

## **THE INFLUENCE OF MOTIVATION, COMPETENCE AND WORK ENVIRONMENT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF AGRICULTURAL INSTRUCTORS AT THE MANDAILING NATAL REGENCY AGRICULTURE SERVICE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The approach in this research is to use an associative approach, an associative approach is an approach to find out that there is a relationship or influence between the two variables (independent variable and dependent variable). The sample population in this study was all agricultural instructors at the Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service, totaling 311 people and a sample of 31 people using the Slovin formula. Partially, work motivation has a significant influence on the performance of instructors, competence has a significant influence on the performance of instructors, work environment has a significant influence on the performance of instructors at the Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service. Simultaneously, work motivation, competence and work environment have a significant effect on the performance of instructors at the Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service.

**Keywords: Competence, Motivation, Performance, Work Environment**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In order to improve the quality of human resources for agricultural, fisheries and forestry development actors, the government is obliged to provide outreach in the fields of agriculture, fisheries and forestry. Agricultural extension workers play an important role in determining the success of agricultural development, namely in the transfer of agricultural technology to farmers. Thus, the performance of agricultural instructors needs attention. In terms of organizing agricultural extension, extension workers play a role as a determining factor in changes in farmer behavior in developing farming businesses, because extension workers guide farmers directly to produce behavioral changes in farmers as expected. (Muliady TR, 2009) states that "the performance of agricultural instructors is the quality of the work of agricultural instructors in carrying out the tasks that are their responsibility which is caused by the abilities obtained from the learning process and the desire to excel". Good agricultural instructor performance is the dream of every agricultural actor. For this reason, the performance of agricultural instructors must always be improved. The performance of agricultural instructors can be used as an important indicator in achieving goals in the agricultural sector. Good performance of extension workers will provide a good climate for agricultural sustainability. Agricultural extension officers are officers who have

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competence in the agricultural sector and are able to communicate well with farmers. Good communication skills by agricultural extension officers are needed, so that the material presented can be accepted by all farmers. The existence of field agricultural instructors is to increase farmers' knowledge about environmentally friendly agriculture so that it increases, so that in the future it is hoped that it will have an impact on agricultural productivity and increase farmers' income, which in the future will also increase their welfare.

**Table Data on Assisted Farmer Groups  
Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service**

NO	TAHUN	JUMLAH	
		POKTAN	GAPOKTAN
1	2020	3683	310
2	2021	3688	330
3	2022	3681	335
4	2023	3777	335

**Source: Mandailing Regency Agriculture Service Natal 2024**

From the data above, it can be seen that the number of farmer groups and the number of farmer group associations is not comparable when compared with the number of agricultural instructors, which is 311 instructors. Thus, it is necessary to increase the competency that is needed by each instructor in carrying out coaching and counseling in their work area. Based on the Law on Farmer Group Development, the minimum number of groups coached by each agricultural instructor is 8 groups/extension workers. The competency of agricultural instructors in carrying out extension services is the basis for achieving targets and targets for the performance of the instructors themselves and achieving agricultural development goals in the extension workers' work areas. The role of extension workers in developing farmer groups needs to be carried out with a participatory nuance so that the principles of equality, transparency, responsibility, accountability and cooperation become new contents in empowering farmers. The manifestation of extension activities in developing farmer groups can be reflected in the existence of regular group member meetings and mutual cooperation activities accompanied by extension workers. Of all the farmer groups, only 1 group has the criteria for 5 intermediate farmer groups, namely the Mitra Mandiri farmer group, because the Mitra Mandiri group meets the criteria for achieving a higher class score than other farmer groups. Class level assessment is one indicator of the role of extension workers in developing farmer groups, however, seen in the field, the level of farmer groups is still far from being developed. It is hoped that the existence of extension activities will be a form of guidance to motivate farmers to be more interested, collaborate and excel in their groups and achieve a higher level of ability. It is important to note that the aim of extension workers is not only to generate and change farmers' knowledge, skills, attitudes and motivation. But what is more important is changing the mindset of farmers from farming that uses chemicals to environmentally friendly farming. The implementation of environmentally friendly agriculture is expected to produce

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stable agricultural production throughout the year, preventing environmental damage, economic benefits in the form of cost savings, healthier agricultural products, and maintaining ecological sustainability.

From the results found in the field through interviews with several farmers, farmers stated that today's extension agents are not like the previous extension agents. Farmers stated that instructors often came to their work areas to carry out counseling, discuss and exchange ideas about the cultivation of agricultural commodities and the farming problems faced by farmers. Meanwhile, when compared with today's extension workers, it is very different, today's extension agents only come to their work areas when there are government assistance activities and only to take documentary photos, and there are even extension workers who are not known to local village officials. So sometimes village officials come to the Agriculture Service office to make proposals and submit groups because the extension workers in their area are never active in the field. Human resource management is a part of organizational management that focuses on the element of human resources. HRM's task is to manage the human element well in order to obtain a good workforce. Human resources are important in an organization, so an effort is needed to process them well in order to create a balance between employee needs and the organization's desires and capabilities. Employees are the main asset of an organization and have a strategic role within the organization, namely as thinkers, planners and controllers of organizational activities. Every decision always expects its employees to have achievements, because having employees who excel will provide optimal contributions to the organization. The problems in organizations that are often faced are related to human resource problems. This is a challenge for management in managing them. Performance is a manifestation of an employee's work behavior which is displayed as work performance in accordance with his role in an organization within a certain period of time. This indicates that employee performance is a determinant of the success and survival of an organization. In every organization, humans are one of the most important components in bringing the organization to life. This must be supported by good performance because without good performance, the company will not achieve its goals. For this reason, the work environment in which employees work is very important in improving employee performance. Where the work environment is the material and psychological conditions that exist in the organization. However, the phenomenon that is currently occurring in the work environment of field agricultural instructors, especially at the Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service, is that there are still a lack of instructors who have competencies that are not in line with organizational needs. With the development of the current work application system which is being developed little by little, it requires the skills of each instructor to be able to accept and understand a different work system in accordance with current technological developments.

Apart from the factors mentioned above, employee performance can be improved by paying attention to work environmental factors. The organization as the employer must provide a comfortable and conducive work environment that can encourage employees to work productively. Providing a comfortable work environment will be able to give employees satisfaction with the work they do and give a deep impression to employees which will ultimately result in employees having good performance. In Mandailing Natal Regency, agricultural instructors work in each extension work area (WKP) which is under

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the auspices of the Agricultural Extension Center (BPP). There are 23 Agricultural Extension Center (BPP) offices in the Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service spread across 23 sub-districts. There are still 4 BPPs that do not have offices in sub-districts, so so far they work by joining the BPP office in the nearest sub-district and some work at the local sub-district office. For BPPs that already have offices, the facilities to support extension activities are very minimal, there are even some BPP offices that don't have chairs and tables. For BPP offices that already have chairs and tables, the number of available ones is very less when compared to the capacity of the number of employees working in the office. Another phenomenon that occurs in the current work environment is the lack of work support equipment, such as work tools, for example the limited provision of computers so that in completing the work of instructors they have to take turns waiting for instructors or other employees to complete their tasks. For the non-physical environment, intense communication, attention support and enthusiasm from leadership in providing task direction is still lacking. Because in general employees want to always be noticed to be more enthusiastic and need direction from the leadership to minimize errors at work. Competency is the work ability of each individual which includes aspects of knowledge, skills and work attitudes that are in accordance with established standards. Competency is a combination of skills, knowledge and attitude that can be observed and applied in a critical manner for the success of an organization and work performance as well as the employee's personal contribution to the organization. One factor that can influence performance is work motivation. Organizations really need employees who are active and work to achieve maximum results. To achieve maximum work results, motivation is needed so that the desired goals can be achieved. According to Hasibuan (2019: 95) "motivation is the provision of driving force that creates enthusiasm for a person's work, so that they are able to work together, work effectively and integrate with all their efforts to achieve satisfaction." Handoko (2018:52) states that "motivation is a person's personal condition which drives an individual's desire to carry out certain activities to achieve a goal".

No less important, of course, employees need motivation to be able to work more diligently. With high work motivation, employees will work harder in carrying out their work. On the other hand, with low work motivation, employees do not have the enthusiasm to work, give up easily, and have difficulty completing their work (Setiawan, 2018). Motivation has a close relationship with a person's attitudes and behavior. The attitudes that exist in each individual interact with values, emotions, roles, social structures and new events, which together with emotions can be influenced and changed by behavior. In the context of government agencies, Handoko (2018) suggests that a way to improve employee performance is to apply competency standards that are in accordance with organizational needs, apart from that, other factors are the work environment, and good work motivation can improve employee performance. Based on the background of the problem above, the researcher is interested in conducting research with the title "The Influence of Motivation, Competence and Work Environment on the Performance of Agricultural Instructors at the Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service".

**METHOD**

The method in this research is a quantitative research method. Quantitative research methods can be interpreted as methods used to research certain populations or samples, data collection using research instruments, statistical data analysis, with the aim of testing predetermined hypotheses. Meanwhile, the approach in this research is to use an associative approach, an associative approach is an approach to find out that there is a relationship or influence between the two variables (independent variable and dependent variable). In this research the independent variable X1 is Work Motivation, X2 is Competence, X3 is Work Environment and the dependent variable Y is Performance.

**DISCUSSION****The Influence of Motivation on Extension Worker Performance**

The Work Motivation Coefficient is positive, meaning that every increase in the instructor's work motivation will be accompanied by an increase in the instructor's performance as well. Meanwhile, every time the instructor's work motivation decreases, it will also be accompanied by a decline in the performance of instructors at the Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service. Employee motivation and performance are two different things, but both are related in an organization. According to Sedarmayanti (2017:40), a person's performance is determined by their ability and motivation to carry out work. It is said that job performance is determined by the interaction between ability and motivation. Work motivation is one of the many things that can influence employee performance. Motivation is used as a tool to motivate an individual to take action in implementing performance.

**The Influence of Competency on Extension Worker Performance**

The Competency Coefficient is positive, meaning that every increase in competency carried out by the Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service will be accompanied by an increase in the performance of instructors as well. Meanwhile, every decrease in competency carried out by the Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service will also be accompanied by a decrease in the performance of extension workers. This is in accordance with the framework of thinking that competence is one of the factors in improving performance. According to Noe (2019:94), competency is an aspect of a person's ability that includes knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and personal characteristics that enable workers to achieve success in completing their work through achieving results or success in completing tasks.

**The Influence of the Work Environment on the Performance of Extension Workers**

The Work Environment Coefficient is positive, meaning that every increase in the work environment carried out by the Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service will be accompanied by an increase in the performance of extension workers as well. Meanwhile, every time the work environment carried out by the Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service decreases, it will be accompanied by a decrease in the performance of extension workers. Based on the results of this research, it shows that the work environment has a positive and significant effect on performance. The results of this research are in accordance



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with previous research conducted by Yuniati (2021) entitled "The Influence of Individual Characteristics, Work and Work Environment on Employee Performance of PT BRI (Persero) Tbk Kapas Krampung Surabaya Branch" explaining that the work environment has a significant effect on employee performance. . The results of statistical analysis of the work environment have a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

### **The Influence of Motivation, Competence and Work Environment on Extension Worker Performance**

The Constant Coefficient is positive, meaning that when the Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service improves motivation, competence and the resulting work environment, the performance of instructors at the Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service will increase. Based on the results of the F test, the value in the F test of 58.683 is greater than the f table value of 3.34 with a significance level of 0.000 or <0.05, so simultaneously the variables Work Motivation, Competence and Work Environment have a significant effect on the variables on the Performance of Instructors. Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service. The performance of extension workers refers to empowerment concepts that are able to increase farmers' capacity and independence. This article aims to describe the performance of extension workers in empowering farmers. Agricultural extension workers are competent agricultural experts, besides being able to guide farmers, extension workers also provide motivation, provide information and increase awareness of farmers. So that it can encourage their interest in learning in facing problems in the field.

### **CONCLUSION**

Work motivation has a significant effect on the performance of instructors at the Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service. Competence has a significant effect on the performance of instructors at the Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service. The work environment has a significant effect on the performance of instructors at the Mandailing Natal District Agriculture Service. Work Motivation, Competence and Work Environment have a significant effect on the Performance of Extension Officers at the Mandailing Natal Regency Agriculture Service.

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