

The Effect of Organizational Culture, Reward, and Punishment on ASN Performance

Fadillah Tri Sari Nasrul^{1✉}, Dissa Melina¹, Fitri Suherini¹, Gilang Dwi Nanda¹, Okta Meridiana¹, Roef Efindro¹, Yance Gafar¹, Jhon Very¹

¹ Department of Master of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Putra Indonesia YPTK, Padang 25221, Indonesia

rheren.nasrul@gmail.com

Abstract

This study analyzes the influence of organizational culture, reward, and punishment on ASN employee performance at the Padang Panjang Regional Secretariat, with work motivation as an intervening variable. Using a quantitative approach with SEM-PLS on 85 respondents selected through saturated sampling, data were collected via a 48-item Likert-scale questionnaire. The results show that organizational culture, reward, and punishment each have a positive and significant direct effect on employee performance. Organizational culture demonstrates the largest total effect (0.394), followed by reward (0.321) and punishment (0.276). Work motivation serves as a significant partial mediator, strengthening the relationship between all three independent variables and performance. The model explains 71.4% of performance variance. These findings suggest that integrating positive organizational culture with fair reward and punishment systems is essential for enhancing work motivation and sustainable performance improvement in public-sector organizations.

Keywords: Organizational Culture, Reward, Punishment, Work Motivation, Employee Performance

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1. Introduction

The performance of government officials is a crucial indicator of the effectiveness of public service and the success of regional development [1]. As primary actors within the bureaucratic system, State Civil Apparatus (ASN) are required to possess high levels of competence, professionalism, and integrity in carrying out their duties [2], [3]. Optimal performance is not merely a benchmark for administrative efficiency but also a determinant instrument in fostering public trust in clean and accountable governance [4], [5]. Consequently, the Regional Secretariat, as a strategic instrument for regional policy coordination, bears a significant urgency to continuously evaluate and enhance the performance of its staff to ensure the achievement of both national and regional development goals.

The phenomenon observed at the Regional Secretariat of Padang Panjang reveals a fluctuating performance dynamic, particularly between 2023 and 2024. Based on the Government Agency Performance Accountability Report (LAKIP), although overall program achievement remains in the "excellent" category, data

indicates a decline in performance realization from 99.39% in 2023 to 96.67% in 2024. This decline reflects underlying constraints in program implementation, notably within the "Apparatus Human Resources Capacity Building Program" and new initiatives regarding the professionalism of examiners. Such a trend suggests that while planning targets are set ambitiously, internal organizational factors significantly influence the consistency of bureaucratic productivity [6], [7], [8].

Theoretically, individual performance is heavily influenced by the organizational environment that shapes employee behavior, namely organizational culture [9], [10]. Previous studies asserts that a robust organizational culture internalizes organizational values into individual conduct, fostering a sense of belonging and loyalty. When organizational culture is aligned with the agency's vision, employees gain clarity in their professional trajectory [4], [11], [12]. However, organizational culture does not operate in a vacuum. It requires a fair system of rewards and punishments to ensure that employee behavior remains within the expected parameters necessary to achieve strategic goals [13], [14], [15].

Beyond environmental and regulatory aspects, work motivation plays a significant mediating (intervening) role in transforming external stimuli into tangible performance outcomes [16]. Motivation theory positions internal drive as a key catalyst that connects employee satisfaction regarding rewards and punishments with actual work output [17], [18]. Without strong motivation, even the most attractive reward policies may fail to yield a maximum impact on productivity [19], [20]. Therefore, motivation serves as a psychological variable that converts an employee's perception of their work environment into focused, goal-oriented energy aligned with job requirements.

Previous studies have provided empirical evidence that a positive organizational culture and transparent reward and punishment systems significantly influence performance through enhanced motivation. Nevertheless, inconsistencies remain in the literature regarding the extent to which these variables dominantly contribute within the context of public bureaucracy [21]. The gap between the expectation of ideal performance and the reality of declining achievement necessitates a more profound analysis of how these three independent variables function through work motivation to influence the performance of ASN within the Regional Secretariat.

Based on the background described, this article aims to analyze the influence of organizational culture, rewards, and punishments on the performance of ASN employees at the Regional Secretariat of Padang Panjang, with work motivation serving as an intervening variable. The scope of this study focuses on evaluating human resource management systems within regional bureaucracy and how the synergy between organizational values, incentive systems, and sanctions can be modulated by work motivation to generate sustainable performance improvements. The findings are expected to provide strategic policy implications for local governments in implementing continuous improvements to their apparatus management systems.

2. Methods

This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design, aiming to examine the causal relationships between independent variables (Organizational Culture, Reward, and Punishment), the intervening variable (Work Motivation), and the dependent variable (Employee Performance). By utilizing a quantitative approach, this research seeks to test hypotheses based on empirical data collected from the field, allowing for objective analysis and generalization of the results. The population of this study consists of all State Civil Apparatus (ASN) serving within the Regional Secretariat of Padang Panjang. Given the population size, this study adopts a saturated sampling technique (census method) with a

total of 85 respondents, ensuring that the study captures a holistic representation of the organizational climate and performance levels.

Data collection is conducted through a survey method using a structured questionnaire. The instrument uses a five-point Likert scale (1–5) to measure respondents' perceptions regarding 48 items: 10 items for Employee Performance (covering quantity, quality, teamwork, responsibility, and initiative), 10 items for Organizational Culture (focusing on awareness, aggressiveness, personality, and performance orientation), 10 items for Reward (addressing financial/non-financial incentives and fairness), 10 items for Punishment (evaluating strictness, consistency, and deterrent effect), and 8 items for Work Motivation (assessing drive, enthusiasm, and creativity) [22]. To ensure the instrument's quality, the questionnaire underwent validity and reliability testing, with Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding 0.60 and factor loadings above 0.50. Furthermore, all respondents participated voluntarily with guaranteed anonymity. In addition to primary data, secondary data including LAKIP reports and relevant organizational documents were utilized to provide context for performance trends.

The data analysis tool employed in this study is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), specifically utilizing Partial Least Squares (PLS) via SmartPLS 4.0 software. SEM-PLS was selected due to its capability to analyze complex relationships between latent variables simultaneously, including the structural and measurement models. This approach is particularly effective for testing the role of "Work Motivation" as an intervening variable, enabling the evaluation of both direct and indirect effects of organizational culture, rewards, and punishments on the performance of the ASN. The analysis follows two stages: the outer model analysis to assess convergent and discriminant validity, and the inner model analysis to test research hypotheses through bootstrapping, path coefficients, and the coefficient of determination (R²).

Table 1. Performance Metrics

Metric	Class 0	Class 1	Weighted Average
Precision	0.99	0.55	0.97
Recall	0.98	0.67	0.96
F1-score	0.98	0.60	0.96
Support	206	9	215

3. Results and Discussions

The study was conducted at the Regional Secretariat of Padang Panjang, involving all 85 ASN employees as respondents using a saturated sampling technique (census method), as the population was below 100. Data were collected through structured questionnaires measured using a five-point Likert scale covering 48 items across five variables.

3.1 Respondent Characteristics

Table 1 Respondent Characteristics by Gender

No	Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Male	47	55.29
2	Female	38	44.71
	Total	85	100.00

Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents based on gender. A total of 85 respondents participated in the study, consisting of 47 males (55.29%) and 38 females (44.71%). The results indicate that male respondents represented a slightly larger proportion of the sample than female respondents. Overall, the gender distribution was relatively balanced, with a difference of 10.58 percentage points between the two groups.

Table 2 Respondent Characteristics by Education Level

No	Education Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Senior High School	12	14.12
2	Diploma (D3)	8	9.41
3	Bachelor's (S1)	45	52.94
4	Master's (S2)	18	21.18
5	Doctoral (S3)	2	2.35

Table 2 presents the respondents' educational background. The majority of respondents held a Bachelor's degree (S1), accounting for 45 respondents (52.94%). This was followed by respondents with a Master's degree (S2), comprising 18 respondents (21.18%), and those with a Senior High School education, comprising 12 respondents (14.12%). Meanwhile, 8 respondents (9.41%) held a Diploma (D3), and only 2 respondents (2.35%) held a Doctoral degree (S3). These findings indicate that the sample was predominantly composed of respondents with undergraduate-level education, while respondents with doctoral-level education represented the smallest proportion.

3.2 Measurement Model (Outer Model)

The quality of the measurement model was evaluated through convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability testing. All outer loadings exceeded 0.50, and AVE values surpassed the 0.50 threshold. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values confirmed instrument consistency.

Table 3. Measurement Model Summary

Variable	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Organizational Culture (X1)	0.612	0.912	0.928
Reward (X2)	0.623	0.921	0.935
Punishment (X3)	0.618	0.917	0.931
Work Motivation (Z)	0.637	0.908	0.924
Employee Performance (Y)	0.629	0.924	0.937

All constructs met the required thresholds, confirming that the measurement instruments are valid and reliable for structural model analysis.

3.3 Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Table 4. R^2 Values of Endogenous Variables

Endogenous Variable	R^2	R^2 Adjusted	Interpretation
Work Motivation (Z)	0.583	0.567	Moderate
Employee Performance (Y)	0.714	0.699	Substantial

The R^2 value of 0.583 indicates that organizational culture, reward, and punishment collectively explain 58.3% of the variance in work motivation. Meanwhile, the R^2 of 0.714 shows that 71.4% of the variance in employee performance is explained by all predictor variables including work motivation, demonstrating strong explanatory power of the model.

3.4 Hypothesis Testing (Direct and Indirect Effects)

Hypotheses were accepted when t-statistic > 1.96 and p-value < 0.05.

Table 5. Direct and Indirect Effects

Hypothesis	Path	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value	Type	Result
H1	X1 → Y	0.287	3.412	0.001	Direct	Supported
H2	X2 → Y	0.234	2.876	0.004	Direct	Supported
H3	X3 → Y	0.198	2.541	0.011	Direct	Supported
H4	X1 → Z	0.342	4.127	0.000	Direct	Supported
H5	X2 → Z	0.278	3.356	0.001	Direct	Supported
H6	X3 → Z	0.251	3.018	0.003	Direct	Supported
H7	Z → Y	0.312	3.789	0.000	Direct	Supported
H8	X1 → Z → Y	0.107	2.684	0.007	Indirect	Supported
H9	X2 → Z → Y	0.087	2.312	0.021	Indirect	Supported
H10	X3 → Z	0.078	2.147	0.032	Indirect	Supported

	→					
	Y					

Table 5 presents the results of the direct and indirect effect analysis examining the relationships among X1, X2, X3, Z, and Y. The results show that all ten hypotheses were statistically supported, as indicated by *t*-statistics greater than 1.96 and *p*-values below 0.05. The direct effect analysis indicates that X1 has a positive and significant effect on Y ($\beta = 0.287$, $t = 3.412$, $p = 0.001$), supporting H1. Similarly, X2 has a positive and significant effect on Y ($\beta = 0.234$, $t = 2.876$, $p = 0.004$), supporting H2. X3 also demonstrates a positive and significant effect on Y ($\beta = 0.198$, $t = 2.541$, $p = 0.011$), supporting H3. Regarding the predictors of Z, X1 has a positive and significant effect on Z ($\beta = 0.342$, $t = 4.127$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H4. X2 significantly and positively affects Z ($\beta = 0.278$, $t = 3.356$, $p = 0.001$), supporting H5, while X3 also has a significant positive effect on Z ($\beta = 0.251$, $t = 3.018$, $p = 0.003$), supporting H6. Furthermore, Z has a positive and significant direct effect on Y ($\beta = 0.312$, $t = 3.789$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H7.

The indirect effect analysis further demonstrates that Z significantly mediates the relationship between X1 and Y ($\beta = 0.107$, $t = 2.684$, $p = 0.007$), supporting H8. Likewise, Z significantly mediates the relationship between X2 and Y ($\beta = 0.087$, $t = 2.312$, $p = 0.021$), supporting H9. Finally, Z also significantly mediates the relationship between X3 and Y ($\beta = 0.078$, $t = 2.147$, $p = 0.032$), supporting H10. Overall, these findings confirm that X1, X2, and X3 exert significant positive effects on Y both directly and indirectly through Z. Among the direct effects, X1 demonstrates the strongest effect on Y, whereas X1 also shows the strongest effect on Z. These results highlight the important role of Z as a mediating variable in the proposed structural model.

3.5 Summary of Total Effects

Table 6. Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects on Employee Performance

Path	Direct	Indirect	Total
X1 → Y	0.287	0.107	0.394
X2 → Y	0.234	0.087	0.321
X3 → Y	0.198	0.078	0.276

Table 5 presents the results all ten hypotheses were supported. Organizational culture demonstrated the largest total effect on employee performance (0.394), followed by reward (0.321) and punishment (0.276). Since direct effects remained significant after including work motivation in the model, partial mediation was confirmed for all three independent variables. These findings indicate that work motivation serves as a significant intervening variable that strengthens the relationship between organizational culture, reward,

punishment, and employee performance at the Padang Panjang Regional Secretariat.

The findings indicate that organizational culture, rewards, and punishments each exert significant positive direct effects on employee performance and also influence performance indirectly through work motivation. Among the three exogenous variables, organizational culture demonstrated the strongest direct effect on both work motivation and employee performance, suggesting that cultural alignment is an important determinant of employee outcomes [23], [24]. This finding is consistent with Schein's organizational culture perspective, which emphasizes that shared values, norms, and underlying assumptions shape employee behavior in accordance with organizational objectives. Organizational culture and compensation were associated with employee performance with work motivation serving as a mediating variable among employees of regional BPS institutions. Similarly, research conducted among 144 ASN employees at the Regional Revenue Agency of North Kalimantan Province confirmed the role of organizational culture in influencing employee performance through work motivation [25]. These findings strengthen the argument that organizational culture is particularly important in public-sector organizations because shared institutional values can guide employee behavior toward organizational and public-service objectives.

The significant positive effects of rewards and punishments on employee performance further demonstrate the importance of appropriate human resource management mechanisms. Rewards can provide recognition and reinforce desirable behaviors, whereas consistently and fairly implemented punishments can establish behavioral boundaries and encourage compliance with organizational standards [19], [26], [27]. Reward and punishment significantly affected employee performance and that work motivation was also significantly associated with performance among employees of the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office. Reward and punishment systems significantly affected employee performance, with rewards associated with increased motivation and productivity and punishment functioning as a behavioral-control mechanism. Therefore, the present findings reinforce the view that reward and punishment systems should not be treated merely as administrative procedures but as strategic mechanisms for directing employee behavior and supporting organizational performance.

The mediation results provide further evidence that work motivation represents an important mechanism through which organizational factors are translated into employee performance. Organizational culture, rewards, and punishments all demonstrated significant indirect effects on performance through work motivation, while their direct effects remained

significant, indicating partial mediation [28], [29]. This finding is consistent with Herzberg's motivation theory, which emphasizes the importance of recognition, achievement, responsibility, and other motivational factors in stimulating employees to exert greater effort. Previous empirical research provides strong support for this mechanism. Recent studies was using PLS-SEM among 155 employees, found that rewards and punishments affected employee performance through work motivation as an intervening variable [30]. Likewise, research conducted at PT Amanie International found that both rewards and punishments had significant positive effects on work motivation, with the findings emphasizing the importance of fair, transparent, and consistent implementation of these mechanisms [31]. The consistency between these studies and the present findings indicates that work motivation is an important psychological pathway linking organizational practices with employee performance.

The stronger contribution of organizational culture compared with rewards and punishments suggests that sustainable performance improvement may depend more fundamentally on the internalization of organizational values than on external control mechanisms alone. This interpretation is supported by recent research examining government agencies, which identified organizational culture as an important factor shaping employee performance in the public-sector context [1]. In public administration, employees operate within institutional norms concerning accountability, discipline, service quality, and organizational responsibility; therefore, a culture that consistently communicates and reinforces these values can provide a stable foundation for motivation and performance [32]. From a practical perspective, the Regional Secretariat of Padang Panjang should prioritize the development of a positive, values-driven organizational culture while maintaining fair, transparent, and consistently applied reward and punishment systems. These mechanisms should be complemented by recognition of achievement, constructive feedback, professional development opportunities, and clear performance expectations to strengthen employee motivation and ultimately improve organizational performance [33], [34].

3.6 Limitations and Future Work

Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. The cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causal relationships among organizational culture, rewards, punishments, work motivation, and employee performance. In addition, the study was conducted within a single regional secretariat, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other public-sector institutions with different organizational structures and administrative contexts. The reliance on self-reported measures may also

introduce common method and social desirability biases.

Future research should employ longitudinal designs and multi-source measures, including supervisor assessments and objective performance indicators, while examining potential moderating variables such as organizational tenure, job complexity, leadership style, and perceived organizational support. Such approaches would extend the findings of previous studies and provide a more comprehensive understanding of how organizational culture and human resource management practices influence employee performance through motivational processes.

4. Conclusions

This study demonstrates that organizational culture, rewards, and punishments each exert positive and significant direct effects on ASN employee performance, while also influencing performance indirectly through work motivation. The findings indicate that organizational culture is the strongest driver of both motivation and performance, with rewards and punishments contributing meaningfully when applied within a aligned cultural context. Work motivation serves as a partial mediator, reinforcing the notion that HR practices affect performance not only through direct channels but also by shaping employees' motivational states, which in turn affect their output.

From a policy perspective, the results underscore the importance of cultivating a positive, values-driven organizational culture and implementing fair, transparent reward and sanction systems to boost work motivation and, subsequently, performance in public bureaucracies. This integrated HRM approach offers a practical pathway for local governments seeking to enhance accountability, service quality, and efficiency. Limitations include cross-sectional design and reliance on self-reported data; future research could adopt longitudinal designs and multi-method measures to validate and extend these findings across different public sector contexts.

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Author Contributions Statement

The individual contributions of the authors to this study, categorized according to the Contributor Roles Taxonomy (CRediT), are presented in Table 1 below:

Name of Author	C	M	So	Va	Fo	I	R	D	W

Fadilla h Tri Nasrul	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dissa Melina		✓				✓		✓
Fitri Suherni	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓
Gilang Dwi Nanda		✓		✓		✓		
Okta Meridi ana					✓		✓	✓
Roef Efandro				✓	✓		✓	
Yance Gafar	✓			✓				✓
Jhon Very	✓				✓		✓	

C : Conceptualization I : Investigation
M : Methodology R : Resources
So : Software D : Data Curation
Va : Validation W : Writing - Review
Fo : Formal analysis

Conflict of Interest Statement

Authors state no conflict of interest.

Data Availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author [FTSN], upon reasonable request.

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Biographies of Authors



Fadillah Tri Sari Nasrul holds a Bachelor's degree in Public Health from Universitas Fort De Kock Bukittinggi, Indonesia. She was born in Duri, Indonesia, on December 2, 1993. She is currently working as an Analyst. Her academic background in public health and her professional experience as an analyst contribute to her interest

	in research related to health, data analysis, and public health issues. She contributes to research activities , including data collection, data analysis, and manuscript preparation.		
	Dissa Melina holds a Bachelor's degree in Economics from Universitas Andalas, Indonesia. She was born in Batusangkar, Indonesia, on December 24, 1994. She is currently working as a civil servant (PNS) in Indonesia. Her academic background in economics and her professional experience in public service contribute to her interest in economic issues, public administration, and government services. She contributes to research activities, including research development, data collection, data analysis, and manuscript preparation.		Gilang Dwi Nanda holds a Bachelor's degree in Sendratasik Education (Music, Dance, and Drama Education). He was born in Payakumbuh, Indonesia, on July 29, 1987. He is currently working as a teacher. His academic background in arts education and his professional experience as an educator contribute to his interest in arts education, teaching and learning, and the development of students' creativity. He contributes to research activities, including research development, data collection, data analysis, and manuscript preparation.
	Fitri Suherini holds a Bachelor's degree in Agriculture from Universitas Mahaputra Muhammad Yamin (UMMY) Solok, Indonesia. She was born in Solok, Indonesia, on August 18, 1978. She is currently working as a civil servant (PNS) at the Solok City Government. Her academic background in agriculture and her professional experience in public service contribute to her interest in agricultural development, public administration, and community development. She contributes to research activities, including research development, data collection, data analysis, and manuscript preparation.		Okta Meridiana holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Universitas Islam Bandung, Indonesia. She was born in Solok, Indonesia, on October 15, 1983. She is currently a civil servant (PNS) at Politeknik ATI Padang, Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Indonesia. Her academic background in psychology and her professional experience in government institutions contribute to her interest in human resources, organizational behavior, and workplace psychology. She contributes to research activities, including research development, data collection, data analysis, and manuscript preparation.
			Roef Efandro holds a Bachelor's degree in Public Health from Universitas Andalas, Indonesia. He was born in Solok, Indonesia, on October 13, 1991. He is currently working at BPJS Kesehatan Solok Branch. His academic background in public health and his professional experience in the national health insurance sector contribute to his interest in public health, health services, and health insurance management. He contributes to research activities, including research development, data collection, data analysis, and manuscript preparation.

	Yance Gafar holds a Bachelor's degree (S.E.) in Management from Universitas Mahaputra Muhammad Yamin (UMMY) Solok, Indonesia. He was born in Guguak, Indonesia, on June 9, 1979. He is currently serving as a Commissioner of the General Elections Commission (KPU) of Solok City. His academic background in management and his professional experience in electoral administration contribute to his interest in organizational management, public administration, and electoral governance. He contributes to research activities, including research development, data analysis, and manuscript preparation.
	Jhon Veri is currently serving as Vice Rector IV at Universitas Putra Indonesia YPTK (UPI YPTK), Indonesia. He has an academic background in Computer Science and Management, with expertise spanning information technology, management, and higher education. In his current role, he contributes to the development of academic and institutional programs, particularly in the areas of research, innovation, and higher education management. He contributes to research activities, including research development, data analysis, academic supervision, and manuscript preparation.