

## Regular article

# The Effect of Self Efficacy, Working Conditions and Employee Retention on Plantation Employee Performance Through Work Discipline at PT Socfindo Labuhanbatu Utara

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## ABSTRACT

The performance of plantation employees has become an important issue in today's modern and digital era, considering the declining interest of younger generations in working in the plantation sector, particularly in tapping positions. This study aims to analyze the influence of self-efficacy, job conditions, and employee retention on the performance of plantation employees through work discipline at PT Socfindo Labuhanbatu Utara. This research is an associative quantitative study with a population consisting of all plantation employees at PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke, totaling 979 employees. The sample used consists of 284 employees selected through non-probability sampling using an incidental sampling approach, with the criterion that employees must have worked for at least 10 years. Data analysis was conducted using structural equation modeling (SEM) with the assistance of Smart PLS software. The results show that self-efficacy has a direct positive and significant effect on employee performance, but a negative and insignificant effect on work discipline. Job conditions have a significant negative effect on both employee performance and work discipline. Employee retention has a significant positive effect on both employee performance and work discipline. Moreover, work discipline itself has a significant positive effect on employee performance. Indirectly, self-efficacy and job conditions do not have a significant effect on performance through work discipline, whereas employee retention has a significant effect.

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## Introduction

The business world is becoming increasingly competitive by the day, which requires companies to have superior human resources that are also highly competitive. Especially in the era of digitalization and Industry 5.0, human resources are expected to be innovative, excellent, and competitive through the use of digitalization and technology. In Industry 5.0, a balance and harmony between humans and technology is essential, allowing for the development and sustainable advancement of human resources (HR) to become even better in the future (Ramírez-

Márquez et al., 2024). Every company expects its employees to perform well and to focus on their work by dedicating their full capabilities, knowledge, skills, and time to the organization. Therefore, human resources are one of the most crucial elements for a company's success. Based on this, it can be said that the presence of human resources within a company has a significant influence on its progress and the achievement of its goals (Ayu et al., 2022).

PT Socfindo, a leading rubber and oil palm plantation company, operates in the provinces of Aceh and North Sumatra, with its

headquarters located in Medan. It is also a member of the Socfin Group. In addition to producing palm oil and rubber products, the company distributes premium planting materials and offers agronomic services as well as analytical laboratory services. Employee performance is a key factor in the success of any company, including PT Socfindo. Better employee performance contributes to improving overall employee quality as well (Arifin & Matriadi, 2024). Performance refers to the overall results of an employee's work, in terms of both quantity and quality, aimed at achieving the company's goals. High performance has a positive impact on a company's productivity, efficiency, and profitability (Ghulam, 2023).

However, the reality in the field, the average work results obtained by employees have not met the target number given by the company. To cover the lack of achievement of this target, extra harvesting was implemented by continuing to work on Sundays and big days. As shown in the following graph:

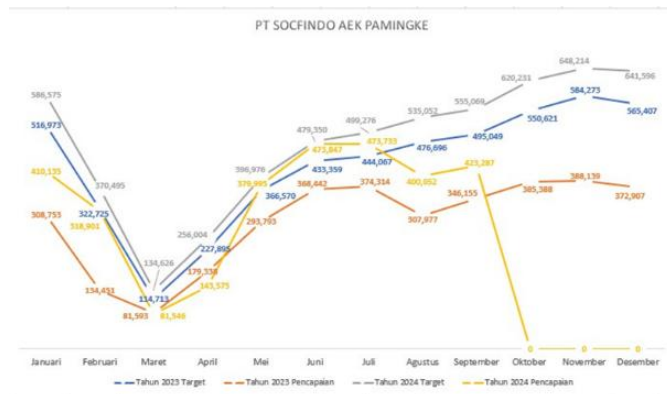


Figure 1. Target and Achievement Chart of PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke

Figure 1 shows that employee achievements and targets fluctuate, meaning that employee target attainment constantly changes and is not consistent. This fluctuation is influenced by many factors, including working conditions, employee discipline, employee performance, and even natural conditions. In January 2023 and 2024, the assigned targets were relatively high due to seasonal factors and favorable environmental conditions. The beginning of the year often coincides with the rainy season, and sufficient rainfall helps supply water to rubber plants, keeping the soil moist and suitable for growth.

Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting further research under the title: "The Influence of Self-Efficacy, Working Conditions, and Employee Retention on Plantation Employee Performance through Work Discipline at PT Socfindo Labuhanbatu Utara".

## Literature Review

### Self Efficacy Theory

Self efficacy is defined as a belief that an individual can succeed in a particular job or achievement and is confident that they can complete a task through the actions they take. Self efficacy plays an important role in achieving goals, tasks, and challenges. Someone who has confidence can achieve something, it is greatly influenced by how they act and how they try it so that they succeed (Bandura, 1997). This means that when someone is confident that they will achieve a goal, they tend to take action, because self efficacy is closely related to behavior and self efficacy is also closely related to locus of control, namely the individual's perception of their ability to bring about change through behavior. Someone with high self efficacy will do better because they have high motivation, have clear goals, stable emotions, and are able to carry out activities and behave well (Krasny, 2020). Individuals with high self-efficacy will have a stronger spirit and perseverance in overcoming problems, and are able to mobilize greater energy in facing challenges so that this will improve the individual's own performance (Ayu et al., 2022). Self-efficacy not only includes self-confidence but also the ability to adapt to environmental changes, work in teams, and interact with work pressures that may arise, so that in the long term someone with high self-efficacy will tend to have ethics and morals when working (Aryati & Armanu, 2023). So it can be concluded that self-efficacy is a person's belief that they can achieve certain goals with their own efforts, this is an estimate of what can be achieved in the future and an evaluation of what has been done.

### Job Condition Theory

According to (Robbins, 2022) job conditions are forces that come from outside so that they have the ability to influence performance in an organization. Job conditions include things like lighting, sound, air quality, and room conditions. In addition, factors such as workspace, staff collaboration, workload, job security, facilities are indicators of work conditions (Disfantor et al., 2022). Good working conditions will make the employee's experience in the workplace memorable so that they can overcome problems and then intervene from this (Toscanelli et al., 2022). Working conditions are said to be good or fair if people carry out their activities optimally, healthily, safely and comfortably (Ratna Komala Putri, 2023), (Siegel et al., 2022) and (Jeske, 2022) but conversely poor physical working conditions have a negative impact on employee performance (Ngo-henha, 2024).

### Social Support

According to Heriyani & Widiastuti (2022), social support is the degree of support provided to an individual, especially when needed, by people who have a close emotional relationship with them. Based on these studies, the following hypotheses are proposed: Hypothesis 4: Social Support has a positive and significant effect on employee

performance at the Hamparan Perak Community Health Center. Hypothesis 5: Social Support has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction at the Hamparan Perak Community Health Center. Hypothesis 6: Social Support has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance through Job Satisfaction at the Hamparan Perak Community Health Center.

#### *Retention Theory*

Employees are considered the most important resource in bringing success to a company (Jena & Nayak, 2023). Employee retention according to (Robbins, 2022) the Company's effort to retain valuable and high-performing employees in the long term. Employee retention is also described as an ongoing process to create a positive work environment and motivate employees to remain loyal and productive. Robbins emphasizes that employee retention is not only about preventing turnover, but also about developing talent and improving employee performance. According to (Mathis & Jackson, 2019) employee retention is a form of effort to retain employees. Companies view employee retention as a tactic to keep their employees competitive. The main purpose of employee retention is to avoid losing quality workers, which can then reduce business productivity (W. J. Prasetyo et al., 2023). Thus, employee retention is considered very important in the success of a business, company and all organizations of any form and type (Rahman et al., 2024).

#### *Work Discipline Theory*

According to (Robbins, 2022) work discipline is defined as an attitude and behavior that is carried out voluntarily, consciously, and willing to obey the regulations set by the company or superiors, both written and unwritten. According to (Hasibuan, 2021) work discipline is the ability to work consistently, diligently and comply with applicable provisions without violating the rules. Work discipline includes the responsibility of the organization or company that requires careful consideration in order to improve employee work performance from time to time and prevent employees from carrying out unimportant activities during working hours (Aziz et al., 2024). So it can be concluded that work discipline is the awareness and willingness of employees to obey all organizational/company regulations and applicable social norms voluntarily and consciously, both written and unwritten. By creating work discipline, employees can be more productive and effective in their work.

#### *Performance Theory*

According to (Dessler, 2022) performance is the act of working and the results obtained from that work. The performance of a workforce can be evaluated to ensure that they have worked hard and given their all in accordance with the company's goals and targets. Employee

performance is the secret to success for every company. Better employee performance will also help improve employee quality (Afrin et al., 2023). Meanwhile, according to (Rivai, 2009) performance is the overall results or achievements of a person during a certain period of work in accordance with work standards, predetermined goals, or established criteria. Employee performance is the work results achieved by an employee in carrying out their duties and responsibilities in the workplace. This performance can be measured qualitatively and quantitatively (Arifin & Matriadi, 2024), (Andika & Darmanto, 2020) and (Sepdunha et al., 2023). Thus, employee performance is like a brick that builds an organization. The stronger the individual's performance, the stronger the organization is in achieving its goals and success (Ghulam, 2023).

#### **Methodology**

This research is included in associative quantitative research. According to (Sugiyono, 2019) associative research is a formulation of a research problem that is intended to ask about the relationship between two or more variables. The variables in this study are employee performance variables as variable Y. Work discipline variables as variable Z, and self-efficacy variables as variable X1, work conditions X2 and employee retention variables X3. Measurement of variable indicators in this study uses an interval scale, then the indicators are used as guidelines in collecting instrument items in the form of statements and then respondents answer them. And the data obtained were then analyzed using SEM PLS. The population in this study were all permanent plantation employees at PT. Socfindo Perkebunan Aek Pamingke Labuhanbatu Utara with a total of 979 employees. The sampling technique in this study used non-probability sampling, namely plantation employees who had worked for 10 years at PT Socfindo, North Labuhanbatu Regency, as many as 979 employees, selected using the incidental sampling method. And the method of determining the number of samples in this study uses the Slovin formula, based on calculations with Slovin, the number of samples in this study is 284 plantation employees. And the incidental sampling method is carried out by taking random from 7 Afdilings in the Aek Pamingke Plantation.

#### **Research Result**

The data analysis techniques used to test the hypothesis in this study are descriptive analysis and SEM analysis. Descriptive analysis is a data analysis technique that describes the data obtained as it is, without trying to make generalizations or conclusions (Sugiyono, 2019). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is one component of a statistical model that aims to explain the relationship between many variables, according to (Hair et al., 2019). The total number of questionnaire statements in this

study was 32 items, with 6 statements for the self-efficacy variable (X1), 5 statements for the work condition variable (X2), 7 statements for the employee retention variable (X3), 9 statements for the employee performance variable (Y) and 5 statements for the work discipline variable (Z).

#### *Results of Respondent Descriptive Analysis*

The respondents in this study were employees of PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke plantation who had worked for 10 years. In the descriptive analysis test of respondents in this study, the respondents' personal data were in the form of gender, education, and age.

Table 1. Respondent Descriptive Analysis

No	Deskripsi	Category	Frequency	Persentase (%)
1.	Gender	Laki-Laki	241	84.9
		Perempuan	43	15.1
2.	Age	34-40	41	14.4
		41-45	57	20.1
		46-50	151	53.2
		51-55	35	12.3
3.	Last Education	SD	192	67.6
		SMP	38	13.4
		SMA	54	19.0

Based on Table 1.1, the analysis of respondent characteristics based on gender shows that there are 241 male respondents (84.9%) and 43 female respondents (15.1%). Thus, it shows that respondents and employees of PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke are dominated by men. Based on age, from 34-40 years old as many as 41 people (14.4%), respondents aged 41-45 years as many as 57 people (20.1%), respondents aged 46-50 years as many as 151 people (53.2%), and respondents aged 51-55 years as many as 35 people (12.3%). Based on this percentage, it can be concluded that employees of PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke are dominated by ages ranging from 46-50 years. Based on the last education, namely from high school, junior high school and elementary school education. Respondents with the highest level of education of elementary school were 192 people (67.6%), junior high school education was 38 people (13.4%) and high school education was 54 people (19.0%). Thus, based on the percentage, respondents and employees of PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke were dominated by the highest level of education of elementary school (equivalent).

## **Discussion**

### *Self Efficacy Has a Positive and Significant Influence on Employee Performance*

The results of this study indicate that self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. This means that when an individual's self-efficacy increases, their performance also improves. Self-efficacy is crucial in all types of work, as it serves as a fundamental basis for individuals to build self-confidence in order to achieve desired outcomes (Ghaleh et al., 2024), including for plantation employees,

particularly at PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke. Individuals with high self-efficacy tend to have greater enthusiasm and perseverance in overcoming problems, and they are more capable of exerting higher levels of energy when facing challenges (Krasny, 2020). As Bandura (1997) stated, self-efficacy plays a central role in achieving goals, completing tasks, and facing challenges. A person's belief in their ability to achieve something is influenced by how they act and attempt to succeed, which ultimately leads to achievement. Based on the results of the descriptive statistical analysis of the self-efficacy variable from 284 respondents, the researcher found that the average response indicated agreement with the 6 statements provided. This suggests that the employees have good self-efficacy. Of the 6 statements given, the statement "belief in the ability to complete tasks in different areas" received the highest response, with the average respondent agreeing (3.99). This is because each plantation employee at PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke is assigned different tasks, and each task involves different areas with varying levels of difficulty. Therefore, indirectly, the tappers (penderes) must have the confidence to complete their work in different areas.

The results of this study are the same as those conducted by (Arifin & Matriadi, 2024), (Sembiring & Siregar, 2023), (Liu et al., 2024) and (Hadi, 2023) which revealed that self-efficacy has a significant and positive effect on employee performance. Self-efficacy is an important variable that influences individuals in working, regardless of the type and field. Individuals with higher self-efficacy feel capable of facing challenges, succeeding through obstacles, and achieving goals. Conversely, individuals with low self-efficacy often feel helpless and depressed which ultimately affects them in working (Dong et al., 2024). However, this is different from what was done by (Dong et al., 2024). Namun berbeda dengan yang dilakukan oleh (Ali & Wardoyo, 2021) and (Ambarita et al., 2022) stated that self-efficacy does not affect employee performance.

### *Self Efficacy Has a Negative and Insignificant Influence on Work Discipline*

The results of this study indicate that self efficacy does not have a significant and negative effect on work discipline. In theory, self efficacy is a person's self-confidence that they can succeed and achieve something through actions they take (Albert Bandura, 1997). Self efficacy is closely related to self-confidence in being able to complete and achieve something (Krasny, 2020), se while discipline is closely related to a person's awareness and willingness to obey applicable regulations and norms (Robbins, 2022). So in theory, someone who has high self efficacy must also have high work discipline. The results of this study say otherwise, that self efficacy has no effect on work discipline. Plantation employees such as at PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke whose main job is in

the field, have high targets and workloads so that employees must have confidence, willingness, and trust to be able to carry out, complete and complete their work, but the work environment does not support this and there is also no strict time range. Because when the plantation employees are late for work there is no warning from the foreman and also the habits of employees who are late and undisciplined in working. There are still many employees who do not use complete work equipment, are absent and also absent when working. For this reason, the work environment at PT Socfindo does not support discipline and strict supervision from the foreman on plantation employees, so this is what causes self-efficacy to have no effect on work discipline at PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke Labuhanbatu Utara. In fact, work discipline is very much needed anywhere. This study is in line with research conducted by (Polizzi et al., 2021) that self-efficacy has a low correlation with communities of practice in which there is discipline and identity. However, it is different from the results of research conducted by (Ginting & Sihombing, 2021) that self-efficacy has an effect on work discipline. In line with this (Roy & Sumartik, 2021) also revealed that self-efficacy has an effect on work discipline.

#### *Working Conditions Have a Negative and Significant Influence on Employee Performance*

In theory, employee performance cannot stand alone and is influenced by many factors, one of which is working conditions (Darmastuti & Rini, 2023) and working conditions include everything in the workplace, both physically and non-physically, for that it is important to consider working conditions so that employees also feel comfortable and can be productive in the workplace (Disfantoro et al., 2022), so when working conditions improve, employee performance will also improve (Darmastuti & Rini, 2023). However, the results of this study show that working conditions have a significant but negative effect on employee performance. This means that when employee working conditions improve, this will actually reduce employee performance. For plantation employees, especially PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke's deres employees, improving work conditions means that the work conditions/ancak received by employees will be increasingly difficult. PT Socfindo employees are given ancak according to employee work habits. This means that employees who work well and follow company regulations will be given an easy ancak (decreasing work conditions), and placed in divisions with easy areas as well. And vice versa. Apart from that, the work habits of employees at PT Socfindo are always seen trying to get good assessments from the company. Employees who work with difficult ancak tend to be motivated to be transferred to easier ancak, so that their work will also be easier. PT Socfindo's deres employees also work every day without holidays. They still work on Sundays, they also work on red dates, and the holidays are

on August 17, Eid, New Year, Chinese New Year and Christmas. The number of holidays is also small, this clearly takes up employees' personal time, and disrupts the balance of life so that employee performance decreases due to fatigue and work stress. Their workload is also large, the ancak given is too large with a high sap yield target, plus it is difficult to take a vacation and have time for family. Thus, if things make employees stressed and tired of working. For that, the working conditions at PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke have a significant but negative effect, meaning that there are special circumstances where working conditions affect employee performance, both based on work risks, random conditions (difficult and easy), work holidays, work habits and also employee work facilities. This means that the higher the work risk, random conditions, work holidays, work habits and complete work facilities will further improve employee performance, and vice versa.. The results of this study are in line with the research conducted by (Masharyono et al., 2023) that working conditions have a negative effect on employee performance, and in line with the research conducted by (Efawati, 2020), (Ratna Komala Putri, 2023), (Huang et al., 2021), (Mehtab Hameed, et al., 2023) and (Zhou et al., 2024) that working conditions have a significant effect on employee performance. However, it is different from the research conducted by (Ones Charli et al., 2023) and (Lubis et al., 2023) that working conditions do not affect employee performance.

#### *Working Conditions Have a Negative and Significant Influence on Work Discipline*

Working conditions are an important part of shaping employee discipline at work (Yunengsih et al., 2023). Companies need to provide more adequate work support facilities so that employees are more comfortable at work, when employees are comfortable at work, employees tend to be disciplined too. Because in theory, working conditions are forces that come from outside so that they have the ability to influence performance in the organization (Robbins, 2022). However, the results of this study show that working conditions have a significant but negative effect on work discipline. This means that when working conditions improve, employee work discipline will decrease. As with the third hypothesis that working conditions have a significant but negative effect on employee performance, in this fourth hypothesis, working conditions also have a significant but negative effect on work discipline. This means that the higher the working conditions received by PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke plantation employees, the more employee work discipline will decrease. It should be remembered that PT Socfindo plantation employees' main job is in the field, namely tapping, vinegar, peeling, and collecting sap. Each employee is given a different job (workplace), different conditions and with different levels of difficulty or ease.

The results of this study are the same as those conducted by (Lombok et al, 2021), (Noviantoro et al., 2022) and (Rahmat, et al, 2024) that work conditions affect work discipline. This means that the more conducive the work conditions will contribute to increasing employee discipline. However, it is different from the study conducted by (Windarko et al., 2023) ) that work conditions do not affect work discipline through work productivity.

#### *Employee Retention Has a Positive and Significant Influence on Employee Performance*

The results of this study indicate that employee retention has a significant and positive influence on employee performance. This means that the higher the employee retention, the higher the employee performance. Employee retention according to (Robbins, 2022) is a company's effort to retain valuable and high-performing employees in the long term. Employee retention is considered an achievement and trust in the company because if employees believe in the company, they will spend more time in the company and they will stay in the company for a long time. High employee retention shows that employees are loyal to the company (Chaudhry, 2023). So the better the employee retention efforts provided by PT Socfindo to employees, the better the employee performance in PT Socfindo.

Good employee retention will result in employees being loyal to their work and loyal to the company. PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke, which is engaged in a plantation company that uses physical labor for its employees in working, must also pay attention to retention, attention, appreciation and fair treatment for its employees. Moreover, with complex work and heavy loads, good retention is increasingly needed. Because in this modern era and full of technology, the enthusiasm and interest of humans, especially young people, in garden work (tapering) is increasingly lacking. For this reason, good and appropriate efforts and retention are needed to retain employees and empower existing human resources to remain loyal and enthusiastic about working. The results of this study are in line with those conducted by (Ariawan, 2022), (Haar & Kelly, 2024) and (Pandey, et al., 2023) that employee retention has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. However, this is different from the research conducted by (Ayudo & Budiono, 2023) and (Prasetyo et al., 2021) which stated that employee retention has no effect and is negative on employee performance.

#### *Employee Retention Has a Significant and Positive Influence on Work Discipline*

According to (Mathis & Jackson, 2019) employee retention is a form of effort to retain employees. Without an effective retention plan, organizations are at risk of disruption. Because, successful employee retention allows companies to achieve their goals and has a positive

impact on company revenue (Subramaniam et al., 2024). The results of this study indicate that employee retention has a significant and positive effect on work discipline. This means that employee retention (compensation, rewards and efforts to retain employees) can affect work discipline. So when compensation, rewards and company efforts to retain employees improve, employee discipline will also improve and ultimately employee satisfaction will also improve. Employee retention in any organization is basically related to job satisfaction (Subramaniam et al., 2024).

The results of this study are in line with research that job satisfaction affects employee work discipline (Sendi Cendi & Rhian Indradewa, 2024), the better employee satisfaction in the company, the better the work discipline shown by employees in working. This means that when employees are satisfied with their basic salary, bonuses, facilities, opportunities and leadership, employees will also be more disciplined in their work. However, this is different from research conducted by (Morris & Imms, 2021) ) that retention has a low effect on discipline, because time for practice and learning has a greater influence than maintaining discipline.

#### *Work Discipline Has a Positive and Significant Influence on Employee Performance*

The results of this study indicate that work discipline has a significant and positive influence on employee performance. So the better the employee's work discipline, the better the employee's performance will be. According to (Robbins, 2022) work discipline is an attitude and behavior that is carried out voluntarily and with full awareness and willingness to follow the regulations that have been made by the organization or superiors, both written and unwritten.

PT Socfindo requires its employees to be disciplined, because with discipline employee performance will be better. For PT Socfindo plantation employees whose main job is tapping, they are also required to be disciplined in their work. Both come to work on time, wear complete work attributes, tap one ancah one day and finish it along with collecting and peeling sap. However, this discipline has not been fully implemented for plantation employees. The work environment at PT Socfindo does not support work discipline, this is due to the work habits and supervision of the foreman who are lacking in regulating discipline. Hal ini memang menjadi kendala dalam hal kedisiplinan, dan perlunya peraturan yang tegas dalam This is indeed an obstacle in terms of discipline, and the need for strict regulations in discipline. The better the work discipline of PT Socfindo employees, the better their performance will be. In other words, the more obedient employees are at work, such as coming to work on time, obeying the foreman's orders, completing work on time, willing to come to work at certain times, and wearing complete work attributes, the better the performance of PT Socfindo Aek

Pamingke Labuhanbatu Utara plantation employees will be. So in line with the results of the study after the analysis was carried out which found that work discipline had an effect on employee performance (H7 was accepted).

The results of this study are in line with those conducted by (Mangkunegara & Setyono, 2021), (Chrisnanto & Riyanto, 2020), (Johnson et al., 2024) dan (Alista, 2024) that work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. However, this is different from the research conducted by (Jelly et al., 2024) and (Dwigita & Muslikh, 2023) which states that work discipline has no effect and is negative on employee performance.

#### *Self Efficacy Has a Negative and Insignificant Influence on Employee Performance through Work Discipline*

The results of this study indicate that self efficacy has an insignificant and negative effect on employee performance through work discipline. This means that work discipline cannot mediate the influence of self efficacy on employee performance, so this hypothesis is rejected. Self efficacy is only one factor that influences employee performance and work discipline. When self efficacy increases, in theory employee performance also increases and when self efficacy increases in theory work discipline will also increase. This means that when employees have high self efficacy, their performance and work discipline will also increase (Ginting & Sihombing, 2021). However, such conditions are not always the same in all types of jobs. For employees who work in the field, their work discipline and performance are not fully influenced by self efficacy, as research (Ali & Wardoyo, 2021) and (Ambarita et al., 2022) shows that self efficacy has no effect on performance.

Physical work such as plantation workers, especially at PT Socfindo, prioritizes targets, work conditions, work systems and also time. So employee discipline in working is not always accompanied by high self-efficacy. So work discipline does not necessarily mediate self-efficacy on performance. The higher the employee's self-efficacy, the more undisciplined the employee will be, because when employees feel capable of completing their work they tend to be undisciplined, such as coming to work late and being lazy. They feel that even though they come to work late and are lazy, they will still be able and can complete their work.

The results of this study are in line with research conducted by (Riza et al, 2024) that self-efficacy does not affect employee performance through work discipline. This means that work discipline cannot provide a mediating influence of self-efficacy on employee performance. However, it is different from research conducted by (Ramadhani & Lestariningsih, 2020) and (Indarwati et al., 2022) which states that self-efficacy affects employee performance through work discipline.

Furthermore, (Lestari et al., 2024) stated in their research that increasing self-efficacy and strengthening work discipline is one of the important things to be able to improve employee performance in the company.

#### *Working Conditions Have a Negative and Insignificant Influence on Employee Performance through Work Discipline*

The results of this study suggest that working conditions have an insignificant and negative influence on employee performance through work discipline. This means that work discipline cannot provide a mediating effect on the influence of working conditions on employee performance. In theory, good working conditions will improve employee performance and also employee work discipline (Win & Phongsatha, 2024). However, conditions like this cannot be equated in all fields and types of work. Like the employees of the PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke plantation with their working conditions in the field, namely tapping, mencuk, menggelontok and collecting sap with high workloads, work pressures and targets, this directly affects employee performance without going through discipline. So that work discipline is more influenced by internal factors such as motivation, values, work culture and employee work habits than by working conditions. So even though the working conditions change (easy, difficult, good, bad) the level of employee work discipline will be the same so that work discipline cannot link working conditions with performance. Employees with physical work and prioritize targets such as employees of PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke, the higher the working conditions they receive (the more difficult) the more active and better their performance will be. Employees who work with difficult jobs tend to be motivated to be transferred to easier jobs, so that their work will also be easier. Conversely, when the working conditions that employees receive are low (easy), they will be increasingly lazy because they are too relaxed and comfortable, meaning that work motivation decreases. So employees who get easy working conditions tend to be undisciplined, because whether they are disciplined in working, such as arriving on time and wearing complete work attributes, their work will still be completed. This is also related to employee work habits and work culture. The results of this study are in line with research conducted by (Rusmini et al, 2024) that work discipline cannot mediate working conditions (Organizational Climate) on employee performance and work discipline as a mediating variable does not play an optimal role. However, it is different from research conducted by (Win & Phongsatha, 2024) that good working conditions can have a positive effect on employee satisfaction and performance through good employee work discipline. In line with research (Bashir et al., 2020) it is stated that providing employees with better working conditions will lead to an increase in employee performance.

### *Employee Retention Has a Positive and Significant Influence on Employee Performance through Work Discipline*

The results of this study indicate that employee retention has a significant and positive influence on employee performance through work discipline. This means that work discipline is able to mediate the influence of employee retention on performance, so this hypothesis is accepted (H10 is accepted). Employees who are satisfied with the retention provided by the company and feel appreciated will tend to work with discipline and will ultimately improve their performance as well. Retention refers to an organization's ability to retain employees (Robbins, 2022). Regardless of the sector, retaining valuable employees is important for all types of companies and organizations, because turnover is detrimental to the organization.

PT Socfindo provides several facilities for its employees, such as salary, allowances, bonuses, houses that can be inhabited while working at PT Socfindo, scholarships for children of employees who excel, BPJS health, BPJS welfare, and rice every month. So the better the salary, allowances, bonuses, employee houses, child scholarships, rice, BPJS (health and welfare) and rice received by plantation employees, the better the employee performance and work discipline will be. So that employee work discipline at PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke is able to mediate the influence of employee retention on employee performance. Considering that retention is very important at PT Socfindo Aek Pamingke, of the five variables studied, the employee retention variable is the variable that most influences employee performance and work discipline. If employees feel that the company gives appreciation, attention and fair treatment, their work performance and discipline will also increase. This means that the greater the employee retention value (the better the employee retention), the better the employee performance and discipline will be. This is an important finding in this study and future researchers that retention is a very important variable to be maintained and considered in any company and organization.

This study is in line with that conducted by (Brian, 2024) that employee retention affects organizational performance in which there is work discipline, health programs, reduced turnover costs and others. In line with this (Loliyana et al., 2024) and (Haar & Kelly, 2024) stated that employee retention has a positive influence and affects improving employee performance. However, it is different from the research conducted by (Ayudo & Budiono, 2023) that retention does not affect employee performance, meaning that the retention efforts made by the company have not been able to improve the performance of the company's employees, so that work discipline cannot mediate the relationship between retention and performance.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that 1) self-efficacy has a significant and positive effect on employee performance. This means that if self-efficacy increases, employee performance also increases, 2) self-efficacy has an insignificant and negative effect on work discipline. This means that if self-efficacy increases, employee work discipline will decrease, 3) work conditions have a significant and negative effect on employee performance. This means that if work conditions increase, employee performance will decrease, 4) work conditions have a significant and negative effect on work discipline. This means that if work conditions increase, work discipline will decrease, 5) employee retention has a significant and positive effect on employee performance. This means that if employee retention increases, employee performance will also increase, 6) employee retention has a significant and positive effect on work discipline. This means that if employee retention increases, work discipline will also increase, 7) work discipline has a significant and positive effect on employee performance. This means that if work discipline increases, employee performance will also increase, 8) self-efficacy has an insignificant and negative effect on employee performance through work discipline. This means that work discipline is unable to mediate the influence of self-efficacy on employee performance, 9) work conditions have an insignificant and negative effect on employee performance through work discipline. This means that work discipline is unable to mediate work conditions on employee performance, 10) employee retention has a significant and positive effect on employee performance through work discipline. This means that work discipline can mediate employee retention on employee performance. So if employee retention increases, employee performance will also increase through work discipline.

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