
The Impact of Work Discipline and Competency on Production Employees' Performance Indonesian

Dharliana Hardjowikarto¹, Misbak¹, Lia Yulia², Moh Muklis Sulaeman³, Julia Verboeket⁴

¹Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati, Indonesia

²Universitas Galuh, Indonesia

³Islamic Lamongan University, Indonesia

⁴Radboud University, Nijmegen

Abstract

The dynamic landscape of the automotive industry positions organizations such as PT Adient Automotive Indonesia as strategic suppliers of essential spare parts. The sustainability and competitive advantage of such firms are largely determined by the performance and quality of their human resources. Maintaining consistent production outcomes requires continuous attention to employee competence and work discipline as key determinants of performance.

This study aims to: (1) analyze the effect of competence on the performance of production employees at PT Adient Automotive Indonesia; (2) examine the influence of work discipline on employee performance; and (3) assess the simultaneous effect of competence and work discipline on employee performance. A quantitative approach was employed using a sample of 88 production employees.

The findings indicate that competence has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance. Similarly, work discipline exerts a positive and significant influence on performance. Furthermore, competence and work discipline simultaneously have a substantial and significant effect on production employee performance. These results highlight the importance of adopting a comprehensive human resource management strategy that integrates competency development and disciplinary reinforcement to enhance organizational productivity.

Keywords: competence, work discipline, production employee performance

Corresponding Author:

Misbak; misbakdarman@gmail.com

1. Introduction

The automotive industry represents one of Indonesia's strategic industrial sectors, functioning as a key driver of national economic growth. However, in 2021 the industry experienced a significant contraction. Car sales declined by 48.35% to approximately 550,000 units, while motorcycle sales decreased by 43.57% annually. In addition, automotive spare parts sales dropped by 23%, reflecting broader structural challenges within the sector. These challenges include disruptions in raw material supply, operational inefficiencies, logistical and transportation constraints, human resource limitations, and escalating energy costs.

The performance fluctuations of the automotive sector necessitate organizational evaluation, particularly in relation to employee competence and performance outcomes. PT Adient Automotive Indonesia Cirebon, a company specializing in automotive spare parts manufacturing, has encountered several operational issues affecting production performance. Among these are delays in raw material availability due to logistical constraints, resulting in inconsistencies between planned and actual production schedules. Operational inefficiencies have also emerged due to aging machinery—such as press and cutting machines—that frequently require maintenance and repair, thereby disrupting workflow and employee productivity.

In addressing organizational challenges, improving human resource quality constitutes a strategic priority. High-performing employees demonstrate superior competencies that directly contribute to achieving organizational objectives (Samsuni, 2017). Employee performance is reflected not only in output quantity but also in work quality, efficiency, and compliance with operational standards. In addition to competence, work discipline plays a crucial role in shaping performance outcomes (Jufrizen, 2018).

Strong employee performance is essential to achieving production targets (Sanuddin & Widjojo, 2013). At PT Adient Automotive Indonesia Cirebon, discrepancies between production targets and actual realization were observed in 2019, 2021, and 2022. In 2022, production realization reached 347,111 units (63.44%) against a target of 547,148 units, representing the largest gap during the observed period. These shortfalls indicate suboptimal employee performance as one of the contributing factors.

Employee performance evaluations reveal that only 13% of employees were categorized as “very good,” 37% as “good,” 40% as “less,” and 10% as “very less.” Performance indicators include work attitude, quality of work, knowledge and skills, initiative, responsibility, teamwork, occupational safety compliance, attendance, and workplace cleanliness. These findings suggest the need to strengthen both competence and work discipline to improve overall performance levels.

Competence refers to the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform tasks effectively (Akbar, 2018; Pohan et al., 2021). Empirical observations at the company indicate quality control issues reflected in defective product outputs. For Honda products, 111 defective units were recorded, primarily due to folded stitch defects. For Mitsubishi products, 92 defective units were identified, predominantly caused by loose thread defects. These data suggest that employee competencies in technical precision and quality control require enhancement.

Work discipline constitutes another determinant of performance. Discipline encompasses punctuality, adherence to company regulations, and compliance with safety and operational standards. Interviews with HR personnel revealed instances of tardiness, non-compliance with uniform policies, improper storage of personal items in production areas, and other behaviors inconsistent with company regulations. Such disciplinary issues may adversely affect operational efficiency and overall performance.

This study is grounded in McClelland’s Achievement Needs Theory (1973), which posits that individuals with high achievement motivation tend to exhibit superior performance. Individual characteristics—such as motivation, traits, attitudes, and values—distinguish high performers from average performers. Organizations that cultivate achievement-oriented cultures are more likely to attain strategic objectives.

Previous empirical findings show mixed results regarding the influence of competence and discipline on performance. Rosmiati et al. (2021) found that competence significantly affects employee performance, whereas Puspita and Prahawan (2018) reported that preventive discipline did not demonstrate a significant effect. These inconsistencies highlight the need for further investigation, particularly within the context of automotive manufacturing.

Based on the identified performance issues and research gaps, this study examines the effect of competence and work discipline on the performance of production employees at PT Adient Automotive Indonesia Cirebon. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of evidence-based human resource management strategies in the automotive manufacturing sector.

2. Material and Method

2.1 Research Design and Data Collection

This study employed a quantitative approach using an associative research design to examine the relationship between competence and work discipline as independent variables and employee performance as the dependent variable. The population consisted of 113 production employees at PT Adient Automotive Indonesia. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error, resulting in 88 respondents. Nonprobability sampling was applied to select respondents from the accessible population. Data were collected primarily through structured questionnaires distributed to employees, supported by interviews and documentation. In addition, a literature review was conducted to strengthen the theoretical framework by referring to relevant books, academic journals, and prior empirical studies.

Primary data were obtained directly from respondents through questionnaire responses and interviews, while secondary data were sourced from company records, reports, and scholarly literature. The questionnaire items were designed to measure competence, work discipline, and employee performance using measurable indicators. Data processing and statistical analysis were performed using SPSS version 22.0 for Windows to ensure systematic and accurate analysis.

2.2 Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis process included validity and reliability testing, classical assumption testing, and hypothesis testing. Validity was assessed using Pearson's Product Moment correlation, where an item was considered valid if the correlation coefficient (r_{count}) exceeded the critical value (r_{table}) at a 0.05 significance level ($df = n-2$). Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha, with a coefficient greater than 0.70 indicating acceptable internal consistency. Multicollinearity testing was conducted by examining tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values to ensure no strong correlation among independent variables. Hypotheses were tested using the t-test to determine the partial effect of each independent variable on employee performance and the F-test to evaluate the simultaneous effect of competence and work discipline on performance at a 5% significance level.

3. Result

3.1 Validity Test Analysis

A measuring instrument is said to be valid if it can accurately reveal data from the variable under study.

Table 1. validity test

Competence		DK		Performance	
Statement	r count	Statement	r count	Statement	r count
x1p1	,605	x2p1	,355	yp1	,412
x1p2	,467	x2p2	,544	yp2	,392
x1p3	,628	x2p3	,511	yp3	,231
x1p4	,566	x2p4	,513	yp4	,368
x1p5	,575	x2p5	,424	yp5	,606
x1p6	,547	x2p6	,516	yp6	,598
x1p7	,682	x2p7	,508	yp7	,438
x1p8	,656	x2p8	,483	yp8	,652

Competence		DK		Performance	
Statement	r count	Statement	r count	Statement	r count
x1p9	,666			yp9	,643
x1p10	,600			yp10	,604
x1p11	,664			yp11	,514
x1p12	,641			yp12	,512
x1p13	,669			yp13	,478
x1p14	,617			yp14	,453
x1p15	,713			yp15	,635
x1p16	,602			yp16	,595
x1p17	,588			yp17	,500
x1p18	,668			yp18	,491
x1p19	,683			yp19	,411
x1p20	,574			yp20	,529
x1p21	,665			yp21	,643
x1p22	,616			yp22	,590
x1p23	,681				
x1p24	,789				
x1p25	,722				
x1p26	,536				

All statements of competency, dk and performance variables are valid, so it can be concluded that all valid statement instrument variables can be used during data analysis procedures.

3.1 Reliability Analysis

A reliable instrument is an instrument that will produce the same results when used repeatedly to measure the same object.

Table 2. Reliability Analysis

Competence	.949
Work Discipline	.778
Production Employee Performance	.900

Based on table 2, the CA value > 0.70 or $0.949 > 0.70$ for competence (X1), then the dk variable has a value of $0.778 > 0.70$, and the CA value is $0.900 > 0.70$ for the production employee activity variable. So that each variable is reliable.

3.2 Multicollinearity Test Results

The regression model used in the multicollinearity analysis of this study to determine whether there is a correlation between variables runs well because the VIF value is less than 10. There is no multicollinearity between independent variables, according to the test results.

Table 1. Multicollinearity test result

Variables	Value	Description
Competence	VIF = 1,920	No multicollinearity
Work discipline	VIF = 1,920	No multicollinearity

3.3 Analysis Results of the Coefficient of Determination (R-square)

Based on the results of the R Square output, namely 0.826. The value shows the impact of competence and dk simultaneously on the performance of production employees is 82.6%. The remaining 17.4% are influenced by other factors.

Table 2. R square

Variables	R-square	Description
Production Employee Performance	0,826	High

3.4 Hypothesis Test Results

The results of the hypothesis test will reveal whether there is an influence between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

Table 3. competence and employee performance

Variables	Value	Description
Competence → Production Employee Performance	0,326 0,000	Positive Significant

This means that there is an influence of competence on the performance of production employees, as evidenced by sig $0.000 < 0.05$. Where competence has a positive and sig impact on the work activities of production employees.

Table 4. competence and work discipline

Variables	Value	Description
Work discipline → Production Employee Performance	2.665 0,000	Positive Significant

This means that there is an influence of work discipline on the performance of production employees, as evidenced by sig $0.000 < 0.05$. Where dk has a positive and sig impact on the work activities of production employees

4. Discussion

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that competence has a positive and statistically significant effect on the performance of production employees at PT Adient Automotive Indonesia. This conclusion is supported by the t-test results, which show a t_{count} value of 4.710 exceeding the t_{table} value of 1.663, with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). These findings confirm that the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. Thus, higher levels of employee competence—reflected in knowledge, technical skills, and work abilities—contribute significantly to improved production performance. Competent employees are better equipped to perform tasks accurately, minimize production errors, and meet established quality standards, thereby enhancing overall operational effectiveness.

These findings are consistent with prior empirical research. Rosmiati et al. (2020) demonstrated that competency characteristics exert a positive and significant influence on employee performance at PT Infomedia Nusantara Jakarta. The alignment of the present study with previous research reinforces the theoretical assumption that competence constitutes a critical determinant of performance outcomes. From a human resource management perspective, this underscores the importance of continuous training, skill development, and competency-based performance evaluation systems to sustain organizational productivity.

Furthermore, the analysis reveals that work discipline also has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance. The t-test results indicate a t_{count} value of 11.046, which substantially exceeds the t_{table} value of 1.663, with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This confirms the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, indicating that improved work discipline leads to higher performance levels. Employees who demonstrate punctuality, compliance with organizational regulations, and adherence to operational standards contribute to smoother production processes and reduced inefficiencies. These results are consistent with the findings of Hamzah (2021), who reported that work discipline significantly influences employee performance at PT Palm Oil Mill Perkebunan Nusantara XIII Paser Belengkong. Collectively, these findings affirm that both competence and discipline are fundamental behavioral and organizational factors in achieving optimal production performance.

5. Conclusion, Implication, and Recommendation

Conclusion

Based on the results of data analysis and hypothesis testing, this study concludes that competence has a positive and statistically significant effect on the performance of production employees at PT Adient Automotive Indonesia Cirebon. This finding indicates that higher levels of knowledge, technical skills, and work-related abilities contribute directly to improved employee performance. Employees who possess adequate competencies are better able to complete tasks effectively, maintain production quality standards, and support the achievement of organizational targets.

Furthermore, work discipline also demonstrates a positive and statistically significant influence on employee performance. This implies that adherence to organizational regulations, punctuality, compliance with operational procedures, and commitment to workplace standards enhance overall productivity and work effectiveness. Employees who consistently apply disciplinary values tend to perform their duties in a more structured and responsible manner, thereby contributing to smoother production processes.

Simultaneously, competence and work discipline collectively exert a positive and significant effect on the performance of production employees. The combined influence of these variables suggests that optimal employee performance is achieved not only through the development of individual capabilities but also through the reinforcement of organizational discipline. Therefore, both factors function as complementary determinants in enhancing workforce productivity and supporting the company's operational objectives.

Implications

The findings of this study have important managerial implications for human resource management practices. Organizations should prioritize competency development through structured training programs, technical skill enhancement, and continuous professional development initiatives. Additionally, strengthening disciplinary systems through clear regulations, consistent enforcement, and performance-based evaluations is essential to maintain operational efficiency. An integrated human resource strategy that balances competence development and disciplinary reinforcement will contribute to sustainable organizational performance.

Recommendations

Future research is recommended to incorporate additional variables that may influence employee performance, such as leadership style, organizational culture, motivation, or job satisfaction, to provide a more comprehensive analytical framework. Moreover, expanding the research scope to different industrial sectors or utilizing probability sampling techniques may enhance the generalizability of findings. For practitioners, it is recommended that PT Adient Automotive Indonesia continuously evaluate competency standards and disciplinary policies to ensure alignment with evolving production demands and industry challenges.

7. References

- Abdi, W. J., & Rasmansyah, R. (2019). The Effect Of Competence And Work Discipline On Employee Performance Pt. Christalenta Pratama. *Krisnadwipayana Journal Of Business Management*, 7(3). <https://doi.org/10.35137/Jmbk.V7i3.354>
- Busro. 2018. *Theories Of Human Resource Management*. Penadamedia Group, Jakarta.
- Capah, A. S. (2020). Influence On The Effectiveness Of Using Accounting Information Systems, Internal Control And Work Motivation (Study On Service Companies In Subang Regency). 01, 1-14.

- Christine, C., Hendry, H., & Ernanda, Y. (2021). The Effect Of Competence, Motivation And Physical Work Environment On Employee Performance At Pt Abdy Centra Perabot. *Warta Dharmawangsa*, 15(1), 14-28. <https://doi.org/10.46576/Wdw.V15i1.1048>
- JFarisi, S., Irnawati, J., & Fahmi, M. (2020). *Journal Of Humanities*. 4(1), 15-33.
- Hamzah, A., Management, P. S., High, S., Economics, I., Praja, W., Grogot, T., Management, P. S., High, S., Economics, I., Praja, W., Grogot, T., Management, P. S., High, S., Economics, I., Praja, W., & Grogot, T. (2021). The Influence Of Work Discipline On Employee Performance Pt. Perkebunan Nusantara Xiii Palm Oil Mill. 08, 22-36.
- Harlie. M. (2012). The Effect Of Work Discipline, Motivation And Career Development On The Performance Of Civil Servants At The Tabalag Regency Government In Tanjung, South Kalimantan. *Journal Of Management Applications*, 10 No. 4 D, 860-867.
- Mangkunegara. 2017. *Corporate Human Resource Management*. Pt Remaja Rosdakarya, Bandung.
- Mcclelland, D. C. (1973). Testing For Competence Rather Than For "Intelligence". *The American Psychologist*, 28(1), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1037/H0034092>
- Nasrudin Wibowo, S. (2018). The Effect Of Employee Recruitment And Placement On Employee Performance (Study At Pt. Bank Syariah Mandiri Branch A. Yani Bandung). *Monex: Journal Research Accounting Polytechnic Tegal*, 7(1), 335-344.
- Ochoa Pacheco, P., & Coello-Montecel, D. (2023). Does Psychological Empowerment Mediate The Relationship Between Digital Competencies And Job Performance? *Computers In Human Behavior*, 140 (July 2022), 107575. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.Chb.2022.107575>
- Puspita, S., & Prahiawan, W. (2018). The Effect Of Preventive Discipline And Extrinsic Motivation On Employee Performance Through Job Satisfaction As An Intervening Variable At Pt Natura Indoland. 13(2), 339-356.
- Rosmiati, E., Sova, M., & Andari, R. (2021). The Effect Of Competence On Employee Performance Pt. Infomedia Nusantara Jakarta. *Journal Of Administration And Management*, 11(1), 11-16. <https://doi.org/10.52643/Jam.V11i1.1400>
- Sinambela. 2021. *Human Resource Management Building A Solid Work Team To Improve Performance*. Pt Bumi Aksara, Jakarta.
- Wolor, C. W., Musyaffi, A. M., Nurkhin, A., & Tarhan, H. (2022). Employee perceptions of TQM-oriented HRM practices for perceived performance improvement in the case of companies in Indonesia. *Asian Journal for Public Opinion Research*, 10(2), 123-146.
- Zahara, R. N., & Hidayat, H. (2017). The Effect Of Job Satisfaction And Discipline On The Performance Of Bank Employees In Batam City. *Journal Of Applied Managerial Accounting*, 1(2), 150-156. <https://doi.org/10.30871/Jama.V1i2.500>
- Zahra, S. F., SEI, M., Fadillah, N., Hera Khairunnisa, S. E., Respati, M. A. D. K., Ak, M., & Wolor, C. W. (2023). *Tutorial Praktis Dalam Membuat Artikel Ilmiah Untuk Pemula*. CV Literasi Nusantara Abadi.