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THE EFFECT OF THE WORK ENVIRONMENT ON EMPLOYEE MORALE IN THE MEDAN CITY POPULATION AND CIVIL REGISTRY OFFICE

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Abstract

The quality public services can be fulfilled when the agency is able to manage the morale of each employee well. High morale will encourage employees to work optimally. However, classical issues related to public services are in fact still often occur at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency where the administration process provided is still considered complicated and slow by the society. This study aims to determine and analyze the influence of the work environment on employee morale. The type of research used is associative (relationship) with a quantitative approach. The sampling of 55 public civil servants at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency was carried out using probability sampling technique. Data obtained through questionnaires were analyzed descriptively and processed using SmartPLS program. The results of this study indicate that: 1) the work environment condition is at 4.08 which means entering in good category, 2) the employee morale earned a 4.20 so it is classified in a high-level, 3) the work environment has a positive and significant effect on employee morale with R Square value of 0,577. This means that the contribution of the work environment influence to the morale of employees at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency are at 57,7% and other 42,3% is influenced by other variables beyond this study.

Keywords: *Employee Morale, Public Civil Servant, Work Environment*

1. INTRODUCTION

Human Resources (HR) has a dominant role in the continuity of existing activities in the organization. Organizations can proceed if there is human intervention as the driving force in it. To be able to compete competitively, organizations must be able to manage their human resources appropriately. Human resources who are able to work effectively and efficiently will have a positive impact on the future development of the organization.

The success of an organization is highly dependent on the performance of each member. In addition to improving the quality of the organization itself, with good performance, there is a great chance for the organization to be able to achieve its goals. Therefore, it is necessary for organizations to pay attention to what efforts can be made to improve performance, one of which is to instill high morale. Bowles & Cooper (2009) highlight that "one of the most prominent benefits that accrues from high employee morale is enhanced performance. Improved performance is a result of performance both at the individual level and that of the organization as a whole".

The Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency (hereinafter referred to as disdukcapil) is one of the government agencies whose job is to serve the administrative needs of the community in the form of managing and issuing documents and civil records,

especially those related to population events such as births, deaths, marriages, divorces, ratification of children, confessions children or adoption. Seeing that the responsibility they have is so great, the role of work enthusiasm in Disdukcapil employees is very crucial, especially when this concerns the management of public data. Quality public services can be realized if agencies are able to manage the employee morale of each employee properly.

Based on Law Number 43 of 1999 concerning Staffing Principles, every Civil Servant (PNS) is obliged to provide the best possible service to the community. In carrying out government and development tasks, civil servants are required to be fair, professional, responsible and honest. However, classic problems related to public services in fact still often occur in Medan's civil society where the administration process is still considered difficult and slow by the community. This is because the solution to overcoming problems or obstacles that occur in services at the Medan civil society office often still requires pressure from the authorities so that the administrative process can run smoothly, not from their own awareness to provide optimal service.

Employee enthusiasm at work can also be assessed through their presence in the office. Based on field observations, the authors often find employees who arrive late and are not even seen at the service counter even though the clock is already 09.00 WIB. In further review, an overview of the presence of Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency employees can be seen in table 1 below:

Table 1. Recapitulation of Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency Employee Absentee Levels Without Information for the February-August 2021 Period

Month	Alpha Absence Frequency	Work Effectiveness (Days)	Total Employees (Person)	Alpha Absenteeism Rate (%)
February	126	19	128	5,18
March	161	22	128	5,72
April	136	21	128	5,06
May	92	17	128	4,23
June	92	21	124	3,53
July	119	21	124	4,57
August	117	20	123	4,77

Source: Processed Research Data Results, 2021

Based on table 1 above, the percentage of employee absenteeism at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency without information or neglect often fluctuates where the highest absenteeism rate occurs in March with a percentage of 5,72%, while the highest increase occurs in July which increased to 1,04% higher than the previous month.

The low enthusiasm of Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency employees to work or provide quality work results cannot be separated from the influence of the working environment conditions around them. In general, the work environment is everything that is around employees while working. Boles et al in (Waktola, 2019:41) stated that "apart from increasing employee morale and performance, a decent work

environment also helps reduce employee absenteeism so that productivity in the workplace also increases".

According to Sarode & Shirsath (2014:2735), "The physical aspects of a workplace environment can have a direct impact on the productivity, health and safety, comfort, concentration, job satisfaction and morale of the people within it". The moral in this statement is morale, so it can be interpreted that the work environment is able to influence employee morale at work.

A healthy, good and fun work environment will encourage employee feelings and satisfaction, so that the enthusiasm of employees to work harder can grow and organizational goals can be achieved effectively and efficiently. However, in reality problems related to working environment conditions still frequently occur at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency. The problem is in the form of inadequate conditions for Medan City Population and Civil Registry Office. Based on the results of the initial observations made, one of the phenomena that the authors found was noise from outside the office which could still be heard inside the room because the office entrance doors were often left open intentionally by officers. Apart from noise coming from outside, noise pollution also arises from inside the office where the chatter between employees can be heard by residents very clearly.

Based on further observations, we found workspaces that had an unbalanced ratio between the number of personnel and room capacity so that the distance between desks was not ideal. This situation results in employees not being able to work freely because their space for movement becomes narrow and triggers the concentration of employees while working easily lost. In addition, the condition of the room temperature also needs to be considered. The reason is, even though the office is equipped with air conditioning facilities, it often still feels hot and humid which causes discomfort when in it.

The work environment condition can certainly have a negative effect on the morale of the employees. The employees success level in carrying out their duties can decrease if the surrounding working environment conditions are not conducive and do not support the implementation of work activities from employees. This is because the concentration of employees' work becomes easily disturbed and tends not to be serious in carrying out their obligations so that they are unable to provide maximum work results. Likewise, the availability of facilities that are lacking will affect the effectiveness and efficiency of work time so that vulnerable jobs are not completed in a timely manner. In fact, an environmental condition is said to be good or appropriate if humans can carry out their activities optimally, healthy, safe and comfortable (Sedarmayanti, 2011:28).

Based on the background and explanation above, the problem formulation that will be discussed in this study is whether there is an influence of work environment on employee morale at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency. This study aims to determine the work environment and employee morale at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency, and to analyze the influence of the work environment on employee morale.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Work Environment

The work environment is an important component in supporting the work life of employees. According to Sutrisno (2017) "he work environment is the overall working facilities and infrastructure around employees who are doing work that can affect the implementation of work. Nitisemito (2001) defines the work environment as everything that exists around workers and which can influence them in carrying out the tasks they are charged with. Furthermore, according to Sedarmayanti (2011:2) the work environment is the whole of the tools and materials encountered, the surrounding environment in which a person works, his work methods, and work arrangements both as individuals and as a group. According to Wursanto (2003) the two types of work environment are as follows:

1) Physical work environment, everything related to the physical aspect of the work environment which includes the condition of the building, work equipment facilities, and the strategic location of the building
2) Psychological work environment, everything related to the psychological aspect of the work environment which includes a sense of security at work, employee loyalty, and employee satisfaction.

Nitisemito (2001) suggests seven indicators that serve as benchmarks for the work environment, namely: 1) Lighting; 2) Cleanliness; 3) Air circulation; 4) Coloring; 5) Noise; 6) Security; and 7) Work atmosphere.

2.2. Employee Morale

Griffin & Ebert (2007:246) argue that employee morale is the overall attitude of employees towards their work environment. According to Nitisemito (2001) employee morale is to do work more actively, so that the work can be expected to be faster and better. In their book, Employee Morale: Driving Performance in Challenging Times, Bowles and Cooper (2009: 2) define employee morale as the state of individual psychological wellbeing based upon a sense of confidence, usefulness and purpose.

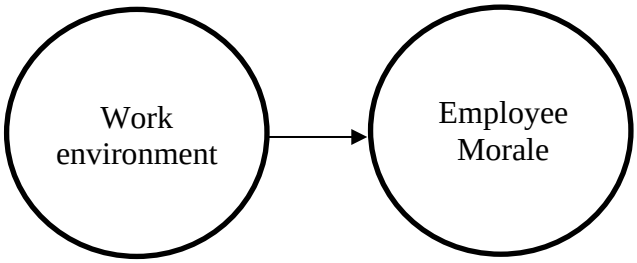
High or low employee morale can be influenced by various factors. Lateiner et al. (1959) state that there are six factors that influence employee morale, including:

1) The worker's pride in his work and his satisfaction in doing a good job
2) His attitude towards his boss
3) His desire to move forward
4) Her feelings have been treated well
5) His ability to get along with co-workers
6) Awareness of responsibility towards work

How much enthusiasm an employee has at work will affect the quantity and quality of work produced. Nitisemito in Darmawan (2013) suggests four indicators used to measure employee morale, namely: 1) Absence; 2) Cooperation; 3) Job satisfaction; and 4) Discipline.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

The form of research used in this research is associative (relationship) with a quantitative approach, namely research that aims to determine the relationship between two or more variables that can be achieved by using statistics or other measurement methods. Furthermore, Hardani et al. (2020:254) adds that "quantitative research is research that focuses on measuring and analyzing cause-and-effect relationships between various variables". The use of quantitative research with valid and reliable instruments as well as appropriate and appropriate statistical analysis has resulted in the research results being achieved not deviating from the actual conditions (Ismail & Sri, 2019). If described, the framework generated in this study is as follows:



Source: Nitisemito Theory,1991

Figure 1. Framework of Thinking

The hypothesis used in this study relates to whether there is a relationship between variable X (the independent variable) and variable Y (the dependent variable). Therefore, the hypothesis of this study is:

H0: The work environment has no effect on employee morale at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency.

Ha: The work environment has a positive effect on employee morale at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency.

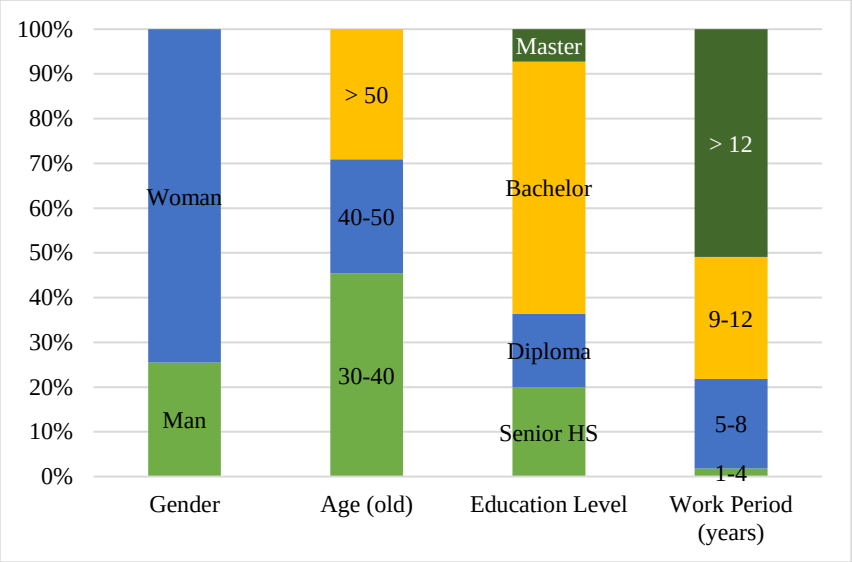
The population in this study were all Civil Servants at the Department of Population and Civil Registry of Medan City with a sample of 55 people. The sampling technique used in this study was probability sampling with the proportional stratified random sampling method. Data was collected through a questionnaire which was then analyzed descriptively and inferentially using the PLS (Partial Least Square) method with the help of the SmartPLS program. In PLS there were two stages of measurement that can be tested simultaneously, namely the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model). Hypothesis testing was carried out using a partial test (t test) with the bootstrapping method on SmartPLS.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Results

In this study, as many as 55 employees at the Medan City Population and Civil Registry Office were selected as respondents in the questionnaire distributed. The characteristics of the respondents were divided into 4 (four) categories which included gender, age, level of education, and years of service of the respondents. Research on the characteristics of respondents based on these categories can be seen in Figure 2 below.

Based on the figure, most of the respondents are women, in general the respondents are aged 30-40 years, the last education level is undergraduate, and have worked for more than 12 years.



Source: Descriptive Analysis Results, 2021

Figure 2. General Characteristics of Respondents

In the work environment variable, there are 14 question items given to respondents to answer and 12 question items in the employee morale variable. The results of respondents' responses to the question items of the two variables can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. Average Distribution of Respondents' Answers

Items	Average value	
	Work Environment (X)	Employee Morale (Y)
1	4,40	4,58
2	4,45	4,51
3	4,56	4,55
4	4,58	4,35
5	3,95	3,98
6	3,40	3,96
7	4,02	4,27
8	4,07	3,56
9	3,18	3,25
10	4,31	4,49
11	4,20	4,40
12	4,25	4,44

13	3,91	-
14	3,89	-
Combined Average	4,08	4,20

Source: Descriptive Analysis Results, 2021

4.1.1. Outer Model Evaluation

1) Validity Test

Table 3. Outer Loading Variable Validity Test Results

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	Information
Work Environment (X)	X1	0,726	Valid
	X2	0,74	Valid
	X3	0,76	Valid
	X4	0,74	Valid
	X5	0,755	Valid
	X6	0,81	Valid
	X7	0,771	Valid
	X8	0,738	Valid
	X9	0,813	Valid
	X10	0,756	Valid
	X11	0,769	Valid
	X12	0,764	Valid
	X13	0,919	Valid
	X14	0,899	Valid
Employee Moral (Y)	Y1	0,855	Valid
	Y2	0,874	Valid
	Y3	0,732	Valid
	Y4	0,826	Valid
	Y5	0,777	Valid
	Y6	0,817	Valid
	Y7	0,781	Valid
	Y8	0,857	Valid
	Y9	0,839	Valid

	Y10	0,784	Valid
	Y11	0,802	Valid
	Y12	0,79	Valid

Source: PLS Processed Data Results, 2021

An indicator is considered valid if it has a loading factor value > 0,5 (Gunarto, 2018:115). Based on table 3 above, it can be seen that the acquisition of the results of all research items from calculations and testing the validity of the outer loading research instruments conducted on 55 respondents met the validity standard with an r-count value > 0,5. Thus, each variable research indicator item submitted to the respondent is appropriate and can be used for further research.

2) Reliability Test

Table 4. Reliability Test Results

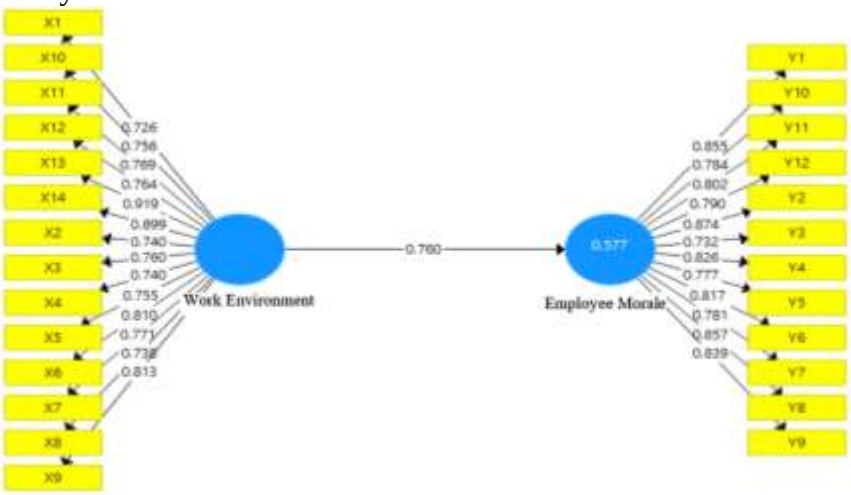
Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted	Information
Work environment	0,951	0,957	0,616	reliable
Employee Morale	0,953	0,959	0,659	reliable

Source: PLS Processed Data Results, 2021

An instrument can be said to be reliable if it has a Cronbach's Alpha value > 0,7 in the reliability test (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2021:44). Based on table 4 above, it can be seen that the results obtained from testing the Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values of the work environment and work enthusiasm variables meet the established reliability value standards, which are greater than 0,7 so that it can be said that the instruments of these two variables are reliable and can be reused for further research.

4.1.2. Evaluation of the Inner Model

1) Path Analysis



Source: PLS Processed Data Results, 2021

Figure 3. Path Analysis Results

Based on Figure 3, the path analysis test conducted on the influence of work environment variables on employee morale variables obtained a path coefficient of 0,760. Therefore, it can be concluded that the work environment variable has a positive influence on employee morale at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency.

2) Coefficient of Determination

Testing the coefficient of determination (R^2) is used to measure how far the percentage ability of the independent variable explains the dependent variable. The value of the coefficient of determination ranges from zero to one ($0 \leq R^2 \geq 1$). The greater the R^2 (close to one), the greater the effect of the independent variable (X) on the dependent variable (Y).

Table 5. Test Results for the Coefficient of Determination (R Square)

	***R* Square**
Employee Morale	0,577

Source: PLS Processed Data Results, 2021

Testing the coefficient of determination (R^2) is used to measure how far the percentage ability of the independent variable explains the dependent variable.Based on table 5 above, the results of the R Square value in this study were 0,577. This shows that the influence of the work environment on employee morale at the Department of Population and Civil Registry of Medan City is 57,7% while the remaining 42,3% comes from the influence of other variables outside of this study.

3) Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis testing (t test) is a procedure carried out in research with the aim of being able to make a decision to accept or reject the proposed hypothesis. The level of truth of the data in this study is 95% (α = 5%), so the T-table value for the one-tailed hypothesis used is 1,67.

Table 6. Inner Model Output Results

	Original Sample (O)	***Sample Means (M)***	***Standard Deviation (STDEV)***	***T-Statistics(| O/STDEV |)***	***P Values***
Work Environment → Employee Morale	0,760	0,769	0,048	15,802	0,000

Source: PLS Processed Data Results, 2021

Based on table 6 above, the value of $T_{statistics} > T_{table}$ (15,802 > 1,67) is obtained with a p-value of 0,000 < 0,05. Then the decision drawn from the test results is that H0 is rejected. This shows that partially, the work environment variable has a significant effect on the employee morale variable at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency.

4.2. Discussion

The work environment is a very important component in supporting employee work activities. The creation of a well organized work environment will encourage employees to be more enthusiastic at work. This is because the work environment can affect the emotional state of employees when on the move.

A healthy, good and pleasant work environment will encourage employee feelings and satisfaction at work so that organizational goals can be achieved effectively and efficiently, while a work environment that is not conducive and does not support the implementation of work activities from employees will affect the success rate of employee work where work becomes vulnerable not resolved in accordance with the deadline that has been given. By instilling high morale, employees are encouraged to work optimally in order to get satisfactory results. Hence, to increase employee morale at work, it is important for leaders to pay attention to the conditions around their employees, one of which is by creating a supportive work environment.

This study aims to analyze the effect of the work environment on employee morale at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency by first assessing each application of the two variables according to the data obtained through distributing questionnaires. The work environment variable as a whole has an average answer value of 4,08, which means that the work environment at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency is in the good category and for the employee morale variable, the resulting average answer value is 4,20, which means work enthusiasm at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency is in the high category.

In testing the coefficient of determination, the R Square value is 0,577. This shows that the contribution of the influence of the work environment on employee morale at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency is 57,7% with the remaining 42,3% being influenced by other variables outside of this study which were not examined. Furthermore, the results of research conducted using the SEM-PLS method show that there is a positive and significant influence exerted by the work environment variable on employee morale. This statement is consistent with the results obtained from the path analysis test which obtained a value of 0,760 and proof of hypothesis testing in which the results obtained were $T\text{-}_{statistics} > T\text{-}_{table}$ (15,802 > 1,67) and a probability of 0,000 ($p < 0,05$). Based on these data, the conclusion is H0 is rejected. In other words, the hypothesis which states that partially the work environment has a significant effect on employee morale at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency is accepted.

The direction of a positive relationship indicates that the better the work environment, the employee's morale will also increase, conversely if the work environment is bad, the employee's morale will also decrease because their work concentration is disturbed. This is in accordance with the theory previously expressed by Nitisemito (2001) that “it is important for organizations to work on the indicators included in the work environment in order to create a positive influence on the continuity of employee morale”.

5. CONCLUSION

This research was conducted to determine the work environment and employee morale at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency and to analyze the influence of the work environment on employee morale. Based on the presentation of the results of the research that has been done, it can be concluded that:

1) The work environment at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency is in the good category, while employee morale is in the high category. Therefore, Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency is expected to always maintain the condition of the work environment and the morale of employees whose implementation already has good values by maintaining and improving the cleanliness of the environment and work facilities that have been provided as well as supervising and evaluating the performance of all employees in providing administrative services to the public.
2) The work environment variable has a positive and significant effect on employee morale at Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency. The better the work environment, the employee morale will also increase, conversely if the work environment is bad, the employee morale will also decrease. Therefore, it is important for Medan City Population and Civil Registration Agency to always maintain and pay attention to the conditions of the employee's work environment so that employee morale remains high.

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