



# Enhancing Sanitation Worker Performance Through Work Spirit and Work Discipline: The Moderating Effect Of Workplace Friendship

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**Abstract:** This research examines the effects of work spirit and work discipline on the performance of sanitation workers (Yellow Troops) within the Environmental Agency of Cirebon Regency, with workplace friendship serving as a moderating variable. Adopting a quantitative explanatory design, the study surveyed 100 respondents selected through proportional random sampling from a total workforce of 366 employees. Data were gathered using validated questionnaires and analyzed through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0. Findings indicate that both work spirit and work discipline exert significant positive influences on performance. Moreover, workplace friendship significantly moderates the associations between work spirit and performance, as well as between work discipline and performance, thereby strengthening their effects. The model accounts for 50% of the variance in performance, reflecting moderate predictive capability. These results underscore the necessity of enhancing individual motivation and compliance with operational standards alongside fostering strong interpersonal relationships in the workplace. Managerial recommendations include implementing initiatives to promote teamwork, peer support, and intergenerational collaboration. Theoretically, the study advances the literature by positioning workplace friendship as a social moderator within performance models in labor-intensive public service settings.

**Keywords:** work spirit, work discipline, workplace friendship, performance, sanitation workers

## INTRODUCTION

Waste management has emerged as a pressing global concern, posing significant threats to environmental sustainability and public health. The World Bank (2018) projects that global waste generation will escalate from 2.01 billion tons annually to 3.4 billion tons by 2050. Developing nations, including Indonesia, confront a dual challenge: rapid population growth coupled with inadequate waste management systems. As the world's fourth most populous country, Indonesia produces approximately 175,000 tons of waste each day, with 70% disposed of in landfills or openly dumped (KLHK, 2020). This condition positions Indonesia as the second-largest contributor to marine plastic pollution after China, with an estimated 3.2 million tons of plastic waste entering the ocean annually.

Regionally, Cirebon Regency situated along Java's northern coast faces acute ecological pressures. Daily waste generation reaches 1,200 tons, yet only 35.4% is transported to landfills (DLH, 2024). The remaining 775 tons accumulate in rivers, coastal zones, and illegal dumping sites, exacerbating flooding, water contamination, and outbreaks of diseases such as diarrhea and dengue fever. Local government interventions, despite regulatory measures, have yielded suboptimal results due to constraints in human resources and infrastructure capacity.

Central to waste management operations are the Yellow Troops, sanitation workers tasked with maintaining regional cleanliness. Their responsibilities encompass physically demanding activities under challenging environmental conditions, including the collection of waste from streets, waterways, and drainage systems. Nevertheless, performance data from the Cirebon DLH reveals a marked decline in service quality between 2023 and 2024, characterized by lower waste collection rates, an increase in illegal dumping sites, and diminished public satisfaction levels.

Two key determinants of performance work spirit and work discipline warrant particular attention. Work spirit embodies employees' enthusiasm, commitment, and motivation in executing their duties, whereas work discipline ensures compliance with operational procedures and schedules. Both factors are integral to sustaining high service quality in labor-intensive public service contexts. Additionally, workplace friendship, defined as voluntary, trust-based interpersonal relationships within the workplace, may serve as a moderating variable. Empirical evidence suggests that positive workplace relationships foster social support, alleviate work-related stress, and enhance collaboration, thereby strengthening the influence of work spirit and discipline on performance outcomes.

Preliminary survey findings among the Yellow Troops highlight challenges across these three dimensions. Many workers report diminished intrinsic motivation, inconsistent attendance, non-adherence to uniform regulations, and limited opportunities to cultivate close workplace friendships. These issues are compounded by demographic factors, as a substantial portion of the workforce comprises older employees who face both physical and psychological demands in their roles.

Against this backdrop, the present study investigates the impact of work spirit and work discipline on the performance of the Yellow Troops within the Cirebon DLH, with workplace friendship examined as a moderating factor. The research seeks to contribute to human resource management scholarship while offering practical recommendations to enhance public sanitation services in Cirebon Regency.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Work Spirit

Work spirit is defined as a psychological state that reflects enthusiasm, determination, and high energy in accomplishing tasks (Mangkunegara & Octorend, 2015). Its dimensions include desire, diligence, enjoyment, and job satisfaction. Factors influencing work spirit encompass personality traits, work environment, leadership, career development opportunities, and compensation (Masdani, 2019). Previous studies have demonstrated that work spirit has a significant positive effect on employee performance (Lase, 2022). In physically demanding occupations such as those of the *Pasukan Kuning*, high work spirit has the potential to enhance effectiveness, creativity, and resilience in coping with work pressures.

### Work Discipline

Work discipline refers to the awareness and willingness to comply with established regulations and prevailing norms. Its dimensions include adherence to time, organizational rules, work behavior, and other prescribed provisions (Sutrisno, 2019). The indicators commonly used comprise punctuality, compliance, responsibility, and proper use of work equipment (Darmawan et al., 2022). Previous research has confirmed that work discipline significantly influences employee performance (Wau, 2021). For the Yellow Troops, discipline plays a critical role in ensuring service punctuality, adherence to safety procedures, and the quality of work outcomes.

### Performance

Performance refers to the level of achievement in work outcomes, both in terms of quality and quantity, in accordance with established standards or criteria (Wirawan, 2022). Performance indicators include work quality, work quantity, responsibility, teamwork, and initiative (Mangkunegara & Octorend, 2015). Factors influencing performance comprise work quality, timeliness, initiative, capability, and communication (Indrisari, 2022). In the context of the Yellow Troops at the Cirebon Environmental Agency, performance affects not only administrative achievements but also directly impacts the quality of public services and environmental cleanliness.

### Workplace Friendship

Workplace friendship refers to informal social relationships among colleagues that are built on trust, commitment, and shared values (Berman et al., 2002; Muzaki, 2020). Its main dimensions comprise *friendship opportunity* including opportunities to get to know colleagues, open communication, and close relationships and *friendship prevalence*, which involves intimacy, socialization, and mutual sharing (Lestari & Azizah, 2020). Workplace friendship has been shown to moderate the negative effects of work conflict, job insecurity, and abusive supervision on performance (Xing, 2022). Research by (Oktavia et al., 2023) further indicates that workplace friendship positively contributes to public sector employee performance. In the context of the Yellow Troops workplace friendship can enhance social support, reduce stress, and strengthen the impact of motivation and discipline on performance.

## HYPOTHESIS

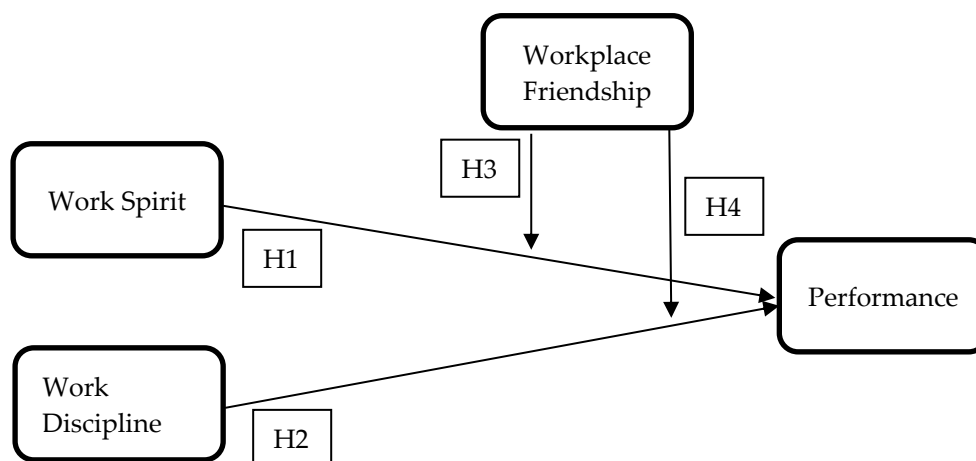


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework serves as the foundation for systematically explaining the relationships among the variables under investigation, grounded in relevant theories and previous research findings. In this study, there are four main variables: work spirit and work discipline as independent variables, performance as the dependent variable, and workplace friendship as the moderating variable.

Work spirit reflects employees' internal drive that fosters enthusiasm, commitment, and responsibility in carrying out daily tasks. Theoretically, employees with high work spirit tend to be more proactive, initiative-taking, and creative in completing their work, thereby enhancing productivity and the quality of outcomes. (Husna, 2023) found that an increase in work spirit has a positive and significant effect on employee performance within local government institutions. (Basri & Rauf, 2021) reported that work spirit makes a significant contribution in predicting variations in employee performance, regardless of job satisfaction factors.

#### H1: The Influence of Work Morale on the Performance of the Yellow Troop

Work discipline refers to employees' adherence to the rules, procedures, and schedules established by the organization, ensuring that tasks are carried out in accordance with established standards. Conceptually, disciplined employees tend to be punctual, well-organized, and capable of managing work resources effectively, thereby enhancing efficiency and work outcomes. Research by (Vallennia et al., 2020) indicates that work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Similar findings were reported by (Chusminah & Haryati, 2020), whose simple regression analysis confirmed the significance of the relationship between work discipline and employee performance.

#### H2: There is an influence between work discipline and the performance of the Yellow Troops

Workplace friendship is defined as an informal relationship among colleagues built upon shared interests, trust, and mutual commitment. Social support theory emphasizes that the presence of friendship networks in the workplace enhances psychological safety, which in turn strengthens the positive effects of motivation (work spirit) on performance. Research

by (He et al., 2022) further revealed that in situations of conflict or high work pressure, employees with stronger workplace friendships are better able to maintain or improve performance compared to those with less social support. Additionally, (Wulandari et al., 2023) found that workplace friendship moderates the relationship between work spirit and employee performance, where positive coworker relationships amplify the impact of work spirit on performance. This underscores the importance of fostering a work environment that supports positive social relationships to enhance employee performance.

H3: There is a moderating influence of Workplace Friendship between work morale and the performance of the Yellow Troops

Workplace friendship can also moderate the relationship between work discipline and employee performance. Positive relationships among colleagues can create a supportive work environment, thereby motivating employees to maintain discipline in their work. Research by (Lestari & Azizah, 2020) found that workplace friendship strengthens the effect of work discipline on employee performance in the education sector. This study suggests that a work environment fostering positive social relationships can enhance the effectiveness of work discipline in improving performance.

H4: There is a moderating influence of Workplace Friendship between work discipline and the performance of the Yellow Troops

## METHODOLOGY

This research adopted a quantitative approach to investigate the influence of work spirit and work discipline on employee performance, with workplace friendship serving as a moderating variable. The study employed an explanatory framework designed to test causal relationships among the variables through statistical analysis, utilizing SPSS software for data processing and hypothesis testing.

### Population and Sample

The study population consisted of all field sanitation personnel Yellow Troops employed by the Environmental Agency (Dinas Lingkungan Hidup/DLH) of Cirebon Regency, totaling 366 individuals. A sample of 100 respondents was drawn through proportional random sampling to ensure representative coverage across all work divisions. The sample size was calculated using the Slovin formula with an allowable margin of error of 8.5%, deemed appropriate for social field research involving a relatively homogeneous population.

### Data Collection

Primary data were obtained via self-administered questionnaires delivered directly to the respondents. The instrument underwent content validation by subject-matter experts and reliability assessment using Cronbach's Alpha, with a minimum acceptable coefficient of 0.70. Secondary data were sourced from official DLH performance reports, employee attendance logs, and other relevant administrative records.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

#### Respondent Characteristics

This study involved several sanitation workers yellow troops from the Environmental Agency of Cirebon Regency, totaling 100 respondents. The researchers distributed 100 questionnaires to the respondents through an indirect approach. Based on the collected data, the characteristics of the respondents are as follows:

Table 1: Respondent Characteristics

No	Characteristics	Sub Characteristics	Total
1.	Gender	Male	82 people
		Women	18 people
2.	Age	35 - 39 year	19 people
		40 - 44 year	44 people
		45 - 49 year	11 people
		>50 year	26 people
3.	Education Level	Elementary School	49 people
		Junior High School	15 people
		High School or Equivalent	33 people
		Bachelor's degree (S1)	3 people

The demographic profile results offer a comprehensive overview of respondent characteristics and serve as a critical foundation for interpreting the contextual dynamics underlying the relationships among Work Spirit, Work Discipline, Work Friendship and Performance within the Environmental Agency of Cirebon Regency

### Data Analysis

This research utilized the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) technique through Smart PLS software version 4.0. The PLS-SEM approach was chosen for its alignment with predictive research purposes, its suitability for relatively small sample sizes, its capacity to accommodate models with formative constructs, and its robustness in analyzing data that may not conform to normal distribution assumptions. (Hair Jr. et al., 2014).

#### 1. Validity Test

Validity testing is conducted to assess the extent to which a research instrument accurately measures the construct it is designed to capture (Setiabudhi, 2024; Hair Jr. et al., 2014). In the context of PLS-SEM, construct validity is evaluated through two primary approaches: convergent validity and discriminant validity.

##### a. Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is typically evaluated using three key criteria: outer loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and composite reliability. An outer loading of  $\geq 0.70$  indicates that each indicator contributes substantially to its associated construct. An AVE value of  $\geq 0.50$  suggests that the construct accounts for more than half of the variance in its indicators. Similarly, a composite reliability score of  $\geq 0.70$  is regarded as optimal, reflecting sufficient internal consistency among the indicators.

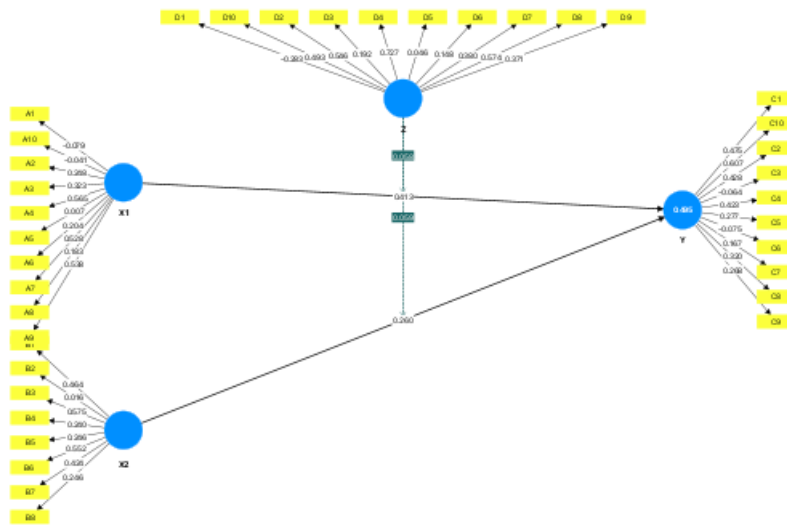


Figure 2 Validity Convergent

Table 2 Outer Loadings

Variable	Indicator	Factor Loading	Conclusion
Work Spirit	SK 1	0,812	Valid
	SK 2	0,796	Valid
	SK 3	0,725	Valid
	SK 4	0,795	Valid
	SK 5	0,828	Valid
	SK 6	0,779	Valid
	SK 7	0,814	Valid
	SK 8	0,814	Valid
	SK 9	0,796	Valid
	SK 10	0,770	Valid
Work Discipline	DK 1	0,785	Valid
	DK 2	0,864	Valid
	DK 3	0,827	Valid
	DK 4	0,817	Valid
	DK 5	0,878	Valid
	DK 6	0,789	Valid
	DK 7	0,754	Valid
	DK 8	0,773	Valid
Performance	K 1	0,718	Valid
	K 2	0,746	Valid
	K 3	0,775	Valid
	K 4	0,822	Valid
	K 5	0,824	Valid
	K 6	0,805	Valid
	K 7	0,740	Valid

	K8	0,771	Valid
	K9	0,812	Valid
	K10	0,830	Valid
Workplace Friendship	WF1	0,826	Valid
	WF2	0,861	Valid
	WF3	0,850	Valid
	WF4	0,840	Valid
	WF5	0,820	Valid
	WF6	0,796	Valid
	WF7	0,800	Valid
	WF8	0,823	Valid
	WF9	0,862	Valid
	WF10	0,851	Valid

Based on the results of the convergent validity test, all indicators for the variables Work Spirit, Work Discipline, Performance, and Workplace Friendship achieved factor loading values of  $\geq 0.70$ , indicating that they are valid. This demonstrates that each indicator effectively represents the construct being measured and makes a substantial contribution to its respective variable. Therefore, the research instrument meets the criteria for convergent validity and is deemed suitable for further analysis.

**b. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)**

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was computed to assess the proportion of variance in the indicators that can be attributed to the underlying latent construct, as opposed to variance due to measurement error. According to Fornell and Larcker (2016), an AVE value greater than 0.50 reflects adequate convergent validity, indicating that the construct explains more than half of the variance in its indicators.

They further highlight that AVE is a robust measure for establishing convergent validity, particularly in reflective measurement models. As shown in Table 4, all constructs in this study have AVE values exceeding the 0.50 threshold, confirming that each construct sufficiently explains the variance of its respective indicators and that the measurement model meets the convergent validity criteria.

*Table 3 Average Variance Extracted (AVE)*

<b>Construct</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
Performance (Y)	0.617	Valid
Workplace Friendship (Z)	0.694	Valid
Work Spirit (X1)	0.629	Valid
Work Discipline (X2)	0.667	Valid

**2. Discriminant Validity**

**a. Cross Loadings**

Discriminant validity was also assessed through cross-loading analysis, in which each indicator is expected to exhibit its highest loading on the construct it is intended to measure, compared to its loadings on all other constructs.

Table 4 Cross Loading (Selected Indicators)

	SK(X1)	DK (X2)	WF (M)	K (Y)
SK 1	0,813	0,420	0,453	0,347
SK 2	0,770	0,382	0,410	0,372
SK3	0,796	0,450	0,575	0,384
SK4	0,725	0,271	0,358	0,273
SK5	0,795	0,455	0,541	0,332
SK6	0,828	0,533	0,510	0,378
SK7	0,779	0,420	0,484	0,347
SK8	0,814	0,410	0,530	0,445
SK9	0,814	0,383	0,380	0,269
SK10	0,796	0,387	0,443	0,236
DK1	0,481	0,785	0,431	0,286
DK2	0,306	0,757	0,485	0,411
DK3	0,470	0,864	0,556	0,332
DK4	0,452	0,827	0,471	0,328
DK5	0,463	0,817	0,565	0,376
DK6	0,466	0,878	0,500	0,413
DK7	0,422	0,789	0,467	0,309
DK8	0,350	0,754	0,519	0,316
K1	0,259	0,102	0,178	0,724
K2	0,328	0,338	0,345	0,833
K3	0,289	0,389	0,435	0,742
K4	0,395	0,442	0,336	0,775
K5	0,392	0,391	0,411	0,821
K6	0,375	0,312	0,324	0,826
K7	0,398	0,377	0,347	0,805
K8	0,326	0,352	0,387	0,736
K9	0,316	0,290	0,321	0,770
K10	0,315	0,305	0,330	0,813
WF4	0,508	0,475	0,825	0,305
WF5	0,503	0,446	0,851	0,349
WF6	0,513	0,522	0,859	0,334
WF7	0,508	0,464	0,849	0,325
WF8	0,549	0,636	0,842	0,444
WF9	0,460	0,566	0,818	0,331
WF10	0,486	0,423	0,796	0,321
WF4	0,449	0,617	0,803	0,469
WF5	0,509	0,468	0,823	0,347
WF6	0,517	0,529	0,860	0,383

Based on the cross-loading analysis, each indicator demonstrated its highest loading on the construct it was intended to measure, compared to its loadings on other constructs. This indicates that each indicator possesses strong discriminative ability in distinguishing one construct from another. Therefore, the measurement model in this study meets the criteria for discriminant validity in accordance with PLS-SEM guidelines.

### 3. Reliability Test

Reliability testing was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the measurement model. Two key indicators were employed: Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR). While

Cronbach’s Alpha is traditionally used to measure internal consistency, Composite Reliability ( $\rho_c$ ) is considered a more accurate indicator of construct reliability, particularly in the context of PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2012). A CR value above 0.70 is generally deemed acceptable, whereas values exceeding 0.80 indicate good to excellent reliability.

Table 5 Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha

Variable	Cronbach’s Alpha	Composite Reliability ( $\rho_a$ )	Composite Reliability ( $\rho_c$ )
Work Spirit (X1)	0.935	0.940	0.944
Work Discipline (X2)	0.944	0.947	0.952
Workplace Friendship (M)	0.951	0.953	0.958
Performance(Y)	0.931	0.934	0.941

Based on the reliability test results, all variables exhibited Cronbach’s Alpha and Composite Reliability ( $\rho_c$ ) values exceeding 0.90, indicating an exceptionally high level of internal consistency. This suggests that each indicator within the respective variables consistently and reliably measures its underlying construct. Therefore, the research instrument meets the criteria for excellent reliability in accordance with PLS-SEM standards.

#### 4. Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

##### a. Koefisien Determinasi ( $R^2$ )

The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) is used to measure the proportion of variance in the dependent variable (Y) that can be explained by the independent variable(s) (X). Assessing the  $R^2$  value is crucial for determining the model’s explanatory power. A higher  $R^2$  value indicates that a larger share of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables, while a lower  $R^2$  reflects a more limited explanatory capacity. In this study,  $R^2$  values were obtained using SmartPLS version 4 to assess the predictive strength of the model.

Table 6 R-Square and R-Square Adjusted

Construct	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Kinerja (Y)	0.500	0.487

Based on the analysis results, the R-Square value for the Performance (Y) variable is 0.500, with an Adjusted R-Square of 0.487. This indicates that 50% of the variance in Performance is explained by the independent variables in the model, while the remaining 50% is influenced by other factors outside the scope of the study. These values suggest that the model demonstrates a moderate explanatory power in accordance with PLS-SEM criteria.

## HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Hypothesis testing results reflect the statistical assessment used to determine whether significant relationships or effects exist among the variables under investigation, based on the data obtained from the research sample. In quantitative research—particularly when applying the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach—these results are typically presented in terms of path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values. A hypothesis is considered statistically significant and accepted when the t-statistic exceeds the critical threshold (e.g.,  $> 1.96$  at the 5% significance level) and the p-value is below 0.05.

Conversely, if these criteria are not met, the hypothesis is deemed unsupported or rejected (Hair Jr. et al., 2014).

The outcomes of hypothesis testing provide important insights into the strength and statistical significance of relationships between variables, serving as the basis for drawing research conclusions and informing both practical implications and theoretical contributions.

Variable	Original sample (O)	T Statistic ( O/STDEV )	P Value	Kesimpulan
SK (X1) → K (Y)	0.353	3.263	0.001	Supported
DK (X2) → K (Y)	0.357	3.083	0.002	Supported
SK(X1) → K (Y) → WF (Z)	0.297	7.328	0.000	Supported
DK (X2) → K (Y) → WF (Z)	0.352	7.088	0.000	Supported

Based on the hypothesis testing results, all relationships between variables in the research model were found to be significant. Work Spirit (X1) has a positive and significant effect on Performance (Y), with an original sample value of 0.353, a t-statistic of 3.263 ( $> 1.96$ ), and a p-value of 0.001 ( $< 0.05$ ). Similarly, Work Discipline (X2) positively and significantly influences Performance (Y), with an original sample value of 0.357, a t-statistic of 3.083, and a p-value of 0.002.

Furthermore, Workplace Friendship (Z) was shown to significantly mediate the relationship between Work Spirit (X1) and Performance (Y) (original sample 0.297, t-statistic 7.328, p-value 0.000), as well as the relationship between Work Discipline (X2) and Performance (Y) (original sample 0.352, t-statistic 7.088, p-value 0.000).

These findings indicate that enhancing work spirit and work discipline not only directly improves performance but also indirectly boosts performance through the strengthening of workplace friendships.

## DISCUSSION

The results of this study highlight the critical influence of work spirit and work discipline in improving the performance of sanitation workers commonly known as the Yellow Troops at the Environmental Agency of Cirebon Regency. Statistical analysis confirmed that both factors have significant and positive effects on performance, thereby supporting the theoretical propositions presented in earlier research (Lase, 2022; Basri & Rauf, 2021; Wau, 2021; Lestari & Febrian, 2024). These findings indicate that intrinsic motivation, enthusiasm, and adherence to organizational procedures jointly serve as essential drivers of efficiency and service quality in labor-intensive public sector roles.

The direct effect of work spirit on performance underscores the motivational dimension of public service work. Elevated work spirit reflected in enthusiasm, perseverance, and commitment enhances productivity and service quality. Within the operational context of the Yellow Troops, where duties are physically demanding and often executed under

challenging conditions, such intrinsic motivation is indispensable. This aligns with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which asserts that intrinsic elements, such as recognition, achievement, and meaningful work, function as strong performance motivators. The findings suggest that instilling a sense of purpose among sanitation workers can generate measurable improvements in operational outcomes, including higher waste collection efficiency and reduced public complaints.

Similarly, the significant positive effect of work discipline on performance confirms the necessity of compliance with operational procedures, punctuality, and safety protocols. In the sanitation sector, where service delivery is time-sensitive and safety risks are inherent, disciplined behavior ensures that tasks meet established standards. This outcome corroborates the views of Hasibuan (2021) and Sutrisno (2019), who emphasize that discipline forms the non-negotiable foundation of service quality. For the Yellow Troops, disciplined execution directly supports operational efficiency, minimizes errors, and strengthens public trust in sanitation services.

A key contribution of this study is the identification of workplace friendship as a significant moderating factor in the relationships between work spirit and performance, as well as between work discipline and performance. The evidence suggests that workplace friendship enhances these effects; in settings where trust, mutual support, and strong interpersonal bonds exist, the benefits of motivation and discipline on performance are magnified. This observation aligns with Social Support Theory, which posits that workplace relationships can buffer stress and increase resilience, ultimately improving job outcomes. In the Yellow Troops' context, shared experiences in strenuous working conditions and reciprocal assistance foster a sense of camaraderie that contributes to improved collective performance.

The moderating effect of workplace friendship on the work spirit–performance relationship indicates that motivation is more effectively translated into tangible outcomes when supported by collegial relationships. Workers who feel socially connected and emotionally supported are better able to sustain high motivation levels, even in adverse situations. Similarly, its moderating influence on the work discipline–performance relationship suggests that rule adherence and punctuality are more consistently maintained in environments characterized by mutual respect and cooperation. These results align with findings from Sari and Wulandari (2021) and Nugroho and Lestari (2020), which highlight the role of positive coworker relationships in enhancing both motivational and procedural determinants of performance.

From a managerial perspective, the results carry important implications for human resource practices in public sanitation services. In addition to providing adequate training and enforcing operational standards, managers should actively cultivate a socially cohesive work environment. Strategies such as team-building programs, peer recognition initiatives, and inclusive decision-making can strengthen workplace friendship, thereby reinforcing the motivational and disciplinary bases of performance. Considering the relatively high proportion of older employees in the sample, interventions aimed at supporting their physical well-being and promoting intergenerational collaboration may also help maintain performance levels.

The R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.500 indicating that 50% of performance variance is explained by the studied variables reflects a moderate level of explanatory power. This leaves scope for examining additional factors, such as leadership style, workload management, and employee well-being, that may further influence performance outcomes. Nonetheless, the findings provide a robust empirical foundation for policy recommendations aimed at improving sanitation service delivery in Cirebon Regency and similar urban settings.

From a theoretical standpoint, this research expands the literature on public service performance by incorporating workplace friendship as a moderator in the relationships between work spirit, work discipline, and performance. The strong statistical support for all tested hypotheses affirms the validity of the conceptual framework and points toward future investigations into other social or organizational moderators. Overall, the study demonstrates that in the high-demand and socially interdependent environment of public sanitation work, optimizing performance requires not only motivated and disciplined individuals but also cohesive, supportive teams.

## CONCLUSION

This study reaffirms that work spirit and work discipline are key determinants of sanitation worker performance within the Environmental Agency of Cirebon Regency. Both factors exert significant and positive effects, underscoring that intrinsic motivation, enthusiasm, and adherence to operational standards are fundamental for achieving efficiency and maintaining service quality in labor-intensive public sector contexts.

The results also highlight the pivotal moderating role of workplace friendship, which enhances the effects of work spirit and work discipline on performance. Strong interpersonal bonds among colleagues foster motivation, support consistent discipline, and build resilience in challenging work conditions.

From a managerial standpoint, the findings underscore the importance of strategies that not only develop individual competencies but also strengthen social cohesion within the workforce. Programs aimed at fostering team unity, mutual support, and intergenerational collaboration can maximize the combined impact of motivation and discipline on service delivery.

Theoretically, this research advances public service performance literature by integrating workplace friendship as a moderator between work spirit, work discipline, and performance. With the model accounting for 50% of the variance in performance, future research should explore additional factors such as leadership style, workload management, and employee well-being to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of performance drivers in the sanitation sector.

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