

Exploring Key Factors Affecting Employee Performance: Evidence from Indonesia's State-Owned Port Enterprises

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Abstract

This research investigates the impact of the work environment, perceived organizational support, and digital capability on employee performance with motivation acting as a mediating variable. Utilizing a structural equation modeling (SEM) approach, the research examines data collected from employees at state own port enterprise in Java and Lampung province. Findings reveal that digital capability positively influences both employee performance and motivation, work environment directly impacts employee performance only when mediated by motivation. Interestingly, perceived organizational support shows no significant effect on either employee performance or motivation. These results underscore the critical role of digital capability in enhancing employee motivation and performance, suggesting that port enterprise should prioritize digital investments to sustain business operations and achieve higher employee productivity. Digital capability refers to the ability of companies and employees to use digital technologies effectively to improve performance, productivity and innovation. The research contributes to the existing literature by providing new insights into the dynamics of work environment and perceived organizational support within the context of digital transformation in state own port enterprise.

Keywords: Employee Performance, Work Environment, Perceived Organizational Support, Digital Capability, Motivation

INTRODUCTION

Human resources play a key role in the management and success of the company. The success of a company in achieving its goals is highly dependent on employee performance (Piri et al., 2022). Employee performance is a measure of individual employees in achieving company goals (Robbins & Judge, 2019). Employees are thus considered a valuable asset for every company to improve performance (Zhenjing et al., 2022). Employees can be said to have high performance if they achieve company goals in quantity, have good work quality, demonstrate commitment to work, maintain independence at work, and are punctual in completing tasks and arriving at work.

Indonesia, as an archipelago, has sea transportation and ports that play an important role in connecting thousands of islands and facilitating trade (Zen & Yudhistira, 2022). Companies engaged in the port sector provide services that become connecting nodes for delivering goods between regions (Munim & Schramm, 2018). This shows that the company requires employees to have good performance to achieve company goals. Companies that experience improved performance are characterized by high employee performance (Handayani & Khairi, 2022). However, in actuality, port enterprises still encounter numerous impediments that hinder their ability to effectively facilitate the efficient transportation of commodities, thus impeding economic progress and regional development, and reducing the international competitiveness

of a country, especially in terms of employee performance (Almeida, 2023).

Employee performance does not arise by itself but is influenced by several factors. According to Robbins & Judge (2019), the factors that influence employee performance are ability and motivation. According to Mathis et al. (2019), there are five factors that affect employee performance: ability, employee effort, perceived organizational support, work performed, and relationship with the organization. Previous researchers have examined various factors that affect employee performance, including the *work environment* (Kurniawanto et al., 2022) and *perceived organizational support* (Suwarno et al., 2023). Employee performance is also influenced by digital capabilities. Digital capabilities related to employee performance highlight the importance of digital skills in increasing employee productivity, creativity, and problem-solving ability (Wang et al., 2024). Digital capability is considered a manifestation of *dynamic capability*, which includes various dynamic actions such as identifying new digital opportunities, responding to digital transformation, and utilizing digital technology to develop innovative products, services, or processes (Khin & Ho, 2019).

Work environment refers to a workplace setting for a group of people, where there are supporting facilities for employees to achieve company goals (Sedarmayanti, 2019). Fithri et al. (2019) found that the work environment has an influence on employee performance. However, research by Riyadi (2019) shows that the work environment has no influence on employee performance. *Perceived organizational support* is the employee's perception that the organization appreciates their efforts and pays attention to their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Based on research by Suwarno et al. (2023), there is an influence of perceived organizational support on employee performance, while research by Ratnasari et al. (2023) shows there is no such influence. Apart from this, digital capability also affects employee performance (Fu et al., 2023). Digital capability is the ability needed to operationalize technology, such as operating social media, mobile applications, and analytical skills to provide accurate and useful information (Bolli & Pusterla, 2022). Motivation plays an important role in determining the level of effort employees put in to contribute to company goals (Kumari et al., 2021). Research by Nasution & Priangkata (2022) shows that there is an influence of motivation on employee performance.

While existing studies have explored the influence of individual factors such as the work environment, perceived organizational support, and digital capability on employee performance, a significant gap remains in understanding how these factors interact when considered simultaneously, especially within the context of the port sector. Furthermore, the role of motivation as a mediating variable in these relationships has not been thoroughly examined, particularly in the dynamic and operationally intensive environment of port enterprises.

This research seeks to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of the effects of the work environment, perceived organizational support, and digital capability on employee performance, with motivation as a mediating variable, focusing on state-owned port enterprises in Indonesia—a sector critical to the country's economic infrastructure yet underexplored in this context. By incorporating motivation as a mediating variable, this research offers a novel contribution to the literature, providing a nuanced understanding of how these factors collectively influence employee performance.

This research aims to analyze the influence of the work environment, perceived organizational support, and digital capabilities on employee performance, with motivation as a mediating variable, in state-owned port companies in Indonesia. Specifically, this study was designed to examine the extent to which these factors contribute to improved employee performance, either directly or indirectly through motivation. In addition, this research also aims to provide practical recommendations for port companies and stakeholders in optimizing employee performance, especially through improving digital capabilities and motivation. This research

is expected to provide insights and valuable contributions, as well as practical implications, for companies in the port sector and their stakeholders, assisting in the development of effective employee performance strategies. The remainder of this article is structured as follows: the next section provides a review of the relevant literature, followed by the methodology used in this research. The results are then presented and analyzed, leading to a discussion of the findings. Finally, the research concludes with the implications, limitations, and suggestions for future studies.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs an explanatory or causal research design with a *mixed methods* research approach, an evolving research strategy that deliberately combines both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to provide comprehensive insights into the research problem (Venkatesh et al., 2016). The research was conducted over a four-month period, from February to May 2024, at a state-owned port enterprise located on the island of Java and in Lampung Province. Primary quantitative data were gathered by distributing online questionnaires to *state-owned port enterprise* employees on the island of Java and in Lampung Province, with 240 participants. Employees were selected as respondents for several key reasons. First, employees are directly involved in organizational processes (Obiekwe et al., 2019), and human resources play a key role in the management and success of the company (Alqudah et al., 2022). Considering that all employees at *state-owned port enterprises* on the island of Java and in Lampung Province are integral to port operations and service delivery, their insights are critical for understanding the internal dynamics of these organizations (Nugroho & Achmadi, 2022). Second, the island of Java has the highest number of *state-owned port enterprises* in Indonesia (Malisan et al., 2023); similarly, Lampung Province is home to significant port operations (Harianto et al., 2023).

The sample size was determined using the formula proposed by Hair et al. (2021). Each indicator was assessed using a 5-point Likert scale. Quantitative data were collected using a structured questionnaire, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. Questionnaire

Construct	Indicators	Measures Items
Work Environment (Ahakwa et al., 2021)	WE1	At the company I work for, the workspace environment is visually appealing.
	WE2	In the company I work for, there is enough space for me and my coworkers.
	WE3	I am satisfied with the division of workspace to do my job.
	WE4	In the company I work for, my work environment is not noisy.
	WE5	In the company I work for, my overall work environment is comfortable.
Perceived Organization Support (Eisenberger et al., 1986)	POS1	The organization values my contribution to its well-being.
	POS2	I feel that where I work, this company understands how they can provide for their employees.
	POS3	I feel that the company is proud of my work achievements.
	POS4	In the company I work for, I feel that employees respect each other's opinions.

Digital Capability (Khin & Ho, 2019)	DC1	Our company can acquire important digital technology.
	DC2	Our company can identify new digital opportunities.
	DC3	Our company can respond to digital transformation.
	DC4	Our company mastering the state of the art digital technologies.
	DC5	Our company developing innovative product/service/process using digital technology.
Motivation (Hasibuan, 2019)	MO1	Involve employees in decision making.
	MO2	Creating two-way communication
	MO3	Creating healthy competition.
	MO4	Authority is given to the right person.
	MO5	Creating harmonious work atmosphere.
Employee Performance (Robbins & Judge, 2019a)	EP1	In the company I work for, I am able to plan my work so that it is completed on time.
	EP2	The company has set KPIs, so I can achieve my work targets.
	EP3	I actively participate in work meetings
	EP4	I am able to carry out my tasks in accordance with the direction of my superiors.
	EP5	I feel that the rules in the company make me work on time.

Source: Research Questionnaire

The data analysis method used in this research is *SEM* (Structural Equation Modeling), which is based on components or variance, namely *PLS* (Partial Least Square), to validate measurements and test hypotheses (Hair et al., 2014). This research utilizes *SEM-PLS 4.0* because there are several series of regression equations to be tested. Model evaluation in *SEM-PLS* analysis will be carried out with a measurement model (*outer model*), which explains the specification of the relationship between variables and indicators, and the structural model (*inner model*), which shows the specification of the relationship between hidden variables (Ghozali & Laten, 2015).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Profile

Respondents in this research were 240 employees of state own port enterprises PT Pelindo Petikemas Teluk Lamong and PT ASDP Ferry Indonesia Bakaheuni, with several demographic characteristics, which are by gender, age, and length of work. The demographic characteristics of the sample are described as follows: 42 (17.5%) respondents were female and 198 (82.5%) respondents were male. Respondents ranged in age (years) from 22-25 (5.8%), 26-30 (11.3%), 31-35 (37.5%), 36-40 (21.7%), and over 40 (23.7%). Respondents' length of service varied as follows: 2 to approximately 5 years (13.3%), more than 5 to less than 10 years (40.4%), and more than 10 years (46.3%). Full details are available in Table 2.

Table 2. Profile Of Respondents (n = 240)

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Female	42	17.5
Male	198	82.5
Age (Years)		
21 – 25	14	5.8
26 – 30	27	11.3
31 – 35	90	37.5
36 – 40	52	21.7
> 40	57	23.7
Tenure		
Between 2 up to ≤ 5 Years	32	13.3
Between 5 > up to ≤ 10 Years	97	40.4
> 10 Years	111	46.3

Source: Primary data processed by researchers

Validity and Reliability Test

The research questionnaires underwent rigorous testing to determine their validity and reliability. Convergent validity was assessed by examining the outer loading (OL) value, which should be equal to or more than 0.7, and the average variance extracted (AVE), which should be equal to or greater than 0.5. The convergent validity test results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Result Of Convergent Validity

Construct	Indicator	Item	Outer Loading	AVE
WE	Leader concern and support	WE1	0.793	0.637
	Fairness and reward equity	WE2	0.767	
	Leader work facilitation	WE3	0.833	
	Position uncertainty	WE4	0.781	
	Working group cooperation	WE5	0.814	
POS	Justice	POS1	0.772	0.569
	Supervisor support	POS2	0.754	
	Reward	POS3	0.742	
	Working conditions	POS4	0.750	
DC	Acquiring important digital technologies	DC1	0.818	0.631
	Identifying new digital opportunities	DC2	0.745	
	Responding to digital transformation	DC3	0.841	
	Mastering the state-of-the-art digital technologies	DC4	0.766	
	Developing innovative products/services/processes using digital technology	DC5	0.799	
MO	Principle of participation	MO1	0.743	0.593
	Principle of communication	MO2	0.805	
	Principle of recognition	MO3	0.756	
	Principle of delegated authority	MO4	0.785	

Construct	Indicator	Item	Outer Loading	AVE
EP	Principle of mutual attention	MO5	0.761	0.592
	Work quantity	EP1	0.764	
	Work quality	EP2	0.705	
	Work commitment	EP3	0.805	
	Work independence	EP4	0.786	
	Punctuality of work	EP5	0.784	

Source: Researcher's analysis using PLS-SEM

The outer loadings, which exceeded the threshold of 0.7, indicate that the measurement indicators employed in this research exhibit significant variation and strong correlations with the respective constructs, thereby confirming the reliability of the measures (Hair et al., 2019). Furthermore, the average variance extracted (AVE) values, which were found to be greater than or equal to 0.5, demonstrate that the manifest variables effectively capture the essence of the measured constructs, exhibiting good correlation between measurements of the same construct and thus confirming convergent validity.

Reliability was tested based on Cronbach's Alpha (CA), Rho A (ρA), and Composite Reliability (CR). The reliability test results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Results Of Reliability Test

	CA	ρA	CR
WE	0.857	0.861	0.897
POS	0.748	0.750	0.841
DC	0.853	0.858	0.895
MO	0.829	0.830	0.879
EP	0.828	0.832	0.879

Sumber: Researcher's analysis using PLS-SEM

To evaluate the reliability of the measurement instrument, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated for each construct. The results showed that the Cronbach's Alpha values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.7 for all constructs, indicating a high level of internal consistency and reliability of the measurement items (Zaato et al., 2023). This suggests that the items within each construct are closely related and reliably measure the underlying phenomenon. Rho A values range from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating better reliability. In this research, the Rho A values for all constructs were above 0.60, indicating good reliability (Othman & Yusuff, 2022). Furthermore, the Composite Reliability (CR) values for all constructs were found to be greater than 0.7, which is the commonly accepted threshold for satisfactory reliability (Dzani & Lay, 2021). The high composite reliability values provide additional evidence that the construct variables are reliable in measuring the phenomenon under investigation.

Structural Model

The R-Square value of 0.675 (moderating) in this research, meaning that the effect of employee performance can be explained by the work environment, perceived organizational support, digital capabilities, and motivation by 67.5%, while the remaining 32.5% can be explained by other variables outside the model measured in this research.

Hypothesis Testing

To further validate the findings, additional testing can be conducted by bootstrapping a large sample size of 5000 from the original sample of 240. This involves checking for errors and calculating the P-value to prove the significance of the measurement model. The significance level used is 5%, requiring a P-value less than 0.05 and a T-value greater than 1.96 to support the hypotheses. The results indicate that hypotheses H1, H2, H6, and H9 were rejected, while H3, H4, H5, H7, H8, and H9 were accepted, as shown in Figure 2 and Table 5.

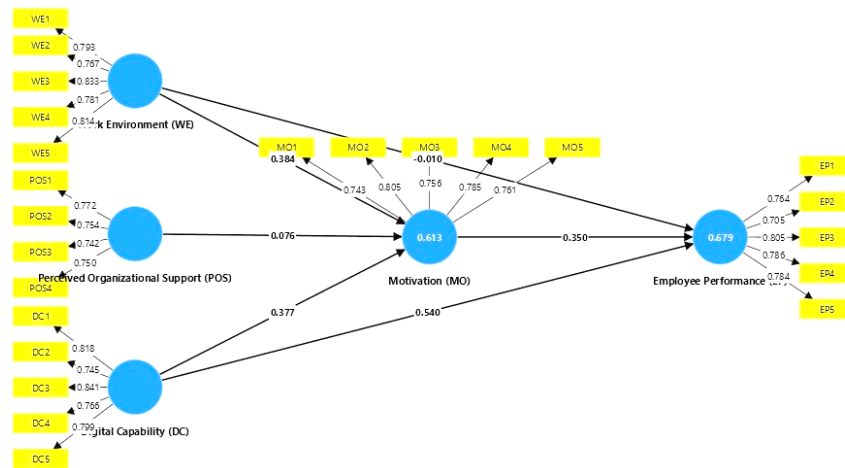


Figure 2. Results of Path Coefficient Analysis
Source: Researcher's analysis using PLS-SEM

Table 5. Results of Hypotheses Tests using Path Coefficient Analysis

	Structural Path	Original Sample	t-Value	P-Value	Result
H1	WE -> EP	-0.010	0.127	0.899	Rejected
H2	POS -> EP	0.027	0.903	0.367	Rejected
H3	DC -> EP	0.540	6.664	0.000	Accepted
H4	MO -> EP	0.350	4.515	0.000	Accepted
H5	WE -> MO	0.384	4.803	0.000	Accepted
H6	POS -> MO	0.076	1.012	0.312	Rejected
H7	DC -> MO	0.377	4.471	0.000	Accepted
H8	WE -> MO -> EP	0.134	3.467	0.001	Accepted
H9	POS -> MO -> EP	0.027	0.903	0.367	Rejected
H10	DC -> MO -> EP	0.132	3.413	0.001	Accepted

Source: Researcher's analysis using PLS-SEM

H1. Work environment has no positive and significant influence on employee performance

Findings showed that the work environment has no positive and significant influence on employee performance ($\beta = -0.010$, $t = 0.127$, $p = 0.899$), which aligns with the findings of Riyadi (2019) research. According to the results of convergent validity, the work environment item with the highest outer loading value is "leader work facilitation" (outer loading = 0.833). This suggests that effective leadership plays a vital role in creating a conducive work environment inside port and container enterprises. Nevertheless, the most significant factor influencing employee performance is "work commitment" (outer loading = 0.805). This indicates that although leader facilitation is appreciated, it does not directly result in enhanced work commitment and overall performance in this particular situation. The presence of distinctive difficulties in certain sectors, where the importance of operational efficiency and technical assistance is heightened, could account for this phenomenon.

H2. Perceived organizational support has no positive and significant influence on employee performance

Findings showed that the perceived organizational support has no positive and significant influence on employee performance ($\beta = 0.027$, $t = 0.903$, $p = 0.367$), which aligns with the

findings of research (Ratnasari et al., 2023). The highest outer loading for perceived organizational support was "justice" (outer loading = 0.772), indicating that perceptions of fairness are a significant aspect. However, this perception of fairness did not significantly impact the highest outer loading item of employee performance "work commitment". This suggests that while fairness is important, it may not be enough to drive performance improvements without other supportive measures, such as practical support and resource availability specific to the operational needs of port enterprises.

H3. Digital capability has a positive and significant influence on employee performance

Findings showed that the digital capability has a positive and significant influence on employee performance ($\beta = 0.540$, $t = 6.644$, $p = 0.000$). The finding of research showing the influence between digital capability and employee performance by Fu et al. (2023), analyzed the effect of the company's digital capabilities perceived by employees to be positively related to sustainable performance. These findings suggest that digital capability possessed by employees, as measured by the constructs in this research, has a direct impact on employee performance. In the context of port enterprises, the digital capability such as automated systems for cargo handling, tracking, and logistics management is crucial. These technologies directly improve operational efficiency and reduce errors, thereby enhancing overall performance.

H4. Motivation has a positive and significant influence on employee performance

Findings showed that the motivation has a positive and significant influence on employee performance ($\beta = 0.350$, $t = 4.145$, $p = 0.000$). This finding aligns with previous research by Kuswati (2020), provide meaning that the role of motivation is a supporting factor in an organization, both government and private, especially in improving performance. These results emphasize the importance of employee motivation in port operations and the need for companies to develop strategies that encourage a motivated workforce.

H5. Work environment has a positive and significant influence on motivation

Findings showed that the work environment has a positive and significant influence on employee motivation ($\beta = 0.384$, $t = 4.803$, $p = 0.000$). This finding aligns with previous research by Julia & Danasasmitha (2023), show the influence between work environment and motivation. The highest outer loading item, "Leader work facilitation," significantly enhances motivation, suggesting that leadership support and facilitation are critical in motivating employees. This is particularly important in the demanding environments of port operations, where motivation can lead to better adherence to safety protocols and increased productivity.

H6. Perceived organizational support has no positive and significant influence on motivation

Findings showed that the perceived organizational support has no positive and significant influence on motivation ($\beta = 0.076$, $t = 1.012$, $p = 0.312$). While "justice" was the highest outer loading item, it did not significantly impact motivation, suggesting that fairness alone may not suffice to motivate employees. General support measures might not suffice; instead, personalized support addressing specific employee needs could be more effective in boosting motivation (Lasiny et al., 2021). In the context of port enterprises, support that directly addresses operational challenges, such as equipment maintenance and availability of resources, might be needed to see a significant impact on motivation.

H7. Digital capability has a positive and significant influence on motivation

Findings showed that the digital capability a positive and significant influence on employee performance ($\beta = 0.377$, $t = 4.471$, $p = 0.000$), in line with (Vebryana et al., 2024).

This finding shows that digital capability possessed by employees, as measured by the constructs in this research, has a direct impact on motivation. The highest outer loading item, "responding to digital transformation," highlights the importance of keeping up with technological advancements to maintain high levels of employee motivation and performance in operationally intensive environments like ports.

H8. Work environment has a positive and significant influence on employee performance through motivation as a mediating variable

Findings showed that the work environment has a positive and significant influence on employee performance through motivation as a mediating variable ($\beta = 0.134$, $t = 3.467$, $p = 0.001$). These findings align with Guritno et al. (2022), work environment has a direct effect on employee performance mediated by motivation which also has a direct effect on employee performance. In port enterprises, supportive leadership and a conducive environment enhance motivation, subsequently improving performance.

H9. Perceived organizational support has no positive and significant influence on employee performance through motivation as a mediating variable

Findings showed that there has no positive and significant influence on employee performance through motivation as a mediating variable ($\beta = 0.027$, $t = 0.903$, $p = 0.367$). This aligns with the findings of Suharto & Suprpto (2023) research. This suggests that perceived organizational support alone, such as perceived fairness, is insufficient to enhance motivation and performance without additional supportive measures.

H10. Digital capability has a positive and significant influence on employee performance through motivation as a mediating variable

Findings showed that the digital capability has a positive and significant influence on employee performance through motivation as a mediating variable ($\beta = 0.132$, $t = 3.413$, $p = 0.001$). These findings align with Wijaya et al. (2019) research, which also demonstrated that motivation mediates the relationship between user ability and employee performance. Effective use of digital can enhance motivation, which subsequently improves performance. This is particularly relevant in port enterprises, where digital advancements play a critical role in operational efficiency and employee performance.

This finding shows that digital capability and motivation are the most influential variables impacting employee performance among port enterprises employees. The direct effect of digital capability on employee performance was significant, with a path coefficient of 0.540, indicating that effective use of digital directly enhances performance. Furthermore, motivation plays a crucial mediating role, as evidenced by its significant effects on both employee performance and the relationships between digital capability and employee performance, as well as work environment and employee performance. The findings suggest that while work environment and perceived organizational support did not significantly influence employee performance directly, they positively affected motivation, which in turn enhanced employee performance, highlighting the importance of fostering a motivating work environment and leveraging digital for optimal performance outcomes.

CONCLUSIONS

This research aims to explore the influence of *work environment*, *perceived organizational support*, and *digital capability* on employee performance, with motivation as a mediating variable in *state-owned port enterprises*. To achieve this goal, a *Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)* model was built to examine the direct correlation between these variables. In

several previous studies, the employee performance variable was found to have a positive impact on several human resource outputs in a company. Through this research, the explanation and confirmation of the phenomenon strengthen the existing concept. With the inclusion of other variables used in this research—such as *work environment*, *perceived organizational support*, *digital capability*, and *motivation*—as well as *state-owned port enterprises* on the island of Java and in Lampung Province as the research objects, there are different variations in terms of results. Specifically, *work environment* and *perceived organizational support* do not have a significant impact on employee performance. In addition, *perceived organizational support* also has no impact on motivation. The effect of *perceived organizational support* on employee performance mediated by motivation also shows no significant effect. These findings provide support and enrich insights, and can offer valuable contributions and practical implications for companies in the port sector and their stakeholders. Embracing digital technology enables *port enterprises* to optimize their operations and achieve business sustainability.

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