

THE IMPACT OF HUSTLE CULTURE AS A MEDIATION BETWEEN WORK MOTIVATION AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AT JNE EXPRESS IN MADIUN CITY

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Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk membuktikan bukti empiris Dampak *Hustle Culture* Sebagai Mediasi Antara *Work Motivation* Terhadap *Employee Performance* (Studi Kasus Karyawan JNE Express Kota Madiun). Metode dalam penelitian ini adalah penelitian kuantitatif. Teknik pengambilan sampel menggunakan Teknik sampel jenuh dengan jumlah sampel sebanyak 245 responden. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan kuesioner. Sedangkan analisis data menggunakan Smart-PLS3. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa: 1) variabel *work motivation* berpengaruh secara positif dan signifikan terhadap *Hustle Culture* Karyawan JNE Express Kota Madiun. 2) Variabel *work motivation* berpengaruh secara positif dan signifikan terhadap *employee performance* Karyawan JNE Express Kota Madiun. 3) *Hustle Culture* berpengaruh secara positif dan signifikan terhadap *employee performance* Karyawan JNE Express Kota Madiun. 4) *Hustle culture* mampu memediasi pengaruh *work motivation* terhadap *employee performance* Karyawan JNE Express Kota Madiun secara positif.

Kata Kunci: *Hustle Culture, Work Motivation, Employee Performance*

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to provide empirical evidence for the Impact of Hustle Culture as a Mediator Between Work Motivation and Employee Performance (Case Study of JNE Express Employees in Madiun City). The method used in this study is quantitative research. The sampling technique used jenuh sampling, with a sample size of 245 respondents. Data collection used a questionnaire. Data analysis used Smart-PLS3. The results of the study indicate that: 1) the variable work motivation has a positive and significant effect on the hustle culture of JNE Express employees in Madiun City. 2) the variable work motivation has a positive and significant effect on the employee performance of JNE Express employees in Madiun City. 3) Hustle culture has a positive and significant impact on employee performance of JNE Express employees in Madiun City. 4) Hustle culture can positively mediate the influence of work motivation on employee performance of JNE Express employees in Madiun City.

Keywords: *Hustle Culture, Work Motivation, Employee Performance.*

A. INTRODUCTION

In logistics companies such as Lintas Nugraha Ekakurir (JNE), the role of couriers is very vital because they are the spearhead in the process of distributing goods to customers. Courier performance directly impacts daily operations and the company's image in the eyes of customers. However, in practice, there is often an imbalance between high organizational demands and limited human resource capacity. Based on daily volume targets with high time pressure, it encourages employees to work beyond their physical and psychological limits to meet on-time delivery expectations. Considering aspects of welfare and realistic capacity of the workforce. The balance between organizational demands and human resource capabilities is a crucial part in creating sustainable and quality employee performance in the dynamic logistics industry. So organizations need to consider the balance between targets and the welfare of human resources to achieve organizational goals.

In an effort to create optimal employee performance amidst the dynamic demands of the logistics industry, work motivation is one of the internal factors that plays a central role. Work motivation not only encourages individuals to work productively, but also determines how far they are able to survive and develop in a stressful work environment, as defined in (Banks & Dillow, 2023). This condition has the potential to encourage employees to exploit themselves to meet work demands, which ultimately risks reducing the quality of performance, triggering fatigue and even disrupting psychological health. Therefore, it is important for organizations not only to encourage work motivation through incentives and targets, but also to build a work environment that supports a balance between the drive for achievement and the realistic capacity of the workforce. This approach will create employee performance that is not only productive, but also sustainable in the long term.

In relation to work motivation and unbalanced systems, the emergence of the hustle culture phenomenon has become a significant new challenge in human resource management practices,

especially in the logistics industry which is oriented towards speed and daily performance targets. Hustle culture refers to an extreme work culture that uses constant busyness and non-stop productivity as a measure of success.

The hustle culture phenomenon is clearly reflected in the work system of couriers in logistics companies, including on the Nugraha Ekakurir (JNE) Express Route in Madiun City. In this context, a work culture that glorifies high productivity is relentlessly internalized through the implementation of a strict daily target system and sanctions for late deliveries. Based on data from JNE Madiun's Human Resource Development (HRD) in 2025, it was recorded that 47% of the total 245 employees were couriers, the majority of whom faced intense work pressure due to the company's expectations for speed and accuracy of delivery.

This quantity and time-based work system not only requires couriers to achieve certain targets every day, but also provides penalties when these targets are not met, without considering external factors such as traffic conditions, weather, or delivery loads. This situation shows how hustle culture is not only a social construct, but has become part of a managerial system that influences the daily operations of logistics companies.

In research, the pressure on hustle culture has the potential to strengthen work motivation in the short term, but on the other hand it also increases the risk of physical and psychological fatigue which can lead to a decrease in service quality and a decrease in employee loyalty. Therefore, it is important for management to reflect back on work design and performance appraisal policies so as not to fall into practices that sacrifice workforce welfare for the sake of efficiency alone.

The pressure of hustle culture on a quantity-based work system that is strictly implemented in logistics operations not only has an impact on the physical and psychological aspects of employees, but also has the potential to encourage the emergence of deviant behavior that is detrimental to work integrity. Within JNE Express Madiun City, practices such as manipulation of delivery times, claims that packages have been received before they actually reach the customer,

as well as overtime work that is not officially recorded reflect deviations from operational standards that should be upheld.

B. METHODS

The method in this research is quantitative research. The sampling technique used a saturated sample technique with a sample size of 245 respondents. The data collection technique uses a questionnaire. The results of data analysis in this research used instrument tests which include validity and reliability tests, descriptive analysis, and path analysis using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis method.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESEARCH RESULT

1. Struktural Model (*Inner Model*)

a. *R-Squares*

The results of PLS R-Square represent the number of variables from the construct explained by the model. Below are presented the results of calculating the R-Squares value:

Table 1. R-Square Value from SmartPLS3 Application Analysis Results

Variable	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square
<i>Hustle Culture (Z)</i>	0,886	0,862
<i>Employee Performace (Y)</i>	0,857	0,848

Source: Data Processing Using SmartPLS (2025)

Based on the results of the analysis, it can be seen that the R-Square for the employee performance variable (Y) is 0.857. These results indicate that 85.7% of the existence of employee performance (Y) is influenced by the work motivation variable (X). The R-Square for the hustle culture variable (Z) is 0.886. These results show that 88.6% of the existence of hustle culture (Z) is influenced by the work motivation variable (X)

b. *Model Goodness of Fit (GoF)*

The Goodness of Fit (GoF) test results can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. Output Quality Indexes

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0,149	0,141

Source: Data Processing Using SmartPLS (2025)

Based on table 4.16, it is known that the SRMR value is 0.141. Where the SRMR value means that the path model built in this research is a good model.

c. Q-Squares

The results of the Q- test are used in the constructive observation model obtained from the parameter estimation model as follows:

Table 3. Q-Square Value from SmartPLS3 Application Analysis Results

Variable	Q-Squares
Hustle Culture (Z)	0,775
Employee Performace (Y)	0,705

Source: Data Processing Using SmartPLS (2025)

The Q-Squares value for the endogenous variable, namely employee performance (Y), is 0.705. Because Q-Squares is $0.705 > 0.35$, it can be concluded that work motivation (X) and hustle culture (Z) have predictive relevance for employee performance (Y). The Q-Squares value for the endogenous variable, namely hustle culture (Z), is 0.775. Because Q-Squares $0.775 > 0$, it is concluded that work motivation (X) has predictive relevance for hustle culture (Z)

2. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis research in SmartPLS using bootstrapping models. There are pictures of bootstrapping models as follows:

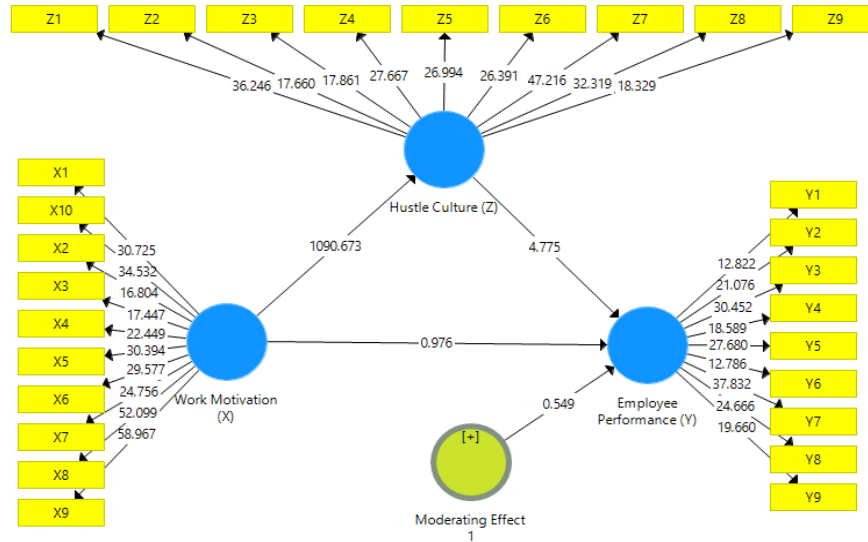


Figure 1. SmartPLS3 Bootstrapping Model

Table 4. Significance Test Results

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Work Motivation (X) -> Hustle Culture (Z)	0,993	0,993	0,001	2,673	0,000
Work Motivation (X) -> Employee Performance (Y)	0,165	0,154	0,169	1,976	0,029
Hustle Culture (Z) -> Employee Performance (Y)	0,809	0,821	0,170	4,775	0,000
(work motivation) x hustle culture -> employee performance (Y)	0,015	0,014	0,026	2,549	0,000

Source: Data Processing Using SmartPLS (2025)

The results of the analysis using SmartPLS 3 bootstrapping obtained the following results:

- The path coefficient value is 0.993, the p-value is 0.000, and the T-Statistics value is 2.673. The p-value is smaller than 0.05 and the T-statistic value is greater than the t-table value

- (1.65), which indicates that hypothesis-1 can be accepted. This indicates that the work motivation variable has a significant effect on hustle culture.
- b. The path coefficient value is 0.165, the p-value is 0.029, and the T-Statistics value is 1.976. The p-value is smaller than 0.05 and the T-statistic value is greater than the t-table value (1.65), which indicates that hypothesis-2 can be accepted. This indicates that the work motivation variable has a significant effect on employee performance.
- c. The path coefficient value is 0.809, the p-value is 0.000, and the T-Statistics value is 4.775. The p-value is smaller than 0.05 and the T-statistic value is greater than the t-table value (1.65), which indicates that hypothesis-3 can be accepted. This indicates that the hustle culture variable has a significant effect on employee performance.
- d. The path coefficient value is 0.015, the p-value is 0.000, and the T-Statistics value is 2.549. The p-value is smaller than 0.05 and the T-statistic value is greater than the t-table value (1.65), which already indicates that hypothesis-4 can be accepted. This indicates that the hustle culture variable can significantly moderate work motivation on employee performance.

DISCUSSION

1. The Influence of Work Motivation on Hustle Culture

Research that has been conducted shows that high work motivation encourages employees to engage in a hustle work style which is characterized by enthusiasm for working beyond working hours, an internal drive to continue to be productive, and a high desire for achievement. Hustle culture emerges as a response to motivational drives that not only come from external pressures such as work targets, but also from intrinsic motivation that encourages a person to take initiative, be responsible and be highly committed to their work.

The implications of this research regarding the influence of Work Motivation on the Hustle Culture of JNE Express Madiun City Employees show that work motivation is very

important for the company, especially to be able to improve Hustle culture. Employees who have high work motivation will focus on their work so that employees are able to take initiative, be responsible and highly committed to their work.

Recommendations can be given to companies to pay more attention to employee work motivation. Apart from that, the company is also expected to be able to provide workload to employees in accordance with their respective responsibilities. Meanwhile, recommendations that can be given to employees are that they should continue to increase work motivation and work seriously in accordance with the stipulated provisions.

(Astuti & Hartati, 2021) in a national journal stated that work motivation is the main factor in forming a culture of hard work in service companies. In international research, (Robinson & Lopez, 2021) confirms that individuals with high work motivation tend to adopt hustle culture as an expression of their sincerity in achieving career success. This is very relevant in the competitive and dynamic world of work. Based on the results of this research, it can be concluded that the influence of work motivation on hustle culture is positive and significant.

2. The Influence of Work Motivation on Employee Performance

Research that has been conducted shows that work motivation is one of the most dominant psychological factors in influencing individual performance in the workplace. Motivated employees have the drive to achieve work goals, show loyalty to the organization, and carry out their duties and responsibilities with discipline and high efficiency. In the logistics sector such as JNE Express which places great demands on speed, accuracy and responsibility, work motivation is an important asset to create optimal performance.

Implications regarding the influence of Work Motivation on employee performance of JNE Express Madiun City employees show that motivated employees tend to have better performance, higher performance, and provide better customer service. Where the forms of work motivation of J&T employees, like other companies, can vary, including financial (salary,

bonuses, incentives), non-financial (recognition, promotions, training, positive work environment), and also intrinsic factors such as job satisfaction and career goals. So with high work motivation it can improve employee performance

Recommendations can be given to the company, namely by making various efforts to increase employee work motivation, one of which is by providing salaries and bonuses according to employee performance. Apart from that, the company should also give appreciation to exemplary employees by giving awards or promotions. (Siregar & Mardhotillah, 2022) in their empirical study proves that work motivation has a direct correlation with individual performance achievement in a stressful work context. This is also confirmed by (Robbins & Judge, 2017), who states that work motivation is the main catalyst for achieving high and innovative performance in the modern work environment. Apart from that, (Hasibuan, 2016) stated that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation have a direct contribution to work productivity. Based on this empirical evidence, the relationship between work motivation and employee performance in this research is stated to be positively significant.

3. The Influence of Hustle Culture on Employee Performance

Hustle culture, which is characterized by high work intensity, time flexibility, unlimited work dedication, and enthusiasm for completing work quickly and efficiently, has become a very strategic work culture in the logistics sector which places great emphasis on time and productivity. When this culture is implemented in a healthy and proportional manner, employees are encouraged to work more focused, take the initiative in resolving work obstacles, and encourage operational efficiency.

The implication of this research is that Hustle culture is often associated with excessive hard work and can have a negative impact on work-life balance and employee mental health. Although there may be a positive correlation between hustle culture and temporary performance, especially in the short term. It is important to consider the long-term impact. Research by (Susanti & Budiman, 2022) shows that hustle culture influences performance, by

channeling motivational energy into productive work behavior. (Permatasari & Nugroho, 2023) proves that hustle culture has a significant and positive effect on employee performance

4. Hustle Culture Mediates the Influence of Work Motivation on Employee Performance

Research that has been conducted shows that work motivation not only influences performance directly, but also indirectly through the role of hustle work culture. When employees have strong motivation, they tend to develop hustle work behavior as a form of actualization and commitment to their work. This hustle behavior then has a further effect on improving overall work performance. Hustle culture in this case is a bridge that explains how motivation can be transformed into performance through the practice of hard work, consistency and high dedication

The implication of this research is that Hustle culture is often associated with excessive hard work and can have a negative impact on work-life balance and employee mental health. Although there may be a positive correlation between hustle culture and temporary performance, especially in the short term. It is important to consider the long-term impact. Work motivation, on the other hand, is an internal drive to achieve goals, and strong motivation tends to result in better performance. Hustle culture is able to mediate the influence of work motivation on performance in several cases, but this mediation is not always positive or profitable. If work motivation encourages a healthy hustle culture, the impact will be positive, namely increasing employee performance. However, if the hustle culture driven by motivation is coercion or obsession, the impact can be negative and actually reduce employee performance.

Research by (Susanti & Budiman, 2022) shows that hustle culture is able to strengthen the influence of work motivation on performance, by channeling motivational energy into productive work behavior. (Permatasari & Nugroho, 2023) proves that employees who have high motivation will create a culture of hard work that significantly encourages the achievement of work targets and organizational success. Therefore, it can be concluded that hustle culture

acts as a significant mediator and strengthens the positive influence of work motivation on employee performance.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that: 1) the work motivation variable has a positive and significant effect on the Hustle Culture of JNE Express Madiun City Employees, so the first hypothesis is accepted. 2) The work motivation variable has a positive and significant effect on employee performance of JNE Express Madiun City employees, so that the second hypothesis is accepted. 3) The Hustle Culture variable has a positive and significant effect on employee performance of JNE Express Madiun City employees, so the second hypothesis is accepted. 4) Hustle culture is able to positively mediate the influence of work motivation on employee performance of JNE Express Madiun City employees, so the third hypothesis is accepted.

E. Suggestions

Based on the conclusions of this research, suggestions can be given to other researchers to consider the contribution of other independent variables that influence employee performance which were not examined in this research. Apart from that, you should take different research respondents with different numbers so that more accurate results will be obtained.

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