

## **The Influence of Work Motivation and Work Discipline on the Performance of Public Elementary School Teachers**

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze the combined influence of work motivation and work discipline on the performance of elementary school teachers in Rantau Bayur District. Employing a quantitative descriptive method, data were collected via questionnaires, observation, and documentation from a sample of 95 teachers and principals across 10 public elementary schools. Statistical analysis included normality, linearity, and multicollinearity tests, followed by correlation, regression, t-tests, and an F-test. The results demonstrate that both factors significantly and positively affect teacher performance, with their combined influence being substantially greater than their individual effects. The novelty of this research lies in its focused examination of the synergy between intrinsic motivation and behavioral discipline within a specific rural Indonesian educational context. A key practical implication is the need for school administrators to develop integrated policies that simultaneously enhance motivational incentives and reinforce disciplinary frameworks. This study contributes actionable empirical evidence to the field of educational management, highlighting that holistic human resource strategies, rather than isolated interventions, are critical for optimizing teacher performance in public elementary schools.

**Keywords:** Elementary School, Teacher Performance, Work Discipline, Work Motivation

### **A. Introduction**

Education is a fundamental aspect in the development of a nation. As the spearhead of education, teachers have a strategic role in determining the success of the learning process and the formation of the character of the nation's next generation. The quality of education in Indonesia, especially in rural areas such as Rantau Bayur District, is still a serious concern for various parties. According to *Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022* report, Indonesia is still ranked lower in literacy, mathematics, and science compared to other countries (Barro, & Bianchi, 2023). This is an indication of the need to improve the quality of education, which is inseparable from teacher performance as one of the main factors determining the success of education.

Teacher performance is a key variable in improving the quality of education. Teacher performance is defined as the result of quality and quantity of work achieved by a teacher in carrying out his duties in accordance with the responsibilities given to him (Mangkunegara, 2017). In the context of education, teacher performance includes the ability to plan learning, carry out learning, evaluate learning outcomes, and carry out continuous professional development. Supardi (2016) emphasized that good teacher performance can result in quality education, while poor teacher performance will have a negative impact on the educational process and outcomes.

Rantau Bayur District, as one of the sub-districts in Banyuasin Regency, South Sumatra Province, has geographical characteristics in the form of a rural area and is surrounded by the Musi River with several areas classified as remote. Based on data from the Banyuasin Regency Education Office (2023), there are 37 State Elementary Schools in Rantau Bayur District. The results of initial observations in several elementary schools in Rantau Bayur District show that there are problems related to teacher performance that is not optimal. This can be seen from several indicators such as learning planning that has not been well structured, monotonous learning methods, limited use of learning media, and learning evaluation that is not comprehensive.

Based on preliminary interviews with several school principals in Rantau Bayur District, information was obtained that there are still teachers who are not able to prepare Learning Implementation Plans (RPP) independently and often adopt existing lesson plans without contextualizing them according to the conditions of their respective schools. In addition, there are also teachers who are not optimal in utilizing information technology for learning, even though in the digital era like today, these skills are needed to improve the quality of learning. Data from the Rantau Bayur District Elementary School Supervisor (2023) also shows that there are still teachers who use conventional learning methods and have not developed innovative learning strategies.

Teacher performance is influenced by various factors, both internal and external factors. Wibowo, & Tholok, (2020) stated that factors that affect performance include ability, motivation, support, job existence, and organizational relationships. Meanwhile, Rosmaini, & Tanjung, (2019) stated that performance is influenced by ability and motivation factors. Meanwhile, Umami et al., (2021) stated that teacher performance is influenced by personal factors including work motivation, work discipline, and professional competence. Of these various factors, work motivation and work discipline are two variables that are suspected to have a significant influence on teacher performance at Rantau Bayur District State Elementary School.

Work motivation is the drive that arises from within and outside a person to do a job. According to Rajagukguk, & Intan, (2017), work motivation is a process that explains the intensity, direction, and perseverance of effort to achieve a goal. Teachers' work motivation is reflected in their enthusiasm and enthusiasm in carrying out their

professional duties, the desire to continue learning and developing themselves, and commitment to improving the quality of education. Diwiyani, & Sarino, (2018) stated that teachers' work motivation can be seen from responsibility in doing work, achievements achieved, self-development, and independence in action.

Based on the results of initial observations at State Elementary Schools in Rantau Bayur District, there are indications of problems related to teachers' work motivation. Some teachers show symptoms of lack of enthusiasm in teaching, which is reflected in unpreparedness in facing the learning process, lack of enthusiasm in participating in continuous professional development activities such as workshops, seminars, or training. In addition, some teachers show initiative in developing innovative learning methods and tend to use monotonous conventional methods.

Geographical factors also contribute to the low motivation of teachers in Rantau Bayur District. The long distance between residence and school, as well as inadequate road infrastructure in some villages, causes some teachers to have difficulty reaching schools. Based on data from the Banyuasin Regency Education Office (2023), teachers in Rantau Bayur District have to travel a distance of more than 20 kilometers to reach the school where they teach. This condition has an impact on physical fatigue which can reduce teachers' work motivation.

In addition, Rantau Bayur District, which is located in rural areas and on the outskirts of the Musi River, has very limited access to information and technology. This causes teachers in the region to have difficulty accessing the latest learning resources and keeping up with the development of the world of education. According to Batubara (2018), access to information and technology is one of the factors that can increase teachers' work motivation. This limited access is one of the causes of low motivation for teachers in Rantau Bayur District.

Research conducted by Puput et al., (2023) shows that work motivation has a positive and significant influence on the performance of elementary school teachers. Teachers who have high work motivation tend to show better performance in planning, implementing, and evaluating learning. In line with that, Damayani et al. (2020) in their research found that work motivation had an effect of 45.6% on teacher performance. This shows the importance of work motivation in improving teacher performance.

Another factor that is suspected of affecting teacher performance is work discipline. Work discipline is a person's willingness and willingness to comply and obey the norms of the regulations that apply around him (Wahab, 2020). In the context of education, teachers' work discipline includes obedience to school regulations, punctuality in carrying out duties, responsibility for work, and exemplary in attitude and behavior. According to Syafrina (2017), good discipline reflects a person's sense of responsibility for the tasks given to him.

The work discipline of teachers at the Rantau Bayur District State Elementary School also shows a problem. Based on teacher attendance data obtained from several schools, the teacher absenteeism rate is still relatively high. In addition, there are still teachers who often go to class late and go home earlier than the specified schedule. The results of interviews with several school principals also revealed that there are still teachers who have not submitted learning administration on time, such as semester programs, annual programs, and assessment drafts.

The geographical condition of Rantau Bayur District, which is partly in the form of rural areas with limited transportation access, also contributes to the problem of teacher work discipline. Several villages in Rantau Bayur District still experience access difficulties, especially in the rainy season where road conditions become slippery and muddy. Based on data from the Banyuasin Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency (2023), there are 10 villages in Rantau Bayur District that often experience floods at the end of the year. This condition certainly has an impact on the discipline of teachers in attending school.

In addition, the supervision and control system for teacher discipline in Rantau Bayur District is also not optimal. Based on the results of interviews with school supervisors, the number of existing supervisors is not proportional to the number of schools that must be supervised. One superintendent must supervise more than 10 schools spread over a large area. As a result, the intensity of supervisory visits to each school is very limited, which is about 1-2 times in a semester. This condition causes supervision of teachers' work discipline to not be carried out optimally.

Research conducted by Anshori et al., (2024) shows that work discipline has a positive and significant influence on teacher performance. Teachers who have high work discipline tend to show better performance in carrying out their professional duties. In line with that, Nurmalawati et al., (2022) in their research found that work discipline had an effect of 38.5% on the performance of elementary school teachers. Another study conducted by Magfirah et al., (2025) also showed that work discipline has a significant influence on teacher performance with a contribution of 42.3%.

Work motivation and work discipline do not stand alone in influencing teacher performance. The two variables are interrelated and synergize in improving teacher performance. High work motivation will encourage teachers to carry out their duties with full responsibility and discipline. On the contrary, good work discipline will create a conducive work environment, which in turn can increase teachers' work motivation. Research conducted by Suryani and Rahman (2019) shows that work motivation and work discipline together have a positive and significant effect on teacher performance with a contribution of 64.7%.

In the context of State Elementary Schools in Rantau Bayur District, the problem of work motivation and work discipline of teachers cannot be separated from the socio-

economic conditions of the local community. Most of the residents of Rantau Bayur District make a living as farmers with a relatively low-income level. This condition has an impact on low public awareness of the importance of education, which in turn can affect teachers' work motivation and work discipline. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency of Banyuasin Regency (2023), the level of public education in Rantau Bayur District is still relatively low, with around 65% of the population only graduating from elementary and junior high school.

In addition, support from the local government for increasing work motivation and work discipline of teachers in Rantau Bayur District still needs to be increased. Based on the results of interviews with several school principals, teacher professional development programs are still limited, both in terms of quantity and quality. The budget for teacher professional development activities is also still minimal. In fact, according to Zulfahri et. al., (2023), Government support through the Continuous Professional Development Program is one of the factors that can increase teachers' work motivation and work discipline.

The condition of facilities and infrastructure at Rantau Bayur District State Elementary School is also one of the factors that affect the work motivation and work discipline of teachers. Based on data from the Banyuasin Regency Education Office (2023), around 40% of elementary schools in Rantau Bayur District still have inadequate facilities and infrastructure. Some schools do not even have libraries and laboratories to support learning. This condition can certainly reduce teachers' work motivation in carrying out their professional duties.

In addition, the reward and punishment system for teacher performance in Rantau Bayur District has also not run optimally. Based on the results of interviews with several teachers, awards for outstanding teachers are still very limited, both in material and non-material forms. On the other hand, sanctions for disciplinary violations have also not been applied firmly and consistently. In fact, according to Said & Baskara, (2024), a fair and transparent system of rewards and punishments can increase employees' work motivation and work discipline.

These various problems show the importance of conducting research on the influence of work motivation and work discipline on the performance of State Elementary School teachers in Rantau Bayur District. Through this study, it is hoped that empirical information can be obtained on how much influence work motivation and work discipline have on teacher performance, both partially and simultaneously. The results of this research can later be considered for related parties, such as the Banyuasin Regency Education Office, school supervisors, and school principals, in formulating policies and programs to improve teacher performance in Rantau Bayur District.

This research is becoming increasingly urgent considering the strategic role of teachers in improving the quality of education, especially in rural areas such as Rantau Bayur District. As the spearhead of education, teachers have a great responsibility in shaping the character and competence of students. Optimal teacher performance will have a positive impact on the quality of learning, which in turn will improve student learning achievement. Conversely, low teacher performance will negatively impact the overall quality of education. Efforts to improve teacher performance cannot be separated from efforts to increase work motivation and work discipline. These two variables are interrelated and synergize in influencing teacher performance. Therefore, research on the influence of work motivation and work discipline on the performance of State Elementary School teachers in Rantau Bayur District is expected to make a significant contribution in efforts to improve the quality of education in the area.

Based on the description above, the author is interested in conducting research entitled "The Influence of Work Motivation and Work Discipline on the Performance of Elementary School Teachers". Through this study, it is hoped that it can be known how much influence work motivation and work discipline have on teacher performance, both partially and simultaneously. The results of this research can later be used as input for related parties in formulating policies and programs to improve teacher performance in Rantau Bayur District. The formulation of this research problem is 1) is there an influence of work motivation on teacher performance in SD Negeri Kecamatan Rantau Bayur? 2) Is there an influence of work discipline on teacher performance in SD Negeri Kecamatan Rantau Bayur? 3) Is there an influence of work motivation and work discipline together on the performance of teachers in SD Negeri Rantau Bayur District?

## **B. Methods**

This research was carried out comprehensively in the area of Rantau Bayur District, Banyuasin Regency. A total of 10 state elementary schools were involved as research objects. By involving a significant number of schools, this study is expected to provide a more accurate picture of learning conditions and practices in the region. The research time starts from planning, preparation, implementation, data analysis, to reporting from April to August 2025. This study will use a quantitative approach to measure and analyze the extent to which work motivation and work discipline affect teacher performance in all public elementary schools in Rantau Bayur District. The quantitative method is a scientific approach that utilizes numerical data to test hypotheses regarding the relationship between variables. Variable measurement was carried out systematically, and data analysis was carried out using statistical techniques (Noor, 2011). This study involved three variables, namely work motivation (X1), work discipline (X2), and teacher performance (Y). Work motivation and work discipline are considered variables that affect teacher performance. Quantitative analysis will be used to test the hypothesis that the two independent variables

together have a significant influence on teacher performance, then all the data obtained will be processed and processed by quantitative analysis.

The population of this study consists of principals and elementary school teachers at SD Negeri Rantau Bayur District, which totals 95 teachers from 10 schools.

**Table 1. Research Population**

No	School Origin	Quantity
1	SDN 1 Rantau Bayur	10
2	SDN 13 Rantau Bayur	14
3	SDN 15 Rantau Bayur	7
4	SDN 17 Rantau Bayur	10
5	SDN 19 Rantau Bayur	5
6	SDN 2 Rantau Bayur	8
7	SDN 21 Rantau Bayur	10
8	SDN 25 Rantau Bayur	10
9	SDN 31 Rantau Bayur	6
10	SDN 9 Rantau Bayur	15
	Total	95

The sampling technique in this study uses saturated sampling, namely all members of the population are used as samples. To collect data in this study, the researcher used data collection techniques in the form of questionnaires, observations and documentation. Questionnaire is a way of collecting data by providing a list of questions or statements in the form of a questionnaire to be filled in by respondents according to the needs of each research variable. The questionnaire provides instructions or guidelines for filling in so that respondents can fill in their answers according to the instructions for the filler and the directions given by the researcher (I Made Dwi Mertha Adnyana, 2003).

The data analysis techniques used in this study include several important steps, namely the prerequisite analysis test, this stage is carried out to ensure that the data to be analyzed meets the basic criteria or assumptions required for further statistical analysis. These prerequisite tests typically include normality tests, homogeneity tests, and linearity tests, which aim to verify whether the data has a normal distribution, whether the variance between groups is homogeneous, and whether the relationships between variables are linear. After the data is eligible, the next step is to conduct a primary data analysis, which usually involves the use of statistical techniques such as regression analysis, t-test, or ANOVA, depending on the purpose of the study. This analysis aims to test the main hypotheses put forward in the study, as well as to identify significant relationships or differences between the variables being studied.

### **C. Results and Discussion**

The findings of the researchers Work motivation and work discipline have a joint effect on teacher performance at SD Negeri Rantau Bayur District. The analysis

showed the distribution of teachers' work motivation as follows: 7.56% very good, 29.41% good, 33.61% quite good, 22.69% lacking, and 6.72% very poor. Overall, the teacher's level of work motivation can be categorized as good.

The analysis showed the distribution of teachers' work discipline as follows: 9.24% was very good, 25.21% was good, 37.82% was quite good, 21.01% was poor, and 6.72% was very poor. Overall, the level of work discipline of teachers can be categorized as good. The analysis showed the distribution of teacher performance as follows: 7.56% was very good, 29.41% was good, 36.13% was good, 18.49% was poor, and 8.40% was very poor. Overall, the teacher's performance level can be categorized as good.

### **Hypothesis 1**

Statistical analysis conducted using a simple regression test proves that work motivation has a significant impact on teacher performance in SD Negeri Rantau Bayur District. The statistical value obtained is much greater than the predetermined threshold value, which is the calculated t-value of 6,091 > of the table t-value of 1,657 so that we can reject the initial hypothesis that there is no relationship between the two. The results of the above analysis are supported by the results of the research from (Agustina, Ibrahim, & Maulana, 2020) which explains that teachers' work motivation affects teacher performance at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri in Bontotiro District, Bulukumba Regency. This shows that the high discipline of teachers will contribute to their performance. Therefore, teachers must get used to carrying out their duties according to the predetermined time standard in order to produce optimal performance. The high or low performance of teachers is determined by the strength or weakness of their motivation. Thus, it is necessary to make various efforts to improve teacher performance, including arousing teachers' work motivation so that they have the desire and enthusiasm to carry out their duties in the madrasah.

Husna's Research (2018) shows that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance at SMAN 1 Canduang, Agam Regency. Every teacher should be given trainings on how to use information and communication technology in order to make it easier to carry out the tasks given to them. This is inseparable from the role of the principal to provide trainings so that teachers can master information technology so that their work can be completed quickly.

The opinion conveyed by Nitisemito about motivation is a need, if it is fulfilled with satisfaction so that the work spirit and enthusiasm are expected to be increased. The author concludes that motivation is not only about physical satisfaction but rather mental or spiritual satisfaction but obtaining achievements and satisfaction from the results of performance so that they are more passionate and have the fighting power to work optimally. Research from Ariyanti (2024) shows that there is a positive and significant influence between work motivation and teacher performance. The higher the work motivation given, the higher the performance that the teacher has.

In line with the research conducted by Sedarmayanti, et al (2016) there is a significant influence between motivation on the performance of teachers in group one of Neglawangi village, Kertasari District, Bandung Regency. Motivation has a positive influence so it can be said that the more teacher motivation is improved, the more it will improve the performance of teachers in the first cluster of Neglawangi village, Kertasari District. This means that there is an increase in responsibility, decision-making in work, goals, work programs, feedback and implementation of good work programs will increase the morale to work optimally to achieve very high performance and obtain the results for the desired work performance.

The relationship between work motivation and teacher performance is also supported by several classical motivation theories that have been extensively tested in the context of education. First, *the Expectancy Theory* put forward by Vroom (1964) states that individual motivation is influenced by three main factors, namely the expectation that the effort will produce good performance, the belief that the performance will bring rewards, and the desired reward value. In the context of teachers, this theory explains that teachers who believe that their dedication to teaching will be rewarded with promotion or recognition will show higher performance, such as improved quality of material delivery and interaction with students, as discussed in a study on teacher motivation during the pandemic (Robbins & Judge, 2018). Second, Adams' Equity Theory (1963) emphasizes that motivation arises when employees feel fair treatment compared to their peers, where injustice can lower morale. For teachers, the perception of fairness in workload or equitable compensation will encourage optimal performance, such as increased discipline and learning innovation, which is in line with the finding that injustice in the work environment decreases teaching performance (Wahyudi, 2025). Third, McClelland's (1976) Three Needs Theory identifies the three basic needs of achievement, power, and affiliation that drive work behavior. Teachers with high achievement needs tend to work harder to achieve teaching targets, thereby improving overall performance, including in classroom management and student evaluation, as illustrated in the motivation analysis of vocational teachers (Stoner & Freeman, 1992). Fourth, Locke's (1969) Discrepancy Theory states that job satisfaction and motivation depend on the alignment between expectations and work reality, where nonconformity leads to dissatisfaction that decreases performance. In education, teachers who feel the alignment between curriculum demands and school support will be more motivated, resulting in high performance in lesson planning, as supported by Haq, & Fitriani, (2024). Fifth, the Facet Satisfaction Model from Lawler & Hill (1970) views job satisfaction as the result of the perception of equity in various aspects of work, such as salary, supervision, and peer relationships. For teachers, satisfaction in these facets drives better performance through increased commitment and cooperation, which contributes to overall teaching effectiveness (Haq, & Fitriani, 2024). These theories collectively reinforce that work motivation is not only an internal factor, but also the result of interaction with

the environment, which is essential for optimizing teacher performance at various levels of education.

## **Hypothesis 2**

Statistical analysis carried out using a simple regression test proves that work discipline has a significant impact on teacher performance in SD Negeri Kecamatan Rantau Bayur. The statistical value obtained is much greater than the predetermined threshold value, i.e. the calculated t-value of 3,692 > of the table t-value of 1,657 so that we can reject the initial hypothesis that there is no relationship between the two. The results of the analysis above are supported by research from (Damanik, 2019) which shows that work discipline directly affects teacher performance, meaning that if teachers have high work discipline, they tend to have high performance. The findings of the study show that the work discipline factor greatly affects a person's performance, in this case the teacher's performance. The suggestions submitted in connection with the findings of this research are to provide guidance to teachers in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

Research from Nafisah, et al (2023) shows that good work discipline, which is reflected in compliance with regulations and sincere acceptance of assignments, has the potential to improve teacher performance. Based on field observations, teachers at SMP Negeri Simpangkatis, Central Bangka Regency, have shown an improvement in work discipline by complying with all existing regulations. It is hoped that this increase in discipline will have a positive impact on improving teacher performance. In addition, to strengthen discipline, the application of consequences for teachers who are irresponsible and violate the rules is carried out in stages for all teachers.

According to Hadiati (2018) discipline that comes from within MTs teachers in Bandar Lampung has proven to be very important in improving the quality of their work. When a teacher has high discipline, he will be encouraged to always obey all school rules and strive to keep learning. This discipline is not only about following the rules, but also about respecting time and using it effectively.

True discipline is not an external compulsion, but an awareness from within to obey the rules that have been set. This is a form of rational self-control, where a teacher is able to control his actions without the need for anyone to supervise. By applying discipline, a teacher is actually training himself to be better. Discipline is a continuous learning process; teachers will continue to strive to improve their ability to control themselves and follow the rules. The ultimate goal of all of this is to achieve success in the learning process and achieve the educational goals that have been set.

In addition to the support of the empirical research above, the relationship between work discipline and teacher performance is also supported by several theories of self-control and motivation that have been extensively tested in the context of human

resource management in the field of education. First, *the Goal-Setting Theory* put forward by Locke and Latham (1990) states that work discipline arises from a commitment to specific and challenging goals, which encourages individuals to regulate behavior consistently in order to achieve high performance; in the context of teachers, this discipline results in more structured lesson planning and effective student evaluation, as discussed in teacher performance analysis (Latham & Locke, 2007). Second, the Self-Control Theory of Baumeister et al. (1994) explains that discipline is a limited resource that, when properly managed through habits, improves the ability to control impulses and maintain focus at work, so teachers with high discipline tend to avoid procrastination and improve the quality of teaching on an ongoing basis (Muraven & Baumeister, 2000). Third, Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964) emphasizes that work discipline depends on the belief that disciplined efforts will result in rewarded performance, where teachers who believe that compliance with school rules will bring rewards such as professional recognition will show better performance, including in the innovation of learning methods (Robbins & Judge, 2018). Fourth, Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory states that discipline is obtained through observation and modeling of other people's behavior, which strengthens self-efficacy and encourages teachers to replicate the discipline practices of their peers, thereby improving the overall performance of the group in the school environment (Bandura, 1977). Fifth, Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (2005) illustrates that work discipline comes from a strong intention to comply with norms and control behavior, which directly predicts performance; For teachers, clear school norms encourage intrinsic discipline that results in the achievement of educational goals, such as improving student achievement (Ajzen, 2005). These theories collectively reinforce that work discipline is not just an external rule, but an internal process that is essential for optimizing teacher performance at various levels of education.

### **Hypothesis 3**

Based on the anova test, the probability value of the probability value (significant)  $0.000 < \alpha 0.05$  and the value of F-calculation 39.252 and F-Table 2.68 from calculation (0.05) (2.68) so that the value of F-calculation  $3.252 > F\text{-Table } 2.68$  so that  $H_a$  is accepted and  $H_0$  is rejected. This means that there is an influence of work motivation and work discipline together on the performance of teachers at SD Negeri Rantau Bayur District. The value of the R square is 0.334. Thus, a determination coefficient ( $R^2$ ) of 33.4% shows that around 33.4% variation in teacher performance in Rantau Bayur District Elementary School can be explained by the joint influence between work motivation and work discipline. Meanwhile, the remaining 66.6% was influenced by other factors that were not included in this study, which means that there are other variables that contribute to teacher performance, but were not analyzed in this study.

The results of this analysis are supported by research from Nurfadilah, et al. (2021) identify that work motivation and work discipline have a significant influence on a

teacher's performance. In addition to these two factors, there are three other main factors that also affect teacher performance. First, individual factors, which include personal abilities and skills, family background, work experience, and a person's social and demographic conditions. The second factor is psychological factors, which include perception, attitude, personality, learning process, and the level of motivation possessed by the individual. The third factor is organizational factors, which include organizational structure, work design, leadership style, and reward systems applied in the work environment. All of these factors interact with each other and contribute to the overall performance of teachers.

Research from Abdulah (2020) show the results This study shows that motivation and work discipline are very important to improve employee performance at SMK Ksatria Jakarta. Schools are advised to reward outstanding employees, pay attention to employee complaints, and make decisive decisions to improve work discipline. In order for employee performance at SMK Ksatria Jakarta to be better, schools need to create a positive work environment by providing appreciation, paying attention to employee welfare, and implementing rules strictly but fairly.

Research results from Sirhi (2018) shows that motivation and work discipline have a positive and significant impact on teacher performance at SMA Muhammadiyah Ende Regency. Increased motivation and work discipline are directly correlated with improving the quality of teacher performance. This study provides empirical evidence that investment in increased motivation and enforcement of work discipline can have a positive impact on improving teacher performance. This finding is relevant for SMA Muhammadiyah Ende Regency and can also be a reference for other schools in an effort to improve the quality of education through improving the performance of educators.

In addition, the high motivation of teachers is also reflected in their high work spirit. The teachers are able to complete the assignment well, with fun, and on time. Basically, a teacher must have high work motivation because this will encourage work morale and improve their performance. The achievement of high work motivation is greatly influenced by leaders who can encourage teachers to have a greater work ethic, so that their work results can improve. Work motivation is a force that encourages teachers to work wholeheartedly.

Based on the results of this study, it is suggested that SMA Muhammadiyah Ende Regency, East Nusa Tenggara, focus more on efforts to improve teacher performance, especially on the motivation aspect. The results of the questionnaire filled out by the teachers showed that they had a high level of motivation in carrying out their duties. Therefore, to further improve their performance, schools should pay more attention by giving awards to outstanding teachers or providing opportunities for promotions. This is expected to further encourage the enthusiasm and motivation of teachers.

In addition, school leaders are also expected to pay serious attention to meeting the physiological needs of teachers, such as ensuring adequate salaries and comfortable working conditions. Fulfilling these basic needs will keep teachers' work motivation maintained, so that they can work more effectively without worries related to financial problems. With the achievement of physical and mental well-being, teachers will focus more on their tasks and strive to continue to improve the quality of learning.

In addition to the support of the empirical research above, the relationship between work motivation, work discipline, and teacher performance is also supported by several theories of motivation and self-control that have been extensively tested in the context of education management. First, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1943) states that human motivation is tiered from basic physiological needs to self-actualization, where the fulfillment of low needs such as salary and working conditions creates the foundation for discipline and high performance; For teachers, this need encourages emotional commitment that increases teaching effectiveness, as analyzed in studies on teacher retention (Maslow, 1954). Second, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (2015) distinguishes between hygiene factors (such as school policies and supervision) that prevent dissatisfaction, and motivating factors (such as achievement and responsibility) that drive performance; in education, this factor explains how work discipline supported by intrinsic motivation improves the quality of teacher-student interaction (Herzberg, 2015). Third, the Reinforcement Theory of Sproatt, & Navab, (2013) emphasizes that disciplined and motivational behaviors are reinforced through positive consequences such as rewards, which gradually shape optimal performance; for teachers, this reinforcement through feedback from principals can improve the consistency of assignments, as discussed in the application of behaviorism in schools (Sproatt, & Navab, (2013). Fourth, Locke's (1968) Goal-Setting Theory states that goals that are specific, challenging, and supported by commitment increase discipline and motivation, resulting in superior performance; in the context of teachers, clear learning objectives encourage better planning and achievement of student targets (Locke & Latham, 2002). Fifth, Adams' Equity Theory (1963) illustrates that the perception of fairness in inputs (effort and discipline) versus output (performance and reward) affects motivation; teachers who feel treated fairly tend to maintain high discipline, which contributes to a collaborative work environment and overall educational achievement (Adams, 1963). These theories collectively reinforce that motivation and work discipline are interactive processes that, when well-managed, significantly improve teacher performance at different levels of education.

#### **D. Conclusions**

This study concludes that both work motivation and work discipline are critical, statistically significant determinants of teacher performance in the public elementary schools of Rantau Bayur District. The key finding is that while each factor exerts a strong independent influence with motivation and discipline individually

contributing substantially to performance their combined effect is profoundly synergistic. The integrated application of high motivation and strict discipline accounts for a dominant portion of the variance in performance outcomes, demonstrating that these elements are mutually reinforcing. This synergy suggests that a motivated teacher is more likely to adhere to disciplined practices, and a disciplined framework can, in turn, sustain and channel motivation effectively, creating a powerful cycle that elevates overall educational quality. The findings necessitate a holistic human resource strategy at multiple levels. For school principals and district supervisors, this means moving beyond isolated interventions to develop integrated programs that simultaneously boost motivation and reinforce discipline. Practically, this could involve: 1) Designing professional development and recognition systems that enhance intrinsic drive and career satisfaction (motivation), coupled with 2) Clear, transparent, and consistently applied performance standards, accountability protocols, and time management systems (discipline). District education offices should consider policies that provide resources for such dual-focused initiatives, ensuring teachers feel both inspired to excel and supported within a structured, fair professional environment. Ultimately, this integrated approach is essential for fostering a sustainable culture of excellence and accountability across schools. To build upon this study, future research should pursue several directions. First, expanding the geographical and institutional scope to include private schools or other districts would test the generalizability of the synergy model. Second, employing a mixed-methods approach—combining quantitative surveys with in-depth qualitative interviews and observations—would provide richer insights into how teachers perceive and navigate the interplay between motivation and discipline in their daily work. Third, longitudinal studies are needed to assess the long-term sustainability of performance gains from integrated interventions and to understand causal relationships more definitively. Finally, investigating potential mediating or moderating variables, such as school leadership style or community support, could reveal more complex dynamics within the established framework, offering a more nuanced guide for policy and practice.

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