensure that organizational objectives and public service standards are achieved.

Employee productivity is widely recognized as one of the key indicators of organizational effectiveness. In public service organizations, productivity is reflected not only in the quantity of work completed but also in the quality, accuracy, timeliness, and efficiency of service delivery. Therefore, organizations must identify factors that contribute to higher employee productivity. Among these factors, work discipline has consistently been identified as one of the most important determinants of employee performance.

According to Hasibuan (2019), work discipline refers to an individual's awareness and willingness to comply with organizational regulations and established social norms. Similarly, Rivai (2016) explains that work discipline can be reflected through employee attendance, compliance with organizational rules, adherence to work standards, vigilance, and ethical behavior. Employees who demonstrate a high level of work discipline tend to utilize working hours more effectively, follow operational procedures consistently, and complete assigned tasks responsibly, thereby enhancing their productivity.

This phenomenon can be observed at the 3 Ilir Service Unit of Perumda Tirta Musi Palembang, particularly within the Meter Division, which is responsible for recording customers' water consumption as the basis for calculating monthly water bills. The division requires employees to perform their duties accurately, punctually, and responsibly because errors in meter reading may negatively affect customer billing and service quality. Based on observations conducted on April 27, 2026, most employees arrived before official working hours, participated in the morning assembly, carried out their duties according to standard operating procedures, utilized working time efficiently, and demonstrated professional behavior when serving customers. These observations indicate that a relatively high level of work discipline has been implemented in supporting daily operational activities.

Furthermore, interviews with one of the employees at the 3 Ilir Service Unit revealed that work discipline is considered a critical element in ensuring smooth service delivery. Punctuality, compliance with organizational regulations, and responsibility in completing assigned tasks were perceived as essential factors in maintaining efficient customer service. Conversely, delays in attendance or task completion may result in accumulated workloads and reduced service quality.

From the perspective of industrial and organizational psychology, work discipline represents an important behavioral factor that contributes to employee productivity. Employees with strong work discipline are generally more capable of regulating their work behavior, complying with organizational policies, and consistently achieving work targets. Consequently, work discipline plays a significant role in improving organizational effectiveness, particularly in public service institutions where service quality directly affects public satisfaction.

Previous empirical studies have consistently demonstrated the positive relationship between work discipline and employee productivity. Nurhasanah (2024) found that work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee productivity, indicating that disciplined employees tend to perform more efficiently and effectively. Likewise, Fauzia, Dongoran, and Sundari (2020) reported that work discipline is influenced by organizational regulations, disciplinary sanctions, and the work environment, all of which contribute to improved employee performance. These findings reinforce the importance of work discipline

as a determinant of organizational productivity.

Despite the growing body of literature on work discipline and productivity, limited studies have specifically examined this relationship within regional public utility organizations, particularly at the 3 Ilir Service Unit of Perumda Tirta Musi Palembang. The unique characteristics of public water service operations, which require accuracy, timeliness, and accountability in customer data management, provide an important context for investigating the role of work discipline in enhancing employee productivity. Therefore, this study aims to examine the role of work discipline in supporting employee productivity at the 3 Ilir Service Unit of Perumda Tirta Musi Palembang. The findings are expected to contribute to the field of industrial and organizational psychology while providing practical recommendations for improving employee discipline and service quality within public service organizations.

Method

The methods employed a semi-structured interview technique to obtain information regarding employees' work discipline at the 3 Ilir Service Unit of Perumda Tirta Musi Palembang. This technique involved preparing an interview guide consisting of key questions while allowing flexibility during the interview process. Such flexibility enabled the authors to explore additional questions based on the participants' responses and the situations that emerged throughout the interviews.

The interviews were conducted with three informants who were purposively selected based on their direct involvement in the operational activities of the Customer Service and Meter Reading Sub-Unit. The informants consisted of YK, the Assistant Manager of Customer Service and Meter Reading; RS, the Meter Reading Supervisor, who is responsible for office-based supervision; and SS, a field officer responsible for recording customers' water meter readings.

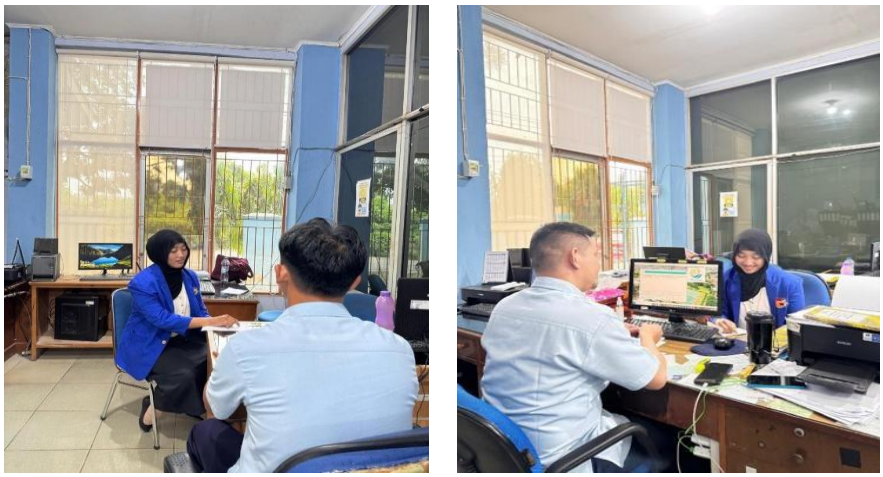
Result

The internship was conducted at the 3 Ilir Service Unit of Perumda Tirta Musi Palembang over a three-month period, from April 1 to June 30, 2026. Throughout the internship, the author had the opportunity to participate directly in the company's daily operational activities by being assigned to three divisions: Meter Reading, Billing and Arrears, and Distribution. This rotation provided a comprehensive understanding of the organization's service system, covering customer meter reading, billing administration, arrears management, and distribution-related administrative processes.

In the Meter Reading Division, the author assisted with various administrative tasks, including organizing meter-reading documents, printing fieldwork maps, and managing incoming and outgoing correspondence. In the Billing and Arrears Division, the author supported the preparation of customer arrears reports, verified payment records, and assisted in communicating billing and service information to customers. Meanwhile, in the Distribution Division, the author contributed to fieldwork administration by documenting completed work, recording material usage, and maintaining personnel records.

Participating in these activities provided valuable practical experience and a deeper understanding of the company's operational workflow. At the same time, the internship enhanced the author's administrative, communication, teamwork, and data management skills. More importantly, direct involvement in day-to-day operations allowed the author to observe how employees consistently applied work discipline while performing their duties. Attendance, punctuality, adherence to standard operating procedures, accuracy in handling customer data, and professional interactions with customers were consistently demonstrated as essential elements in ensuring the continuity and quality of public services.

Figure 1. Interview with Employees



Source: Private Documentation, 2026.

These observations inspired the present study, which seeks to examine the role of work discipline in supporting employee productivity at the 3 Ilir Service Unit of Perumda Tirta Musi Palembang. By combining practical experience gained during the internship with qualitative data collected through interviews, this study provides a deeper understanding of how disciplined work behavior contributes to organizational performance within a public service institution.

The findings revealed that employees perceive work discipline not merely as compliance with organizational rules but as a set of work behaviors that enable services to be delivered effectively, efficiently, and accurately. This perspective suggests that work discipline functions as a behavioral foundation that supports employee productivity, particularly in organizations whose primary responsibility is to provide reliable public services.

Among the dimensions of work discipline, attendance and punctuality emerged as the most influential factors in supporting employee productivity. All informants emphasized that delays by a single employee affect not only individual performance but also the overall workflow of the organization. At the 3 Ilir Service Unit, meter reading represents the initial stage of the operational process and directly influences subsequent activities, including data verification, information processing, and customer billing. Consequently, delays at one stage create a chain reaction that disrupts the entire service process.

These findings indicate that punctuality functions as an essential coordination mechanism within an interdependent work system. The higher the level of employees' time discipline, the lower the likelihood of work delays, accumulated workloads, and service interruptions. As a result, organizational efficiency improves because operational activities can be completed according to predetermined schedules and performance targets.

These results support Rivai (2016), who identified attendance as one of the primary indicators of work discipline because it reflects employees' willingness to comply with organizational working hours. Likewise, the findings are consistent with Nurhasanah (2024), who reported that time discipline positively influences employee productivity by improving task completion efficiency and facilitating the achievement of organizational objectives.

The study also demonstrates that compliance with organizational regulations serves as an essential mechanism for maintaining operational consistency and service quality. All informants explained that operational activities are guided by clearly established procedures, including those followed when customer water meters cannot be accessed. Such procedures ensure that operational decisions are implemented consistently while maintaining accountability throughout the service process.

From a human resource management perspective, compliance with organizational regulations reflects not only employee discipline but also organizational commitment. Employees who consistently follow established procedures tend to produce more accurate work, reduce operational errors, and minimize the need for corrective actions. Conversely, failure to comply with established procedures increases the risk of administrative errors that may ultimately reduce service quality.

These findings reinforce Rivai's (2016) argument that compliance with work regulations represents an important dimension of work discipline that contributes to organizational effectiveness. Similarly, Fauzia, Dongoran, and Sundari (2020) concluded that adherence to organizational rules significantly improves employee performance and productivity.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that employee productivity is assessed not only by the quantity of work completed but also by the quality of work outcomes. In meter-reading operations, every task must follow established standard operating procedures, including recording meter readings, documenting meter conditions, and entering data into the company's information system. These standards function as quality control mechanisms that ensure consistency, accuracy, and accountability while minimizing variations in work quality.

Another important finding concerns employee vigilance and attention to detail. All informants agreed that even minor errors in reading or entering meter data may result in inaccurate customer bills. Such mistakes not only increase workloads through data correction procedures but may also undermine customer trust in the organization. Consequently, the practice of double-checking conducted by both field officers and supervisors serves as an internal control mechanism to minimize human error and maintain service quality.

The findings also highlight ethical behavior as an integral component of work discipline within public service organizations. Informants emphasized the importance of maintaining courtesy, patience, friendliness, and professionalism when interacting with customers. These competencies reflect employees' ability to regulate emotions, establish effective interpersonal communication, and maintain professionalism under demanding working conditions. Beyond enhancing customer satisfaction, ethical work behavior also strengthens public trust and contributes to more effective service delivery.

Overall, this study demonstrates that the five dimensions of work discipline attendance, compliance with organizational regulations, adherence to work standards, vigilance, and ethical behavior operate synergistically in enhancing employee productivity. Attendance ensures workflow continuity, compliance with regulations and work standards promotes operational consistency, vigilance guarantees work accuracy, and ethical behavior improves the quality of customer interactions. Collectively, these dimensions indicate that employee productivity at the 3 Ilir Service Unit depends not only on technical competence but also on disciplined work behavior consistently demonstrated throughout daily operations.

The findings reinforce the view that work discipline is a key determinant of productivity in public service organizations. Therefore, organizations should continue strengthening a culture of discipline through consistent supervision, continuous performance evaluation, regular training on standard operating procedures, and reinforcement of professional values. Such initiatives are expected to sustain improvements in both employee productivity and the quality of public services.

Discussion

The community service program carried out through the internship at the 3 Ilir Service Unit of Perumda Tirta Musi Palembang has provided valuable insights into the role of work discipline in shaping employee productivity within a regional public utility. The findings confirm that work discipline, understood through the five dimensions proposed by Rivai (2016)—attendance, compliance with organizational regulations, adherence to work standards, vigilance, and ethical behavior—functions as a foundational behavioral mechanism that sustains both operational efficiency and service quality. These findings are consistent with the

broader literature on human resource management in public sector organizations (Hasibuan, 2019; Mangkunegara, 2017), which emphasizes that disciplined work behavior is a prerequisite for achieving organizational effectiveness.

One of the most significant findings of this program is the systemic nature of attendance and punctuality within the Meter Division. The internship experience revealed that meter reading constitutes the first link in a sequential operational chain that extends to data verification, billing, and customer service. A delay at this initial stage produces a cascading effect that disrupts the entire workflow. This observation extends the findings of Nurhasanah (2024), who demonstrated a positive relationship between time discipline and task completion efficiency, by illustrating how individual punctuality operates as a coordination mechanism within an interdependent work system. From the perspective of the community service program, this finding underscores the importance of reinforcing time management awareness among employees, not merely as a matter of individual compliance but as a collective responsibility that affects overall service delivery.

The program also highlighted that compliance with organizational regulations and adherence to work standards serve as internal quality control mechanisms. During the internship, it was observed that Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for meter reading—including protocols for inaccessible meters and double-checking procedures—were consistently followed by employees across all levels. This adherence minimizes operational errors, reduces the need for corrective actions, and ensures billing accuracy. These observations align with the findings of Fauzia, Dongoran, and Sundari (2020), who reported that organizational regulations and work environment factors significantly influence employee performance. More importantly, the internship experience demonstrated that SOP compliance is not a passive activity but requires active engagement, particularly in situations where field conditions deviate from standard scenarios. This suggests that continuous training and periodic evaluation of SOP implementation are essential for sustaining high productivity levels.

Another critical insight gained through this community service program concerns the role of vigilance and ethical behavior in public service delivery. The informants consistently emphasized that even minor errors in meter data entry can result in inaccurate billing, which in turn erodes customer trust and generates additional administrative workloads. The practice of double-checking by both field officers and supervisors reflects a culture of accountability that goes beyond formal regulations. Furthermore, the emphasis on courtesy, patience, and professionalism in customer interactions demonstrates that work discipline in public service organizations encompasses emotional regulation and interpersonal competence. These findings resonate with the arguments of Sedarmayanti (2018) and Siagian (2015), who contend that employee discipline in government-affiliated institutions must integrate both technical compliance and service-oriented values to achieve meaningful productivity improvements.

From the perspective of community service impact, this program has contributed to strengthening the partnership between the academic institution and Perumda Tirta Musi Palembang. The direct involvement of the intern in daily operational activities across three divisions—Meter Reading, Billing and Arrears, and Distribution—provided the organization with additional administrative support while generating empirical data that can inform future human resource development strategies. The findings suggest that the 3 Ilir Service Unit has already established a relatively strong culture of work discipline. However, to sustain and further enhance productivity, management should consider implementing more structured performance monitoring systems, regular refresher training on SOPs, and periodic employee feedback mechanisms that allow frontline workers to voice operational challenges. These recommendations are particularly relevant given the increasing customer base and the growing complexity of public water service operations in Palembang.

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of this community service program. The qualitative data were collected from a limited number of informants within a single service unit,

which restricts the generalizability of the findings to other units or regional utilities. Additionally, the three-month internship period, while sufficient for gaining operational familiarity, may not fully capture long-term behavioral patterns or seasonal variations in employee discipline. Future community service programs could expand the scope by involving multiple service units, employing mixed-method approaches, and conducting longitudinal observations to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the discipline-productivity relationship in public water utilities.

This community service program has demonstrated that work discipline is a multidimensional construct that operates synergistically to enhance employee productivity in public service organizations. The internship experience at the 3 Ilir Service Unit of Perumda Tirta Musi Palembang confirms that attendance, regulatory compliance, adherence to work standards, vigilance, and ethical behavior collectively contribute to accurate, efficient, and high-quality service delivery. These findings not only enrich the academic literature on work discipline in the public sector but also provide actionable insights for organizational improvement within regional utility companies.

Conclusion

The conclusion Based on observations and interviews conducted during the internship at the 3 Ilir Service Unit of Perumda Tirta Musi Palembang, it can be concluded that work discipline has a positive influence on employee productivity. This finding is based on Rivai's (2016) dimensions of work discipline, namely attendance, compliance with work regulations, adherence to work standards, vigilance, and ethical work behavior. The findings indicate that employees consistently comply with working hours, organizational regulations, and standard operating procedures, enabling tasks to be completed accurately, consistently, and on time. Furthermore, employees demonstrate careful data management, professionalism, courtesy, and effective communication in serving customers, all of which contribute to maintaining service quality. Overall, the study shows that work discipline is an important factor in improving employee productivity by promoting effective and efficient task completion while supporting the delivery of high-quality public services.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Perumda Tirta Musi Palembang

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