

## The Influence of Transformational Leadership, Human Relations and Work Ethic on Employee Performance through ASN Job Satisfaction of the Medan Class I Railway Engineering Center

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of Transformational Leadership, Human Relation, and Work Ethic on Employee Performance through Job Satisfaction in ASN of the Medan Class I Railway Engineering Center. The background of this research is based on the importance of improving the performance of ASN which is influenced by internal organizational factors, such as leadership style, work relationships, quality of work ethic, and employee satisfaction with their work environment. This study uses a quantitative approach with the Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method. The research population was 141 ASN, and a sample of 58 respondents was determined through the Slovin formula. Data was obtained through a questionnaire and analyzed using SmartPLS. The results of the study show that Work Ethic has a positive and significant effect on Job Performance and Satisfaction. Human Relations also has a positive and significant effect on Performance and Job Satisfaction, while Job Satisfaction has been proven to have a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance. On the other hand, Transformational Leadership has a positive but insignificant influence on Performance and Job Satisfaction. Other findings suggest that Job Satisfaction only significantly mediates the relationship between Human Relations and Employee Performance, while the relationship between Work Ethic and Transformational Leadership to Performance is not significantly mediated by Job Satisfaction. Overall, this study emphasizes that improving work relationships and strengthening work ethic are the main factors in improving the performance of ASN of the Medan Class I Railway Engineering Center.

## Introduction

Human resources are the main asset of the organization that plays an important role in achieving goals. Because human resources are one of the most important elements for the survival of a company, where the back and forth of a company can be determined by the human resources it has (M. C. Rizky, 2022). Human resources need to be managed professionally to create harmony between the interests of employees and the interests of the organization in an effort to develop the organization (Mappamiring et al., 2020) in (Ferine et al., 2021; Mappamiring, 2020). Without the support of well-performing employees, the organization will not be able to achieve the targets that have been set. Therefore, employees are not only seen as labor, but also as the main mover that determines the success of the company's strategy.

According to (Mangkunegara, 2017) performance is the result of work in terms of quality and quantity achieved by an employee in carrying out his duties according to the responsibilities given to him. Performance according to (Runtuwene et al., 2022) is the result of work that can be achieved by a person or group of people in an organization in accordance with their respective authority and responsibilities in order to achieve unlawful and in accordance with morals and ethics. Performance is a function of motivation and the ability to complete a task or work that a person should have a certain degree of willingness and ability level (M. . C. Rizky, 2018). Problems regarding performance are problems that will always be faced by the company's management, therefore management needs to know the factors that affect employee performance. Factors that can affect the performance of these employees will make the company's management able to take various necessary policies, so that it can improve the performance of its employees to meet the company's expectations (Fadilah et al., 2023).

The Medan Class I Railway Engineering Center is a Technical Implementation Unit (UPT) under the Directorate General of Railways, Ministry of Transportation of the Republic of Indonesia which has the main task of carrying out testing, inspection, and certification of railway facilities, infrastructure, and systems as well as supervising the implementation of railways in its work area. As a technical agency responsible for the safety of railway transportation, the Medan Class I Railway Engineering Center carries out strategic tasks that demand optimal, professional, and high-integrity performance of ASN. Government Regulation Number 30 of 2019 concerning Performance Assessment of Civil Servants stipulates that performance assessment of civil servants is carried out based on performance planning at the individual level and at the unit or organization level, taking into account the targets, achievements, results, and benefits achieved as well as the behavior of civil servants.

Government Regulation Number 30 of 2019 stipulates that the performance assessment of civil servants consists of two elements, namely the Employee Performance Target (SKP) which measures aspects of quantity, quality, time, and cost of the output

produced, and work behavior which measures aspects of service orientation, integrity, commitment, discipline, cooperation, and leadership. In achieving a company's goals, problems often arise, one of which is that the performance of employees tends to decrease. This can be seen from the behavior of employees who are less responsible for their work, and from how employees overcome problems that are happening in a company (Rosada, 2021).

Seeing this, one of the factors that can affect employee performance in a company is leadership. According to Sutrisno in (Anwar, 2016) that "in leading a group is determined by the quality of leadership". The form of leadership applied in a company may affect the performance of each employee more. Because the leadership style is in accordance with the situation and conditions of the organization, employee performance will be more effective in carrying out their duties and obligations. One form of leadership that is considered to be able to improve employee performance is transformational leadership (Fadilah et al., 2023). According to (Chang et al., 2017; Purnomo & Nugroho, 2023) transformational leadership is the most superior and influential leadership style because transformational leadership uses logical, active, and effective reasoning, is results-oriented and directs employees in good values and behaviors in the company. Transformational leadership according to the opinion (Suwatno, 2019) is leadership that influences employees to make employees feel a sense of confidence, pride, loyalty and respect for their leaders and also have the motivation to do more than expected. According to Yukl in (Sitanggang et al., 2025), effective leadership is not only about providing direction, but also creating a positive work climate, empowering the community, and facilitating the development of individual and group potential. Based on research conducted by (Djuraidi & Laily, 2020), (Kristina et al., 2025) and (Edward, 2016) the results state that there is a significant influence of transformational leadership on employee performance. Meanwhile, the results of the study (Anam & Mukaffi, 2020) concluded that there is no significant influence of transformational leadership on employee performance.

Human relations or relationships between people in the organization also play an important role. Human relations is a process of harmonious social interaction between leaders and subordinates as well as between fellow colleagues. According to Thoha (2018), human relations is the art of connecting with others effectively so that conducive working relationships are created. According to Davis in the journal Human Relations (Human Relations) is the interaction between a person and another person either in a work situation or in a work organization. Human relations are good relationships between employees and fellow employees and employees with superiors in the agency (Sundayo et al., 2021). (Pangestu et al., 2020) argue that Human relations is a form of interaction between a person and another that is more than just a human relationship that not only attaches importance to the communication aspect, but also the psychological aspect that motivates each other between individuals to create productive cooperation performance, so that economic, psychological and social satisfaction is achieved. Good relationships in the

work environment will create a comfortable atmosphere, reduce conflicts, increase loyalty, and strengthen teamwork which can ultimately drive employee performance. A harmonious relationship between superiors and subordinates as well as between colleagues will create a conducive work environment, so that employees feel comfortable, appreciated, and supported. A harmonious relationship will create a pleasant working atmosphere and this will affect the enthusiasm of employees in carrying out all their work (Saputro & Fathoni, 2017; Utami, 2021). Research conducted by (Putri and Suartina, 2021) proves that human relations have a significant effect on employee performance. In contrast to the results of the study (Asrifah, 2015) it proves that human relations do not have a significant influence on employee performance.

Work ethic is also no less important in determining the quality of employee performance. According to (Priansa, 2018) work ethic is a set of basic attitudes or views held by employees to assess work as a positive thing for improving the quality of life, thus affecting their work behavior in the organization. (Mundiri & Jailani, 2019) explained that work ethic refers more to the quality of work personality as reflected in the performance of work as a whole in various dimensions of life. According to (Tangkudung & Taroreh, 2021) work ethic is the spirit of work that is the characteristic and belief of a person or a group. The term ethos means the appearance of one's character that is in harmony with ethics, credibility, beliefs, uniqueness, authority, experience, insight, knowledge, ability, reliability, integrity, accountability, and behavior and attitudes that are fully trusted by others (Purnomo & Nugroho, 2023). Work ethic itself is a determining factor in an individual's success in achieving his or her goals. The work ethic carried out by employees reflects obedience to the rules and regulations that have been set by an organization to carry out a job (Darmawan et al., 2020). Employees who have a high work ethic are reflected in their behavior, such as like to work hard, be fair, do not waste time during working hours, desire to give more than just what is hinted, willingness to cooperate, respect for colleagues and so on (Evi et al., 2025).

Job satisfaction as a mediating variable plays an important role in linking organizational and individual factors to employee performance. Job satisfaction is an employee's perception of the extent to which work fulfills the things that are important to them. Job satisfaction can increase employee happiness and company productivity so that organizational goals are achieved (Rahayu et al., 2020). According to (Afandi, 2018) job satisfaction is a positive attitude of the workforce, including feelings and behaviors towards their work through the assessment of one of the jobs as a sense of appreciation in achieving one of the important values of work. According to (Evi et al., 2025) Job satisfaction is a positive feeling about a person's work that is the result of an evaluation of their characteristics. A person's satisfaction is a feeling that results from their work that is in accordance with expectations (Devi & Rizky, 2024). Job satisfaction is an emotional state or a person's affective response to various situations and work conditions that can meet everything related to the needs, desires and expectations faced by employees in

looking at the job (Rizky, M., 2018). Each worker has different characteristics, so the level of job satisfaction is also different, so the level of job satisfaction can have a different impact (Suliztyanto et al., 2023). Employees who feel satisfied with their work tend to be more motivated, have high loyalty, and show optimal performance. On the other dissatisfaction can trigger absenteeism, decreased productivity, and the desire to change jobs. In line with Luthans' (2011) view that job satisfaction functions as a psychological bridge between organizational factors and performance outcomes, the low job satisfaction of ASN at the Medan Class I Railway Engineering Center is an inhibiting factor that weakens the impact of these three variables on the achievement of optimal performance, so there is a need for increased leadership attention to welfare, communication, and sustainable development of employee potential.

Based on the description above, the author is interested in conducting a research entitled "The Influence of Transformational Leadership, Human Relations and Work Ethic on Employee Performance through Job Satisfaction of ASN Class I Railway Engineering Center Medan".

## Method

This research method uses a quantitative approach with the type of associative research, because it aims to analyze the relationship and influence of transformational leadership variables, human relations, and work ethic on employee performance through job satisfaction as a mediating variable. The quantitative approach was chosen because it is able to explain phenomena in a measurable and objective manner through statistical analysis (Sugiyono, 2019). The research population consisted of 141 ASN of the Medan Class I Railway Engineering Center, and the sample was determined using the Slovin formula with an error rate of 10%, so that 58 respondents were obtained. The sample determination technique uses simple random sampling, because all members of the population have the same opportunity to be selected as a sample, as well as relatively homogeneous population characteristics (Sugiyono, 2019). The type of data in this study consists of primary data, namely data obtained directly from respondents through questionnaires, as well as secondary data sourced from literature, agency documents, and previous research results.

Data collection techniques are carried out through questionnaires, documentation, and literature studies. The collected data was analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) approach using the help of SmartPLS software. SEM-PLS was chosen because it is able to analyze the relationships between complex variables, including direct, indirect, and mediating relationships on the research model, and is suitable for use on small sample sizes such as in this study (Ghozali & Latan, 2015). The PLS analysis consists of two stages, namely the measurement model (outer model) which includes the test of convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability, and the structural model (inner model) which tests the significance of the relationship

between variables through path coefficient, t-statistics, and p-value. In addition, R-Square, Effect Size ( $f^2$ ), and Predictive Relevance ( $Q^2$ ) tests were also carried out to assess the overall predictive strength of the model.

## Results and Discussion

### 1. Description of Research Object

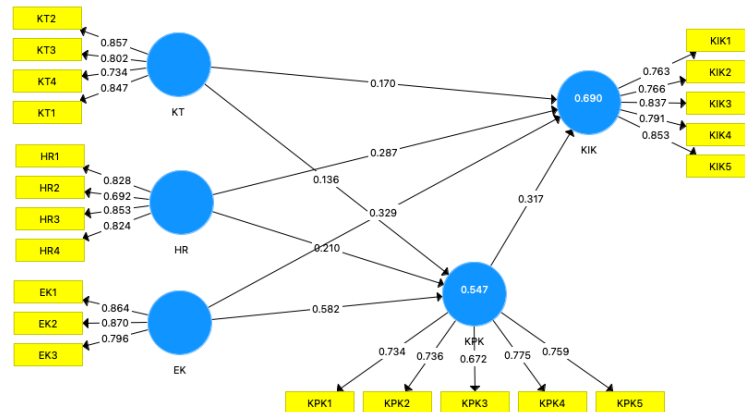
The Medan Class I Railway Engineering Center is a technical implementation unit within the Directorate General of Railways located in the city of Medan, North Sumatra. This center has a strategic role in carrying out testing, certification, and supervision of railway facilities and infrastructure in the northern part of Sumatra, including technical inspections of the feasibility of trains, locomotives, carriages, and rail infrastructure and railway bridges. As an authorized technical institution, this center is responsible for ensuring the safety of railway operations through standardization and periodic supervision of all components of the railway transportation system, as well as providing technical recommendations to railway operators and operators in order to maintain the reliability and safety of rail transportation services in their operational areas.

### 2. Karakteristik Responden

The characteristics of the respondents in this study showed that of the 58 respondents obtained through random sampling techniques from a population of 141 ASN, the composition based on gender was relatively balanced, consisting of 48.3% males and 51.7% females. Based on age, the majority of respondents were in the range of 41–50 years (41.7%), followed by 31–40 years (21.7%), then more than 50 years (18.3%), and 20–30 years old (15%), which reflects the dominance of employees at the mature productive age stage. In terms of service period, most respondents have worked for 1–5 years (36.7%), followed by 11–15 years (30%), then 6–10 years (25%), and the rest have worked for more than 15 years (8.3%), indicating a combination of new employees and experienced employees. Based on education, respondents consisted of Diploma (31.7%), SMA/SMK (23.3%), S1 (25%), and S2 (16.7%) graduates, showing a diversity of educational backgrounds relevant to technical and administrative tasks at the Medan Class I Railway Engineering Center. All of these characteristics give an idea that respondents have a diverse and representative profile of the condition of ASN in the work unit.

### 3. Testing Measurement Model (Outer Model)

Measurement Model Testing (Outer Model) is the initial stage in the analysis of Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) which is used to evaluate the relationship between indicators and latent variables to determine whether the measurement instrument is valid and reliable.



**Figure 1. Outer Model**

Source: SmartPLS data processing, 2026

Based on Figure 1. Outer Model, it can be seen that most of the indicators in each construct have met the criteria of convergent validity with a loading factor value above 0.70. The HR2 and KPK3 indicators have a loading value of below 0.70 so it needs to be eliminated from the model so that the measurement structure becomes more valid and reliable.

#### a. Convergent Validity Test

Convergent Validity Test is a test in the measurement model (outer model) used to ensure that the indicators used to measure a latent construct really have similarities (convergent) in explaining the construct. According to Hair et al. (2021), the validity of the convergence can be assessed through three main criteria: (1) the loading factor value  $\geq 0.70$ , which indicates the strength of the relationship between the indicator and the latent variable; (2) the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value  $\geq 0.50$ , which indicates that more than 50% of the variance of the indicator can be explained by the construct. If these criteria are met, then the construct is declared to have good convergent validity.

**Table 1. Outer Loading After Elimination**

	EK	HR	KIK	KPK	KT
EK1	0,865				
EK2	0,872				
EK3	0,792				
HR1		0,836			
HR3		0,882			
HR4		0,828			
KIK1			0,765		
KIK2			0,765		
KIK3			0,836		
KIK4			0,789		
KIK5			0,855		
KPK1				0,817	
KPK2				0,786	
KPK4				0,775	
KPK5				0,731	
KT2					0,858
KT3					0,806
KT4					0,728
KT1					0,845

Source: SmartPLS data processing, 2026

Based on Table 1. Outer Loading After Elimination, all indicators in the variables of Work Ethic, Human Relations, Employee Performance, Job Satisfaction, and Transformational Leadership show a loading factor value above 0.70, which means that all indicators have met the convergent validity criteria so that they are suitable for use in the model.

**b. Discriminating Validity Test**

The Discriminant Validity Test is used to ensure that each construct in the model is completely different from each other, so that the indicator on a latent variable is no longer representative of another construct. According to Hair et al. (2021), the validity of the discriminator can be tested using two main approaches: (1) The Fornell–Larcker Criterion, which is that the square root value of AVE in each construct must be higher than the correlation between other constructs; and (2) Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), which is the correlation ratio between different constructs, which is declared valid if the HTMT value is < 0.85 (stricter) or < 0.90 (looser). If both indicators are met, then a construct is considered to have good discriminant validity and is able to distinguish itself from other constructs in the model.

**Table 2. Fornell-Larcker Criterion**

	EK	HR	KIK	KPK	KT
EK	0,844				
HR	0,388	0,849			
KIK	0,719	0,557	0,803		
KPK	0,618	0,465	0,724	0,778	
KT	0,321	0,003	0,379	0,311	0,811

Source: SmartPLS data processing, 2026

Based on Table 2. Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), the entire HTMT value between constructs is below the threshold of 0.90, which indicates that each variable in the Work Ethic, Human Relations, Employee Performance, Job Satisfaction, and Transformational Leadership models has good discriminant validity.

### c. Reliability Test

The Reliability Test aims to assess the internal consistency of the indicator in measuring latent constructs, so that the instrument can be trusted and stable when used again. Reliability is assessed through two main measures, namely Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha. According to Hair et al. (2021), the construct is declared reliable if the CR value is  $\geq 0.70$ , which indicates consistency between indicators in one latent variable, while Cronbach's Alpha  $\geq 0.70$  indicates that the indicator has a good level of reliability. If both values meet the minimum limit, then the construct can be said to be reliable and the research instrument is feasible to use.

**Table 3. Reliability Test**

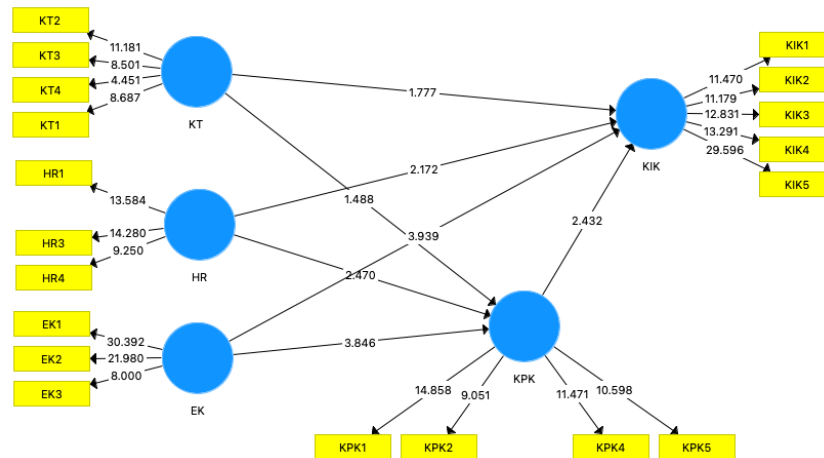
	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
EK	0,798	0,807	0,881	0,712
HR	0,808	0,820	0,886	0,721
KIK	0,862	0,874	0,901	0,645
KPK	0,783	0,782	0,860	0,605
KT	0,829	0,853	0,884	0,658

Source: SmartPLS data processing, 2026

Based on Table 3. In the Reliability test, the entire construct showed Cronbach's Alpha, rho\_A, and Composite Reliability values above 0.70, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values above 0.50. Thus, it can be concluded that this research instrument is reliable and feasible to use for further analysis in the SEM-PLS model.

## 4. Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

Structural Model Testing (Inner Model) is an analysis stage in SEM-PLS that is used to evaluate the relationships between latent constructs in a research model. The inner model assesses whether independent variables are able to explain dependent variables and how the strength and significance of the influence between these variables are.



**Figure 2. Inner Model**

Source: SmartPLS data processing, 2026

**a. Multicollinearity Test (Inner VIF)**

The Multicollinearity Test (Inner VIF) is part of the structural model test (inner model) which aims to ensure that the independent variables in the model do not have a very high correlation so as not to interfere with parameter estimation. Multicollinearity was evaluated using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) on latent constructs. According to Hair et al. (2021), the VIF value  $\leq 5$  indicates the absence of multicollinearity, while the stricter ideal value is  $VIF < 3.3$ . If the VIF value for each construct is below that limit, then the inner model is declared to be free of multicollinearity and the relationships between variables can be interpreted accurately without distortion due to excessive correlation.

**Table 4. Multicollinearity Test (Inner VIF)**

	VIF
EK1	1,807
EK2	1,932
EK3	1,529
HR1	1,537
HR3	2,106
HR4	1,930
KIK1	1,758
KIK2	1,812
KIK3	2,138
KIK4	1,829
KIK5	2,189
KPK1	2,042
KPK2	1,928
KPK4	1,477
KPK5	1,316
KT2	2,145
KT3	1,602

	VIF
KT4	1,630
KT1	1,928

Source: SmartPLS data processing, 2026

Based on Table 4. Multicollinearity test (Inner VIF), all indicators have a VIF value below 5, so it can be concluded that there is no problem of multicollinearity in the model. Thus, the relationship between independent variables is considered safe and does not cause interference with the structural model estimation.

#### b. R-Square ( $R^2$ )

R-Square ( $R^2$ ) is a measure of how much independent variables are able to explain dependent variables in a structural model. According to Hair et al. (2021),  $R^2$  values are categorized as: 0.75 (strong), 0.50 (moderate), and 0.25 (weak). The test was carried out by looking at the  $R^2$  value on the PLS-SEM (SmartPLS) output. The higher the  $R^2$  value, the better the predictability of exogenous constructs against endogenous constructs.

**Table 5. R-Square ( $R^2$ )**

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
KIK	0,706	0,683
KPK	0,466	0,436

Source: SmartPLS data processing, 2026

Based on Table 5, the R-Square ( $R^2$ ) value for the Employee Performance variable (KIK) is 0.706 with the R-Square Adjusted is 0.683. This shows that 70.6% of the variation in KIK can be explained by independent variables in the model (transformational leadership, human relations, and work ethic), while the remaining 29.4% are influenced by other factors that were not studied. This value is in the strong category, so the research model has good predictive ability for KIK.

Meanwhile, the R-Square ( $R^2$ ) value for the Job Satisfaction variable (KPK) was 0.466 with an Adjusted R-Square of 0.436, which means that 46.6% of the KPK variation can be explained by the variables that affect it (transformational leadership, human relations, and work ethic), and the remaining 53.4% are explained by variables outside the model. This value is in the moderate category, so the model is quite able to explain the influence on job satisfaction, although there are other variables that also contribute.

## 5. Pengujian Hypothesis

Hypothesis tests were used in SEM-PLS to determine the direction and magnitude of the direct influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables through path coefficient values ranging from  $-1$  to  $+1$ . The test was carried out with a bootstrapping procedure on SmartPLS to obtain t-statistic and p-value, where the relationship is considered significant if the t-statistic  $\geq 1.96$  or p-value  $\leq 0.05$  (Hair et al., 2021). If the value is met, then the path coefficient is declared significant and shows that the independent variable has a direct effect on the dependent variable.

**Table 6. Path Coefficient Test**

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
<b>EK -&gt; KIK</b>	0,364	0,376	0,092	3,939	<b>0,000</b>
<b>EK -&gt; KPK</b>	0,453	0,437	0,118	3,846	<b>0,000</b>
<b>HR -&gt; KIK</b>	0,263	0,286	0,121	2,172	<b>0,030</b>
<b>HR -&gt; KPK</b>	0,289	0,309	0,117	2,470	<b>0,014</b>
<b>KPK -&gt; KIK</b>	0,327	0,294	0,134	2,432	<b>0,015</b>
<b>KT -&gt; KIK</b>	0,160	0,173	0,090	1,777	<b>0,076</b>
<b>KT -&gt; KPK</b>	0,165	0,186	0,111	1,488	<b>0,137</b>

Source: SmartPLS data processing, 2026

The test results presented in Table 6 show that:

### **The Influence of Work Ethic on Employee Performance**

The results showed that Work Ethic (EK) had a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance (KIK), with a coefficient value of 0.364 and t-statistic of 3.939 (p = 0.000). This indicates that the higher the standard of work ethic that employees have, such as discipline, responsibility, and commitment, the better the individual performance displayed.

### **The Influence of Work Ethic on Job Satisfaction**

Work Ethic has also been proven to have a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction (KPK), as shown by a coefficient value of 0.453, t-statistic of 3.846, and p-value of 0.000. This means that employees who have a high work ethic tend to feel greater satisfaction with their work, both in terms of personal achievements, comfort in carrying out tasks, and feelings of value in the organization. The better the work ethic, the higher the job satisfaction that arises naturally in employees.

### **The Influence of Human Relations on Employee Performance**

Human Relations (HR) or relationships between employees showed a positive and significant influence on KIK with a coefficient of 0.263, t-statistic 2.172, and p-value of 0.030. These results emphasize that effective communication, harmonious cooperation, and good interpersonal relationships between employees can improve the quality of individual performance. High social support in the work environment makes employees feel comfortable, motivated, and easier to achieve performance targets.

### **The Influence of Human Relations on Job Satisfaction**

The relationship between employees also has a positive and significant influence on job satisfaction, as evidenced by a coefficient of 0.289, a t-value of 2.470, and a p-value of 0.014. Employees who feel a conducive, harmonious, and cooperative work environment usually have higher levels of satisfaction. Good communication and supportive

interpersonal relationships help create a positive work atmosphere that encourages a sense of satisfaction at work.

### The Effect of Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance

Job Satisfaction proved to be an important factor that drives employee performance improvement, with a coefficient value of 0.327, t-statistic of 2.432, and p-value of 0.015. This means that the higher the level of satisfaction that employees feel with their work, the greater their enthusiasm and motivation in providing the best results. Satisfied employees tend to work more consistently, responsibly, and are able to achieve performance targets more effectively.

### The Influence of Transformational Leadership on Employee Performance

Transformational Leadership (KT) showed a positive but insignificant influence on KIK, with a coefficient value of 0.160, t-statistic of 1.777, and p-value of 0.076. Although in the direction of Transformational Leadership has the potential to improve performance, the power of this influence is not large enough in the context of this study. This can be caused by the implementation of a leadership style that is not optimal, a lack of inspiration intensity from the leader, or organizational conditions that make employees more influenced by other factors such as work ethic and relationships between employees.

### The Influence of Transformational Leadership on Job Satisfaction

KT also showed a positive but not significant effect on Job Satisfaction, with a coefficient value of 0.165, t-statistic of 1.488, and p-value of 0.137. Although transformational leaders are usually able to create an inspiring and motivating work environment, in this study the influence was not strong enough to significantly increase job satisfaction. This may be because employees feel more direct influence from personal work ethic and quality of work relationship than the leadership style of their superiors.

**Table 7. Specific Indirect Effects**

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV)	P Values
EK -> KPK -> KIK	0,148	0,134	0,077	1,919	<b>0,056</b>
HR -> KPK -> KIK	0,095	0,086	0,046	2,064	<b>0,040</b>
KT -> KPK -> KIK	0,054	0,055	0,043	1,249	<b>0,212</b>

Source: SmartPLS data processing, 2026

Based on table 7. Specific Indirect Effects can be explained as:

### The Effect of Job Satisfaction Mediation on the Relationship between Work Ethic and Employee Performance

The results of the study showed that Work Ethic (EK) had a positive indirect influence on Employee Performance (KIK) through Job Satisfaction (KPK) with a coefficient value of 0.148. However, this effect was not significant, as shown by the t-statistic value of

1.919 and the p-value of 0.056 which were above the significance limit of 0.05. These findings indicate that although work ethic is able to increase job satisfaction, and job satisfaction can in turn improve performance, the mediating role of Job Satisfaction in the relationship between Work Ethic and Performance is not statistically strong enough.

### **The Effect of Job Satisfaction Mediation on Human Relations and Employee Performance**

Human Relations (HR) has a positive and significant indirect influence on KIK through the KPK with a coefficient of 0.095, a t-statistic value of 2.064, and a p-value of 0.040 ( $< 0.05$ ). These results show that the quality of good relationships between employees not only improves work dynamics, but also increases Job Satisfaction which then has an impact on increasing Individual Performance. Thus, Job Satisfaction functions as an effective and significant mediator in strengthening the influence of HR on KIK, so that harmonious working relationships have an important role in building more optimal performance.

### **The Effect of Job Satisfaction Mediation on the Relationship of Transformational Leadership to Employee Performance**

The indirect influence of Transformational Leadership (KT) on KIK through the KPK showed a coefficient of 0.054, but it was not significant with a t-statistic value of 1.249 and a p-value of 0.212. This shows that Job Satisfaction is not able to be a strong mediator in the relationship between KT and KIK. This means that while transformational leadership tends to drive job satisfaction, its contribution is not large enough to indirectly affect performance improvement. Thus, the transformational leadership style of the Medan Class I Railway Engineering Center has not had a significant mediating impact through job satisfaction.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the results of the above data analysis, the conclusions of this study are as follows:

1. Work Ethic (EK) has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance (KIK). This means that the higher the work ethic of the ASN of the Medan Class I Railway Engineering Center, the more the performance they produce.
2. Work Ethic (EK) also has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction (KPK). This shows that commitment, discipline, and good work spirit can increase job satisfaction.
3. Human Relations (HR) has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance (KIK). A harmonious working relationship between employees contributes significantly to increased productivity and performance.

4. Human Relations (HR) has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction (KPK). Good work interaction, effective communication, and a supportive work environment have been proven to increase ASN job satisfaction.
5. Job Satisfaction (KPK) has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance (KIK). The more satisfied the ASN is with their working conditions, the better the performance they will perform.
6. Transformational Leadership (KT) has a positive but insignificant effect on Employee Performance (KIK). This shows that the transformational leadership style has not had a strong enough impact on improving the performance of civil servants.
7. Transformational Leadership (KT) has a positive but insignificant effect on Job Satisfaction (KPK). Thus, the influence of KT on the psychological well-being of employees is not optimal.
8. The indirect influence of EK on KIK through the KPK is not significant. Despite the positive influence direction, job satisfaction has not been a strong mediator in this relationship.
9. The indirect influence of HR on KIK through the KPK is significant. This means that job satisfaction can be an effective bridge in strengthening the relationship between HR and performance.
10. The indirect influence of KT on KIK through the KPK is not significant. This indicates that job satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between KT and ASN performance.

Based on the results of the research, it is suggested that the Medan Class I Railway Engineering Center prioritize improving work ethic and human relations, because these two variables have been proven to significantly increase the satisfaction and performance of civil servants. Leaders need to encourage a disciplined, ethical, and passionate work culture, as well as strengthen interaction, communication, and cooperation between employees to create a harmonious work environment. In addition, it is important for leaders to re-evaluate the application of transformational leadership styles, because its influence has not been significant; more targeted leadership training, strengthening vision, inspirational motivation, and improving the quality of personal approaches to employees are needed so that leadership is more effective in increasing satisfaction and performance of civil servants.

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