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DETERMINANTS OF EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN SERVICE-BASED SMES: THE EFFECTS OF WORK DISCIPLINE, EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, AND COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

Increasingly fierce business competition in the coffee shop industry requires companies to have human resources that perform optimally. Employee performance is a key factor in a company's success because it plays a direct role in service delivery and the achievement of organizational targets. Akasa Coffee Kintamani, as one of the coffee shops in Bangli Regency, faces employee performance issues reflected in its 2024 sales realization, which averaged only 79% of the target. These issues are suspected to be influenced by work discipline, emotional intelligence, and communication that have not yet functioned optimally. This study aims to analyze the influence of work discipline, emotional intelligence, and communication on employee performance at Akasa Coffee Kintamani. This study employs a quantitative approach using a survey method. The study population and sample consist of 32 employees, selected using a saturation sampling technique. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and observations, then analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis with the assistance of SPSS version 25.00. The results indicate that work discipline, emotional intelligence, and communication each have a positive and significant influence on employee performance, both partially and simultaneously. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.764 indicates that 76.4% of the variation in employee performance can be explained by these three variables, while the remainder is influenced by other variables outside the scope of this study. These findings underscore the importance of enhancing work discipline, managing emotional intelligence, and fostering effective communication as strategic efforts to improve employee performance at Akasa Coffee Kintamani.

Keywords: work discipline, emotional intelligence, communication, employee performance, coffee shop

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1. INTRODUCTION

Rapid technological advancements have intensified business competition, including within the coffee shop industry. This situation demands that companies maintain strong competitiveness through effective planning and management, particularly in human resource management (HRM). Human resources play a crucial role as they interact directly with customers and execute company operations. Human resource management is the process of addressing various workplace issues to support organizational activities so that objectives are achieved (Lestari et al., 2023). A company's success is largely determined by optimal employee performance as the primary driver of the organization.

Employee performance is the outcome of work assessed in terms of quality, quantity, timeliness, and collaboration (Sutrisno, 2019), and reflects the fulfillment of responsibilities in accordance with assigned tasks (Simanjuntak et al., 2018; Kasmir, 2019). Akasa Coffee Kintamani, as one of the coffee shops, faces employee performance issues reflected in the achievement of the 2024 sales targets, which averaged only 79%. Fluctuating and generally declining sales indicate that employee performance is not yet optimal; based on interviews with HR, this is attributed to factors such as work discipline, emotional intelligence, and communication that have not been effectively managed.

Work discipline refers to the company's efforts to ensure employees adhere to established rules and procedures (Hustia, 2020; Pertiwi & Gorda, 2019; Hasibuan, 2019; Afandi, 2018). Akasa Coffee Kintamani's 2024 attendance data shows an average absenteeism rate of 3.01%, which is considered high as it exceeds the normal tolerance threshold (Tannady et al., 2022). This high absenteeism rate reflects low compliance with working hours and disciplinary procedures, which impacts performance. Good work discipline is a crucial factor in supporting performance as it fosters order and work productivity (Hasibuan, 2019; Dewiyani et al., 2023). Various previous studies have shown that work discipline has a positive effect on employee performance, although there are differences in findings (Jufrizen, 2021; Dewiyani et al., 2023; Hustia, 2020; Putra & Fernos, 2023; Cay et al., 2022; Putra & Haryadi, 2022; Nurjaya, 2021; Tannady et al., 2022).

In addition to work discipline, emotional intelligence also plays a crucial role in supporting employee performance, particularly in the service industry. Emotional intelligence encompasses the ability to recognize and manage one's own and others' emotions, self-motivation, and fostering workplace relationships (Kaswan, 2021; Putri et al., 2024). Interview results with HR indicated that some employees at Akasa Coffee Kintamani still struggle to manage their emotions when facing work-related stress, which impacts motivation, teamwork, and service quality. Previous research has yielded mixed results regarding the influence of emotional intelligence on employee performance, ranging from significant to non-significant effects (Dhita, 2020; Asrul & Harnida, 2021; Putri et al., 2024; Anandita et al., 2021).

Communication is also a critical factor in enhancing employee performance as it serves as a means of conveying information and fostering understanding between supervisors and subordinates (Mangkunegara, 2019; Hamali, 2018). Although Akasa Coffee Kintamani has conducted regular meetings and briefings, misunderstandings regarding instructions still occur, affecting task execution and teamwork. Ineffective communication can reduce productivity and hinder the achievement of company targets. Previous research has shown inconsistent findings regarding the impact of communication on employee performance, creating a research gap that warrants further investigation (Rialmi & Morsen, 2020; Siahaan & Masriah, 2022; Al Kafit & Saputri, 2023; Joni & Hikmah, 2022; Adriansyah & Ridwan, 2024; Agustina et al., 2024; Utami et al., 2025; Anandita et al., 2021). Therefore, research on the influence of work discipline, emotional intelligence, and communication on employee performance at Akasa Coffee Kintamani is important to conduct.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Goal-Setting Theory is a motivation theory developed by Edwin Locke and Gary Latham that explains the relationship between conscious goals and task performance (Amalia et al., 2025). This theory emphasizes that clear, specific, and challenging goals can motivate individuals to achieve higher performance compared to general goals. Thus, employees' understanding of organizational goals is a critical factor in the successful completion of tasks.

This theory explains that effective goal-setting influences the level of effort, persistence, and the direction of an individual's behavior at work. Well-defined goals help employees understand organizational expectations, enabling them to direct their work behavior in a more structured and focused manner toward achieving optimal results.

Locke and Latham identified five key principles in Goal-Setting Theory: clarity, challenge, acceptance, feedback, and complexity. Clear goals help employees understand performance standards, while challenging goals enhance work motivation. Acceptance of goals fosters commitment, feedback serves as an evaluation tool, and goal complexity must be aligned with individual capabilities to remain realistic and achievable.

Various empirical studies over more than 35 years have shown that Goal-Setting Theory is highly reliable in explaining the relationship between motivation and performance. This theory also emphasizes that

goals can act as a mediator between incentives and job satisfaction, thereby influencing not only work outcomes but also employee engagement and satisfaction in performing their duties.

As a motivation theory, Goal-Setting Theory emphasizes the importance of alignment between organizational goals and individual behavior. Employees who understand organizational goals well tend to adjust their work behavior to align with those goals. The success of achieving organizational goals is influenced by supporting factors such as work skills, work experience, and individual characteristics as determining variables (Utami & Andika, 2025).

The relevance of Goal-Setting Theory to this study lies in its ability to explain how work discipline, emotional intelligence, and communication influence employee performance. Work discipline helps maintain consistent behavior in achieving goals, emotional intelligence supports employees' ability to manage their emotions when facing challenges, and effective communication ensures that goals are clearly understood and supported by constructive feedback.

This study is supported by Goal-Setting Theory, which explains that clear goals, good work discipline, self-control, and effective communication influence employee performance. The situation at Akasa Coffee Kintamani indicates that employee performance is not yet optimal, as evidenced by sales realization averaging only 79% of the target. This condition is suspected to be related to low work discipline, reflected in an employee absenteeism rate of 3.01%, weak emotional intelligence management, and ineffective workplace communication despite regular meetings being held.

The influence of work discipline on employee performance is based on the view (Hasibuan, 2019) that work discipline is the awareness and willingness of employees to comply with company regulations. Good work discipline encourages employees to work according to the rules and take responsibility for their tasks, thereby leading to improved performance (Dewiyani et al., 2023). Discipline also functions as a management tool to influence employee behavior to align with company regulations (Afandi, 2018) and to improve the quality and quantity of work output (Mangkunegara, 2019). Previous studies by Jufrizen (2021), Dewiyani et al. (2023), Hustia (2020), Putra & Fernos (2023), Cay et al. (2022), Putra & Haryadi (2022), Agustina et al. (2024) and Nurjaya (2021) concluded that work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, leading to the formulation of Hypothesis H1.

Emotional intelligence also plays a crucial role in supporting employee performance, particularly in work environments that demand interaction and service. According to (Kaswan, 2021), emotional intelligence is the ability to understand and manage one's own emotions as well as those of others to foster harmonious work relationships. Employees with good emotional intelligence are able to manage stress, self-motivate, and collaborate effectively (Suciati, 2020; Natalia, 2023; Putri et al., 2024). Previous studies by (Dhita, 2020), (Asrul & Harnida, 2021), and (Putri et al., 2024) indicate that emotional intelligence has a positive and significant impact on employee performance, leading to the formulation of Hypothesis H2.

Communication is a crucial factor in enhancing employee performance as it facilitates mutual understanding between supervisors and subordinates (Natalia, 2023). Effective communication not only serves as a means of conveying information but also fosters harmonious collaboration and a conducive work environment (Kellin, 2023; Hartono & Wulandari, 2025). Previous studies by Rialmi & Morsen (2020), Siahaan & Masriah (2022), AlKafit & Saputri (2023), Joni & Hikmah (2022), Adriansyah & Ridwan (2024), Agustina et al. (2024), and Utami et al. (2025) concluded that communication has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, although some studies have found different results (Anandita et al., 2021). Therefore, Hypothesis H3 regarding the effect of communication on employee performance was formulated.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study was conducted at Akasa Coffee Kintamani, located at Jalan Raya Penelokan No. 777, Batur Tengah, Kintamani District, Bangli Regency. The selection of the location was based on interviews with the HR department and an analysis of the company's internal documentation (Akasa Coffee Kintamani, 2024), which indicated issues related to work discipline, emotional intelligence, and communication that impact employee performance. The research focused on Work Discipline (X1), Emotional Intelligence (X2), and Communication (X3) as independent variables, and Employee Performance (Y) as the dependent variable (Sugiyono, 2019). The population and sample in this study consisted of 32 employees of Akasa Coffee Kintamani using a saturated sampling technique (Sugiyono, 2019). The data used included quantitative and qualitative data sourced from primary data in the form of questionnaires and interviews, as well as secondary data in the form of supporting documents and literature.

Data collection was conducted through observation, interviews, and the distribution of questionnaires to all respondents. Quantitative data analysis was performed using a Likert scale to measure respondents' perceptions (Sugiyono, 2019) with the assistance of SPSS version 25.00. Prior to hypothesis testing, the data were subjected to validity and reliability tests to ensure the suitability of the research instruments (Ghozali, 2019), as well as classical assumption tests, including tests for normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity (Ghozali, 2019; Ghozali, 2020). Hypothesis testing was conducted using multiple linear regression analysis to determine the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable, supplemented by simultaneous tests (F-test) and partial tests (t-test) to determine the combined and individual effects. Qualitative analysis was used as a complement to provide a clearer picture of the research results.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Validity and Reliability Tests of the Pilot Test

Table 1. Validity Test Results

No	Variable	Item Statement	Item-Total Correlation	Significance	Description
1	Work discipline (X1)	X1.1	0.950	0.000	Valid
		X1.2	0.955	0.000	Valid
		X1.3	0.944	0.000	Valid
		X1.4	0.836	0.000	Valid
2	Emotional intelligence (X2)	X2.1	0.934	0.000	Valid
		X2.2	0.918	0.000	Valid
		X2.3	0.926	0.000	Valid
		X2.4	0.900	0.000	Valid
		X2.5	0.870	0.000	Valid
3	Communication (X3)	X3.1	0.896	0.000	Valid
		X3.2	0.909	0.000	Valid
		X3.3	0.929	0.000	Valid
		X3.4	0.928	0.000	Valid
		X3.5	0.896	0.000	Valid
4	Employee performance (Y)	Y.1	0.843	0.000	Valid
		Y.2	0.926	0.000	Valid
		Y.3	0.905	0.000	Valid
		Y.4	0.795	0.000	Valid
		Y.5	0.885	0.000	Valid

Table 1 shows that for all indicators of the variables work discipline, emotional intelligence, communication, and employee performance, the correlation coefficients are greater than 0.30 and the significance values are less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that all indicators used in this study are valid.

Table 2. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
Work discipline (X1)	0.942	Reliable
Emotional intelligence (X2)	0.947	Reliable
Communication (X3)	0.948	Reliable
Employee performance (Y)	0.918	Reliable

Table 2 shows that the Cronbach's Alpha values for each instrument in the variables of work discipline, emotional intelligence, communication, and employee performance are greater than 0.70. Therefore, it can be concluded that all instruments are reliable.

Post-Test Validity and Reliability Test

Table 3. Validity Test Results

No	Variable	Item Statement	Item-Total Correlation	Significance	Description
1	Work discipline (X1)	X1.1	0.917	0.000	Valid
		X1.2	0.894	0.000	Valid
		X1.3	0.795	0.000	Valid
		X1.4	0.775	0.000	Valid
2	Emotional intelligence (X2)	X2.1	0.899	0.000	Valid
		X2.2	0.872	0.000	Valid
		X2.3	0.763	0.000	Valid
		X2.4	0.926	0.000	Valid
		X2.5	0.887	0.000	Valid
3	Communication (X3)	X3.1	0.899	0.000	Valid
		X3.2	0.921	0.000	Valid
		X3.3	0.968	0.000	Valid
		X3.4	0.956	0.000	Valid
		X3.5	0.882	0.000	Valid
4	Employee performance (Y)	Y.1	0.943	0.000	Valid
		Y.2	0.849	0.000	Valid
		Y.3	0.751	0.000	Valid
		Y.4	0.899	0.000	Valid
		Y.5	0.861	0.000	Valid

Table 3 shows that for all indicators of the variables work discipline, emotional intelligence, communication, and employee performance, the correlation coefficients are greater than 0.30 and the significance values are less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that all indicators used in this study are valid.

Table 4. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
Work discipline (X1)	0.864	Reliable
Emotional intelligence (X2)	0.917	Reliable
Communication (X3)	0.957	Reliable
Employee performance (Y)	0.913	Reliable

Table 4 shows that the Cronbach's Alpha values for each instrument in the variables of work discipline, emotional intelligence, communication, and employee performance are greater than 0.70. Therefore, it can be concluded that all instruments are reliable.

Descriptive Analysis

Table 5. Description of Work Discipline Variables

No	Statement	Respondent Answers					Total Score	Average Score	Category
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	I always arrive on time during working hours.	1	8	10	10	3	102	3.19	Fair
2	I follow all the work procedures established by the company.	0	9	9	8	6	107	3.34	Fair
3	I perform my duties in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me.	0	11	8	6	7	105	3.28	Fair
4	I understand and follow other applicable company policies.	0	7	13	5	7	108	3.38	Fair
	Total						422	13.19	
	Average						105.50	3.30	Fair

Based on Table 5, it is evident that respondents' perceptions regarding the work discipline variable at Akasa Coffee Kintamani are fairly good, with an average score of 3.30. This indicates that employees at Akasa Coffee Kintamani demonstrate fairly good work discipline.

Table 6. Description of the Emotional Intelligence Variable

No	Statement	Respondent Answers					Total Score	Average Score	Category
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	I understand how my emotions affect my work.	0	15	10	4	3	91	2.84	Fair
2	I remain calm when facing pressure at work.	0	14	12	5	1	89	2.78	Fair
3	I strive to meet my work goals despite facing difficulties.	0	13	9	8	2	95	2.97	Fair
4	I listen to others' opinions attentively.	0	9	6	9	8	112	3.50	Good
5	I build good teamwork	0	10	11	8	3	100	3.13	Fair
	Total						487	15.22	
	Average						97.40	3.04	Fairly Good

Based on Table 6, it is evident that respondents' perceptions regarding the emotional intelligence variable at Akasa Coffee Kintamani are fairly good, with an average score of 3.04. This indicates that employees at Akasa Coffee Kintamani possess fairly good emotional intelligence.

Table 7. Description of the Communication Variable

No	Statement	Respondent Answers					Total Score	Average Score	Category
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	I understand my coworkers' capabilities through our communication.	2	12	10	8	0	88	2.75	Fair
2	I enjoy and appreciate the exchange of information when working with the team.	1	11	12	4	4	95	2.97	Fair
3	Good communication motivates me to achieve my work goals	0	9	10	7	6	106	3.31	Fair
4	Communication has made my	0	15	6	5	6	98	3.06	Fair

	relationship with my coworkers closer.								
5	I took the appropriate action after receiving information from my supervisor.	0	12	10	5	5	99	3.09	Fair
	Total						486	15.19	
	Average						97.20	3.04	Fair

Based on Table 7, it is evident that respondents' perceptions regarding the communication variable at Akasa Coffee Kintamani are positive, with an average score of 3.04. This indicates that employees at Akasa Coffee Kintamani have fairly good communication skills.

Table 8. Description of Employee Performance Variables

No	Statement	Respondent Answers					Total Score	Average Score	Category
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	I produce work that meets company standards.	0	8	8	6	10	114	3.56	Good
2	I completed the work according to the set targets.	0	13	8	7	4	98	3.06	Fair
3	I can complete the work on time.	0	14	10	6	2	92	2.88	Fair
4	I make the most of available resources to complete tasks effectively	0	4	8	11	9	121	3.78	Good
5	I am able to complete the work without relying on others' help.	0	5	9	12	6	115	3.59	Good
	Total						540	16.88	
	Average						108	3.38	Fairly Good

Based on Table 8, it is evident that respondents' perceptions regarding the employee performance variable at Akasa Coffee Kintamani are fairly good, with an average score of 3.38; this indicates that Akasa Coffee Kintamani employees have fairly good performance.

Classical Assumption Test

Table 9. Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Unstandardized Residual
N		32
Normal Parameters [a, b]	Mean	0.0000000
	Standard Deviation	2.07412539
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	0.113
	Positive	0.113
	Negative	-0.113
Test Statistic		0.113
Asymptotic Significance (2-tailed)		0.200[c,d]

a. The test distribution is normal.
b. Calculated from the data.
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.
d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

Based on the normality test shown in Table 9, the value of Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.200, which is greater

than 0.05, indicating that the data is normally distributed. Therefore, it can be concluded that the model satisfies the normality assumption.

Table 10. Multicollinearity Test

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	0.707	1.745		0.405	0.688		
	Work discipline	0.534	0.180	0.438	2,964	0.006	0.348	2.872
	Emotional intelligence	0.249	0.099	0.238	2,504	0.018	0.843	1.186
	Communication	0.351	0.127	0.387	2,755	0.010	0.385	2.594

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

Table 10 above shows that all independent variables have tolerance values > 0.10; similarly, the VIF values for all variables are < 10. This indicates that the regression model does not exhibit multicollinearity.

Table 11. Heteroscedasticity Test

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.367	1.067		0.344	0.734
	Work discipline	0.078	0.110	0.216	0.710	0.483
	Emotional intelligence	0.079	0.061	0.254	1.302	0.204
	Communication	-0.069	0.078	-0.255	-0.882	0.385

a. Dependent Variable: Absolute_Residual

Based on Table 11, it is shown that each model has a significance value greater than 0.05. This means that in this regression model, there is no commonality of variance from one observation's residual to another, or in other words, there is no heteroscedasticity.

Table 12. Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.707	1.745		0.405	0.688
	Work discipline	0.534	0.180	0.438	2.964	0.006
	Emotional intelligence	0.249	0.099	0.238	2.504	0.018
	Communication	0.351	0.127	0.387	2.755	0.010

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

Based on the results of the multiple linear regression analysis, the regression equation obtained is Y = 0.707 + 0.534X1 + 0.249X2 + 0.351X3 + e, which shows that the constant of 0.707 indicates that employee performance continues to improve even if work discipline, emotional intelligence, and communication are set to zero. The regression coefficients for work discipline (0.534), emotional intelligence (0.249), and communication (0.351) are positive, meaning that an increase in each independent variable, assuming the other variables remain constant, will improve employee performance.

F-Test Results

Table 13. F-Test Results

ANOVA[a]

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	492.138	3	164.046	34.442	0.000[b]
	Residual	133.362	28	4.763		
	Total	625.500	31			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Communication, Work Discipline, Emotional Intelligence

Based on the (F-test) in Table 13, the significance value is 0.000 < 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that work discipline X_1, emotional intelligence X_2,and communication X_3have a significant effect on employee performance (Y); thus, the research model is considered valid, and hypothesis testing can proceed.

Results of the Partial Influence Significance Test (t-Test)

Table 14. Results of the Partial Effect Significance Test (t-Test)

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.707	1.745		0.405	0.688
	Work discipline	0.534	0.180	0.438	2.964	0.006
	Emotional intelligence	0.249	0.099	0.238	2.504	0.018
	Communication	0.351	0.127	0.387	2.755	0.010

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

Based on the data analysis results, the t-test results in Table 14 can be interpreted as follows:

1) The effect of the work discipline variable (X1) on employee performance (Y). The work discipline variable has a regression coefficient of 0.534 and a significance value of 0.006 < 0.05. This means that the work discipline variable has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, which implies that $H_0$is rejected and $H_1$is accepted.
2) The effect of the emotional intelligence variable (X2) on employee performance (Y). The emotional intelligence variable has a regression coefficient of 0.249 and a significance value of 0.018 < 0.05. This indicates that the emotional intelligence variable has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, meaning $H_0$is rejected and $H_1$is accepted.
3) The effect of the communication variable (X3) on employee performance (Y). The communication variable has a regression coefficient of 0.351 and a significance value of 0.010 < 0.05. This indicates that the communication variable has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, meaning $_{H_0}$is rejected and $_{H_3}$is accepted.

Results of the Coefficient of Determination (R^2) Test

Table 15. Results of the Coefficient of Determination Analysis

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	0.887[a]	0.787	0.764	2.182

a. Predictors: (Constant), Communication, Work Discipline, Emotional Intelligence

Based on Table 15, the Adjusted R-Square value is 0.764. This means that 76.4% of the variation in employee performance can be explained by the variation in the three independent variables: work discipline, emotional intelligence, and communication. Meanwhile, the remainder (100% - 76.4% = 23.6%) is explained by other variables not included in this study.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Based on the data obtained from the analysis, it can be concluded that work discipline, emotional intelligence, and communication each have a positive and significant effect on employee performance at Akasa Coffee Kintamani, meaning that the higher the work discipline, the better the emotional intelligence, and the more effective the communication applied, the more employee performance will improve.

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