

The Impact of Incentives and Work Discipline on Teacher Performance in Tanjung Lago Junior High Schools

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Abstract: This quantitative study examines the effects of incentives and work discipline on teacher performance in Tanjung Lago District, Banyuasin. This study was conducted at SMP Negeri Sekecamatan Tanjung Lago Kabupaten Banyuasin. In this study, using quantitative research methods. The methods used are correlation test methods and partial and simultaneous tests. Using a Likert-scale questionnaire administered to 82 teachers, data were analyzed via SPSS 26. Results indicate that incentives (45.3%) and work discipline (47.4%) significantly enhance teacher performance. The findings underscore the importance of fair incentive systems and strict work discipline in improving educational outcomes. There is a significant effect of incentives and work discipline on the performance of junior high school teachers in Tanjung Lago sub-district. The conclusion is that there is a significant effect of incentives and work discipline on the performance of teachers in Tanjung Lago sub-district.

Keywords: Educational Management, Financial Incentives, Quantitative Research, Teacher Performance, Work Discipline

A. Introduction

Teacher's performance greatly affects the quality of learning and student achievement, influenced by incentives, discipline, competence, motivation, school environment, and professional development (Hyseni Duraku et al., 2022; Podungge et al., 2020). High-performing teachers are able to design effective learning and create a positive atmosphere. Competence can be improved through training, motivation and a conducive environment that supports creativity and productivity, while discipline reflects professionalism (Patel, 2021). At SMP Negeri 1 Tanjung Lago, teacher's performance needs to be improved, especially in terms of discipline, because of the decline in student literacy and numeracy related to the lack of consistent teacher attendance and concern. A pre-survey of 15 teachers showed work discipline and incentives as the main factors that need attention.

A pre-survey of 15 teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Tanjung Lago showed that the decline in performance was mainly influenced by work discipline (30%) and incentives (36.6%), while the workload was the lowest (13.4%). The low performance was thought to be due to the mismatch of incentives and low discipline, so it is necessary to evaluate incentives and increase discipline supervision for the quality of education. Previous research also stated that incentives have a positive effect on teacher's performance, both directly and through motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational culture. The researcher is interested in examining how incentives and work discipline influence teacher's performance, given the relevance of these findings to the conditions at SMP Negeri 1 Tanjung Lago. Therefore, this study is entitled "The Impact of Incentives and Work Discipline on Teacher Performance in Tanjung Lago Junior High Schools".

Teacher's performance at SMP Negeri 1 Tanjung Lago is influenced by incentives and work discipline. The pre-survey showed that 36.6% of teachers were reluctant to take on additional assignments without incentives, in line with the decline in learning process standards by 31.7% (2022–2023). This study examines the influence of financial incentives and work discipline on teachers' ability, enthusiasm, results, quality, efficiency, and self-development, partially and simultaneously. In theory, the study enriches educational management; in practice, it helps teachers and principals understand the importance of incentives and discipline as a basis for policy and quality improvement.

Teacher's performance as a facilitator, motivator, and role model is influenced by internal and external factors, so that improvement requires training, evaluation, facilities, and technology (Hanaysha et al., 2023; Iqbal et al., 2020; Stumbrienė et al., 2024). Indicators include mastery of material, methods, communication, collaboration, and student achievement. High-performing teachers are the key to quality education and investment in the future of the nation (Lovison, 2025). Incentives play a role in driving employee performance and productivity (Alkandi et al., 2023; Liu & Liu, 2022). Incentives are an HR management strategy to increase motivation, productivity, and achievement of organizational goals. Appropriate incentives encourage focused, efficient, collaborative work and reduce absenteeism and turnover. There are two types: financial (bonuses, allowances) and non-financial (recognition, training), which are combined to meet employee needs. The purpose of incentive administration is to encourage positive work performance and culture, with challenges in determining fair indicators and transparent management. The effectiveness of incentives has a direct impact on work enthusiasm, efficiency, and target achievement (Khun-Inkeeree et al., 2022; Wei & Mauhay, 2024). Rewards for high performance increase motivation and loyalty and create a competitive and supportive work environment (Elrayah & Senglali, 2023).

A fair incentive system encourages focus on results and quality and triggers an innovative and adaptive work culture (Adinew, 2024; Kang & Lee, 2021). Incentives also maintain workforce stability through a sense of appreciation and long-term

prospects (Olitsky et al., 2020). The success of incentives is influenced by organizational values, policies, resources, and external factors such as the economy and regulations. Perceptions, needs, and a sense of fairness also determine their effectiveness. Compliance with rules, consistency of behavior, and adherence to organizational values form the basis of an orderly and productive work environment. High discipline encourages optimal results and a harmonious work atmosphere (Amini et al., 2022). Discipline includes prevention and correction, with a fair and firm progressive sanction system. Applicable to individuals and collectives, discipline reflects professional maturity and forms a strong work culture.

Work discipline determines optimal performance, driven by goal alignment, exemplary leadership, fair compensation, firm sanctions, and healthy relationships (Eri Adinata et al., 2024). Motivation, commitment, culture, and leadership strengthen it. Research shows that incentives, work culture, and a conducive environment significantly improve teacher's performance. Discipline is the result of the integration of structural, cultural, and psychological aspects that support professionalism.

B. Methods

The study was conducted at junior high schools in Tanjung Lago District, Banyuasin, South Sumatra, during December 2024–March 2025. A quantitative approach was used to measure the effect of incentives and work discipline on teacher's performance. The analysis included simple and multiple linear regression. All teachers (82 people) were the subjects so that the data represented real conditions. The results were analyzed to determine the strength and magnitude of the influence between variables. This study involved all junior high school teachers in Tanjung Lago District, a total of 82 people. The entire population was used as respondents in data collection because the number was relatively small and allowed for comprehensive observations without sample sorting. Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire instrument with a five-level Likert scale format. Each respondent responded to a number of statements related to the variables of incentives, work discipline, and performance. This approach allows researchers to obtain quantitative data systematically and objectively according to the conditions felt by teachers in the field.

Data were collected using a five-level Likert scale-based questionnaire. Respondents selected the answers that best fit their actual conditions regarding incentives, discipline, and performance. The use of questionnaires allows for systematic and objective collection of quantitative data. Incentives are rewards to increase motivation and achievement, while discipline reflects compliance with work rules. Performance measures work results against task completion time. Incentives are measured through salary, bonuses, allowances, and other financial facilities (Kuya & Kalei, 2022). Discipline is assessed from compliance with working hours, ethics, and organizational procedures (Falletta & Combs, 2021). Performance is measured through ability, results, enthusiasm, self-development, quality, and efficiency (Idrus & Setiyadi, 2021).

Based on the theoretical review above, the framework of thought can be summarized in Figure 1.

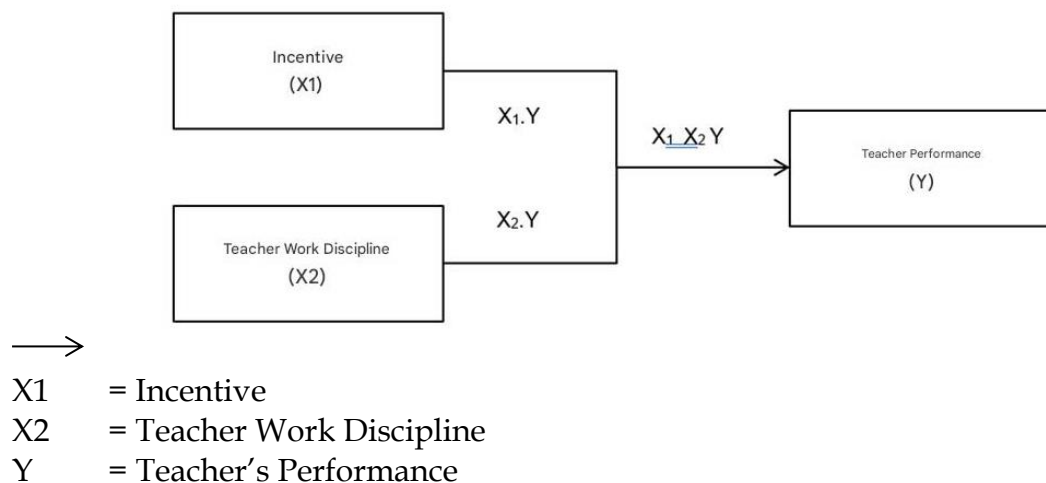


Figure 1. Research Framework

Validity and reliability tests were conducted on 20 teachers of SMP Negeri 5 Rantau Bayur with 30 questionnaire items. Validity was tested using corrected item-total correlation through SPSS 26, with the criteria of correlation values above the critical value at 5% significance. This test aims to identify weaknesses in the editorial, answer options, and the appropriateness of the statement. The results show that the instrument is logically valid, with each item being able to measure variables accurately using Pearson correlation. To calculate the correlation between each statement and the total score using the help of Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) software version 22 on 20 teachers of SMP Negeri 5 Rantau Bayur as a trial of this research variable. Steps for the Pearson product-moment correlation test with the help of SPSS software. The criteria for testing the validity of an instrument are that the instrument is declared valid if $r\text{-count} > r\text{-table}$ and invalid if $r\text{-count} \leq r\text{-table}$.

C. Results and Discussion

The Influence of Incentives on Teachers' Work Performance in Public Middle Schools in Tanjung Lago District

The research conducted at the state junior high schools in Tanjung Lago District obtained a hypothesis that incentives have an effect on teacher's performance. Based on the results of the hypothesis testing, the significance level value (sig) of the incentive variable (X1) was 0.000, which is less than 0.05; thus, H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. This means that it can be said that the incentive variable (X1) has a positive effect on teacher's performance (Y) at State Junior High Schools in Tanjung Lago District. Based on initial observations made on teachers at State Junior High School 1 Tanjung Lago in Banyuasin Regency, it was seen that all teachers who had additional

tasks received incentives as a motivational effort to be more active and enthusiastic in working. This is reinforced by the calculation of the significance level obtained on the incentive variable on teacher's performance, which is smaller than the alpha value (α), so that the results obtained show that there is a positive influence between the two variables. The results of this study are in line with the opinion of Barusman & Amelia (2021), stating that incentives are everything received by employees as compensation for their work. According to Rojikinnor et al. (2023), incentives are everything that employees receive in return for their work. Incentives are a way for the personnel department to improve employee performance, motivation, and job satisfaction through incentives. According to Thakor & Quinn (2019), incentives are intended as a reward for the company for the sacrifice of time, energy, and thought that they have given to the company. Hadijaya et al. (2024) stated that incentives can be defined as any form of appreciation given to employees as a reward for their contributions to the organization. Meanwhile, the definition of incentives, according to Zafar et al. (2021), is that compensation is what employees receive in exchange for their work. Whether hourly wages or periodic salaries, the personnel department usually designs and administers employee compensation.

According to Ubaidillah et al. (2022), the objectives of the incentive system are 1) Appreciating work performance. Providing adequate incentives is an organizational appreciation for the work performance of its employees, which will then encourage employee behavior or performance in accordance with what the organization wants. 2) Ensuring fairness. The existence of a good incentive system will ensure fairness among employees in the organization. 3) Retaining employees. With a good incentive system, employees will feel at home or stay working in the organization. 4) Obtaining quality employees. With a good incentive system, it will attract more prospective employees. 5) Cost control. With a good incentive system, it will reduce the frequency of recruitment as a result of employees often leaving to look for more profitable jobs. 6) Complying with regulations. A good incentive system is a demand from the government/law. A good organization is required to have a good incentive administration system. The incentive indicators in this study are in accordance with those in the regulations and in the form of salaries, bonuses, and wages/incentives; these are financial incentives.

However, in non-financial insurance, allowances and pensions. Each institution has different indicators in the process of providing incentives for employees. There are 2 (two) dimensions regarding incentives, namely: 1) Direct financial incentives, which consist of (a). Salary. Salary is a reward in the form of money received by employees as a consequence of their position as an employee who contributes energy and thoughts in achieving company goals or can also be said to be a fixed payment received by someone from their membership in a company. (b). Bonus. A bonus is a lump sum payment given for meeting performance targets or money paid as a reward for the results of work that has been carried out if it exceeds the target. A bonus is also an additional incentive given to an employee whose value is above his normal salary.

Bonuses can also be used as an award for achieving specific goals set by the company or for his dedication to the company. (c). Incentives. Incentives are direct rewards paid to employees because their performance exceeds the specified standards. Incentives are another form of direct wages outside of wages and salaries, which are fixed compensation, commonly called performance-based compensation (pay-for-performance plan). Incentives are variable rewards given to individuals in a group, which are known based on differences in achieving work results. This is designed to motivate employees to try to increase their work productivity. 2) Indirect financial incentives (fringe benefits) Indirect financial incentives (fringe benefits) are additional compensation given based on company policy to all employees as an effort to improve employee welfare. Examples include facilities such as insurance, allowances, pensions, and others.

This study is in line with the study conducted by (Fardian, 2021), which aims to examine the relationship between teacher incentives and teacher job satisfaction on teacher's performance in vocational high schools located in Koja District, North Jakarta. There is statistical significance and a strong relationship between incentives, teacher job satisfaction, and teacher's performance in vocational high schools located in Koja District, North Jakarta. In line with the study, the next relevant study is the study conducted by Yunita (2023), Contribution of Incentives in Improving Teacher's performance at MIS Budaya Langkat, Tanjung Ibus Village, Secanggang District. The conclusion of the study is that incentives for teachers have a good contribution to teacher's performance, especially in teaching enthusiasm. The incentives received by teachers will encourage work enthusiasm so that the quality of work increases and the results will be maximized. Furthermore, the study conducted by Norjannah & Afandi (2023) was on the provision of incentives in improving motivation and performance of PAI junior high school teachers in North Sangatta. The results are that teachers who are more motivated tend to perform better in carrying out teaching tasks.

The role of providing incentives in improving the motivation and performance of Islamic Religious Education teachers includes a) acting as a driver of Islamic Religious Education teacher motivation, b) improving the quality of teaching, c) acting as support for improving performance, and d) increasing the quality of Islamic Religious Education teaching. In line with the research conducted (Rahmi, 2025). Leadership and incentives have a positive and significant impact on teacher's performance, as shown by the results of the study. The same is true for the research conducted by (Huda & Nasution, 2023), The Influence of the Work Environment, Work Motivation, and Provision of Incentives on Teacher's performance (Study at SDIT Pelita Alam School): It was concluded that the work environment, work motivation, and provision of incentives have a positive influence on teacher's performance at SDIT Pelita Alam Pondok Gede, Bekasi.

This study examines the extent to which the large amount of non-permanent teacher incentives influences teaching motivation at the Kandai II Dompu State Elementary

School, Woja District, with the aim of increasing motivation and learning outcomes, which shows that the large amount of non-permanent teacher incentives influences teaching motivation at the Kandai II Dompou State Elementary School, Woja District, in the 2019/2020 academic year. An effective incentive system is an important part of human resource management because it helps attract and maintain teacher enthusiasm, interest, and performance (Sukawati et al., 2020). In addition, the incentive system also has a significant impact on teacher's performance. The incentive system can include salary, bonuses, and incentives. And also in the form of insurance, allowances, and pensions.

The Influence of Work Discipline on Teacher's performance in Public Junior High Schools in Tanjung Lago District

Based on the results of the hypothesis test, the significance level value (sig) of the work discipline variable (X2) is 0.000, which is smaller than the value (α) of 0.05; thus, H_0 is rejected, meaning H_a is accepted. So it can be concluded that the work discipline variable (X2) has a significant effect on teacher's performance (Y) in public junior high schools throughout Tanjung Lago District. This means that by rejecting H_0 and accepting H_a , the conclusion that can be drawn is that the work discipline variable (X2) has a significant effect on teacher's performance (Y) in public junior high schools throughout Tanjung Lago District. Based on the results of data processing in the linearity test above, it is known that the significance value obtained is 0.236. This means that the significance value is greater than the error level ($0.236 > 0.05$), so it can be concluded that there is a linear relationship between the work discipline variable (X2) and teacher's performance (Y). This means that the more conducive the work discipline, the more the teacher's performance will increase.

According to Izzani (2021), the benefits of work discipline are (1) preventive discipline is useful for creating an orderly work environment and avoiding violations of rules. (2) Corrective discipline is useful for correcting inappropriate employee behavior and maintaining compliance with the rules. The results of a similar study conducted by (Susanti et al., 2025) show that there is a positive influence; the results of this study state that the incentive variable, work discipline, has a positive and significant effect on teacher's performance. Meanwhile, the teacher certification variable as an artificial variable (dummy variable) does not affect teacher's performance. The most dominant variable that affects teacher's performance in this study is the work discipline variable. In line with the study Suciningrum et al. (2021), simultaneously, the competency variables, competency and work discipline together, have a significant effect on teacher's performance.

The Influence of Incentives and Work Discipline on Teacher's performance

Based on data analysis using SPSS 26, the constant value of the regression equation α is 23.483, and the coefficient value of the independent variable b_1 is 0.315 and b_2 is 0.167, so the following regression equation is obtained:

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2$$

$$Y = 23,483 + 0,315 X_1 + 0,167 X_2$$

Research in junior high schools in the Tanjung Lago sub-district, Banyuasin, tested the influence of incentives and work discipline on teacher's performance. Data were collected through a Likert questionnaire (30 incentive items, 21 discipline, and 18 performance) from 82 respondents. The instrument has been tested for validity and reliability, as well as tested for classical assumptions (normality, linearity, multicollinearity). Descriptive and inferential analyses were conducted to test the relationship between variables. The results show the distribution of incentive values that support the understanding of the role of incentives on teacher's performance. The analysis aims to provide a comprehensive picture of the relationship between incentives, discipline, and teacher's performance in the area.

In the direct incentive sub-variable (monthly salary), the majority of respondents agreed (38%) and strongly agreed (57%). For bonuses, 49% agreed and 45% strongly agreed. Indirect incentives in the form of financial payments were supported by 41% agreeing and 51% strongly agreeing, while non-financial payments received 49% agreeing and 41% strongly agreeing. Overall, 0% of respondents disagreed, 6% were neutral, 44% agreed, and 49% strongly agreed, indicating positive support for the incentive variable. In the Incentive Description, the mean value is 132.52, with a standard deviation of 15.798. The following figure shows a frequency histogram of incentive scores against performance:

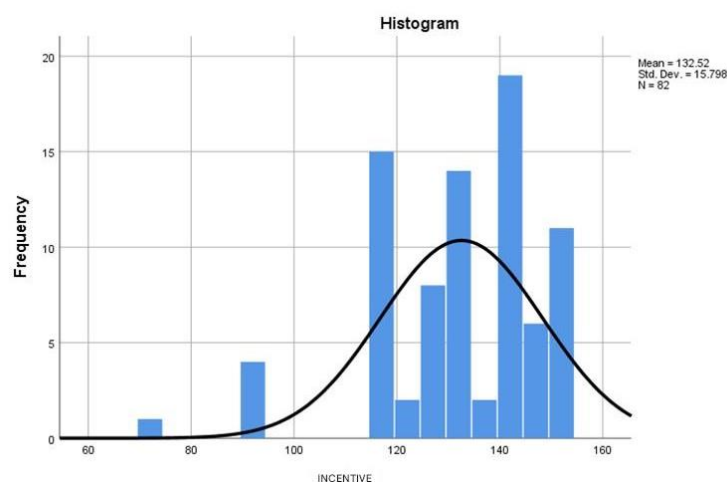


Figure 2. Histogram of Incentive Score X.1

The figure above shows that the histogram bar graph has a bell-shaped curve or is close to it. This indicates that the incentive is in the moderate or fairly good category. In addition, respondents were given a choice score for the work discipline variable. The questionnaire consisted of 21 items with a five-point Likert scale. The percentage of answers showed that the majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the work regulations. On average, 6% disagreed, 8% were neutral, 46% agreed, and 39% strongly agreed. These results indicate optimal work discipline, with no respondents consistently rejecting the rules. The results of the regression test showed that work discipline increased positively with performance. Thus, it can be concluded that the work discipline variable has a significant effect on the teacher's performance variable. In addition, the regression results show that the significant value obtained is 0.000, which is smaller than 0.05, so that H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, meaning that it can be said that there is an influence between incentives (X1) and performance (Y).

D. Conclusion

Incentives and work discipline significantly improve teacher performance, supporting global evidence on motivational strategies in education. Policymakers should design transparent incentive systems and enforce work discipline protocols to enhance teacher performance.

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