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The Effect of Institutional Relocation on Employee Work Discipline at State Islamic University Imam Bonjol Padang: The Mediating Role of Work Motivation

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Abstract: This study examines the effect of institutional relocation on employee work discipline at State Islamic University Imam Bonjol Padang and tests the mediating role of work motivation. The study employed a quantitative explanatory design with a cross-sectional survey approach. From a population of 184 employees, 70 permanent employees were selected through accidental sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling with SmartPLS. The results show that institutional relocation has a significant negative effect on work motivation, but a significant positive effect on work discipline. Work motivation does not significantly affect work discipline and does not mediate the relationship between institutional relocation and work discipline. These findings indicate that institutional relocation may create psychological adjustment pressure while simultaneously strengthening employee discipline through more organized work arrangements, improved facilities, and clearer work procedures. The study contributes to organizational behavior research by showing that organizational change in a public Islamic university does not necessarily influence discipline through motivational mechanisms. Practically, post-relocation policy should prioritize facilities, change communication, psychological support, and employee readiness.

Keywords: Institutional Relocation, Work Motivation, Work Discipline, Mediation, SEM-PLS.

INTRODUCTION

Human resources are a strategic asset because institutional effectiveness ultimately depends on the quality of employee behavior, commitment, and adaptive capacity. In public higher education institutions, this issue is especially important because employee discipline affects the continuity of academic and administrative services. Work discipline reflects punctuality, compliance with procedures, responsibility, and consistency in performing tasks. Strong discipline supports service quality and operational stability, whereas weak discipline may generate delays, reduce service effectiveness, and weaken coordination.

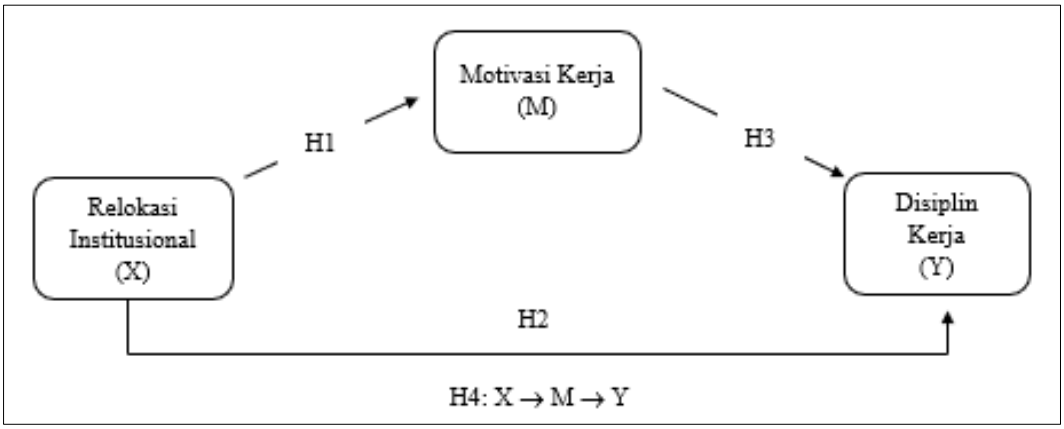
In the case of Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang, the issue of work discipline became more salient after institutional relocation. Institutional relocation should not be understood merely as a physical transfer of workplace location. It also involves changes in commuting patterns, access, facilities, work routines, social interaction, and perceptions of organizational support. Prior studies indicate that organizational conditions and psychological factors are closely linked to work behavior and performance, while discipline may also function as part of a broader organizational behavior system (Agustien & Soeling, 2020; Armstrong, M., & Taylor, 2023; Pamungkas et al., 2024; Robbins, 2020; Tj et al., 2022).

Preliminary evidence from the university showed that discipline-related problems were still present after relocation. In an initial survey of 20 employees, only 63 percent stated that they always arrived on time after relocation, 58 percent stated that relocation did not affect compliance with working hours, 70 percent reported that they consistently followed procedures at the new location, 65 percent stated that they could still complete tasks on time, and 57 percent stated that they remained disciplined despite facilities not yet being fully optimal. These figures suggest that relocation created real behavioral consequences related to attendance, punctuality, procedural adaptation, task completion, and consistency.

From a theoretical perspective, institutional relocation can influence work discipline directly and indirectly. One plausible indirect mechanism is work motivation. Motivation represents the internal and external energy that directs, intensifies, and sustains employee effort. When organizational change is perceived positively, motivation may increase. However, when change creates discomfort, access constraints, uncertainty, or adjustment pressure, motivation may decline. Previous studies have shown that motivation can mediate the relationship between organizational factors and work outcomes (Agustien & Soeling, 2020; Anggraeni, 2021; Pamungkas et al., 2024).

The research gap emerges from four conditions. First, many previous studies focus on organizational climate, compensation, leadership, or work environment, while explicit attention to institutional relocation remains limited. Second, studies that place work motivation as a mediator between institutional relocation and work discipline are still scarce. Third, much of the evidence comes from general public organizations or business settings rather than Islamic public universities. Fourth, many prior studies place performance as the main dependent variable rather than work discipline. This study addresses these gaps by testing institutional relocation as the main antecedent, work motivation as a mediating mechanism, and work discipline as the principal outcome.

Based on this background, the study asks four questions: whether institutional relocation affects work motivation, whether it affects work discipline, whether work motivation affects work discipline, and whether work motivation mediates the relationship between institutional relocation and work discipline. The study is expected to contribute both theoretically, by extending organizational behavior research in a higher education setting undergoing structural change, and practically, by providing evidence for post-relocation management policies.



Source: Developed by the authors, 2026
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHOD

This study used a quantitative explanatory design with a cross-sectional survey approach. The research object was employee work discipline at Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang in the context of institutional relocation. The population consisted of 184 employees, while the sample comprised 70 permanent employees selected through nonprobability accidental sampling. This sampling technique was considered appropriate because respondent access depended on field conditions and employee availability during the post-relocation period. (Septiano et al., 2025; Sugiyono, 2021).

Accordingly, the findings should be interpreted as explanatory evidence within the studied setting rather than as a basis for full statistical generalization. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The instrument initially contained 36 statements, consisting of 18 items for institutional relocation, 6 items for work motivation, and 12 items for work discipline. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling with SmartPLS, including descriptive analysis, outer model evaluation, and inner model evaluation. The outer model assessment covered convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability, while the inner model assessment covered path coefficients, indirect effects, effect size, and coefficients of determination (Septiano & Sari, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Respondent Profile

Category	Group	Frequency	Percentage
Age	21–30 years	0	0%
	31–40 years	8	11%
	41–50 years	29	41%
	51–60 years	33	47%
Gender	Female	30	43%
	Male	40	57%
Education	Senior high school	11	16%
	Diploma	4	6%
	Bachelor	42	60%
	Master	12	17%
	Doctoral	1	1%
Tenure	< 10 years	7	10%
	10–20 years	26	37%
	21–30 years	34	49%
	31–40 years	3	4%

Source: Primary data processed, 2026.

The respondent profile shows that the sample was dominated by mature employees with long work experience. Most respondents were aged 41–60 years and had worked for 10–30 years. This composition is important because long-tenured employees are more likely to understand the university's organizational routines and to compare work conditions before and after relocation in a meaningful way.

Table 2. Measurement and Structural Model Summary

Construct	Retained items	Loading range	Key evidence	Interpretation
Institutional relocation (X)	6	0.819–0.902	All retained loadings > 0.70	Convergent validity achieved

Work motivation (Z)	5	0.760–0.909	All retained loadings > 0.70	Convergent validity achieved
Work discipline (Y)	4	0.715–0.868	All retained loadings > 0.70	Convergent validity achieved
Discriminant validity	–	–	HTMT = 0.160–0.293	All HTMT values below 0.90
Model explanatory power	–	–	R^2 discipline = 0.115; R^2 motivation = 0.069	Low explanatory power
Effect size	–	–	f^2 X→Y = 0.101; X→Z = 0.074; Z→Y = 0.007	Small effects

Source: Primary data processed, 2026

The measurement model was acceptable after the purification process. In the second estimation, all retained indicators exceeded the recommended loading threshold, which indicates that the final indicators were sufficiently representative of their respective constructs. The discriminant validity test also showed low HTMT values, confirming that institutional relocation, work motivation, and work discipline were empirically distinct. However, the structural model displayed limited explanatory power, with R^2 values of 0.115 for work discipline and 0.069 for work motivation. This suggests that employee discipline and motivation in the post-relocation context were influenced not only by the variables included in the model but also by other organizational and personal factors outside the present framework. In addition, the descriptive results indicate that work motivation remained relatively weak after relocation, as reflected in the average score of 2.36 and a TCR of 47.14 percent. This pattern implies that physical relocation did not automatically generate stronger psychological engagement with work.

Table 3. Structural Model Results

Path	Beta	t	p	Decision
Institutional relocation → Work motivation	-0.263	2.368	0.018	Significant
Institutional relocation → Work discipline	0.310	2.447	0.014	Significant
Work motivation → Work discipline	-0.080	0.546	0.585	Not Significant
Institutional relocation → Work discipline through work motivation	0.021	0.500	0.617	Not Significant

Source: SmartPLS output, 2026.

The structural model reveals a mixed pattern of results. Institutional relocation has a significant negative effect on work motivation, which means that the first hypothesis is not supported in the hypothesized positive direction. In other words, relocation significantly affects motivation, but the effect is inverse rather than reinforcing. Institutional relocation also has a significant positive effect on work discipline, indicating that better relocation conditions are associated with stronger employee discipline. In contrast, work motivation does not have a significant effect on work discipline, and the indirect effect test confirms that work motivation does not mediate the relationship between institutional relocation and work discipline. These findings suggest that the influence of relocation on discipline operates primarily through a direct organizational route rather than through a motivational mechanism (Desvina & Siregar, 2022; Khasanah, 2022). The negative effect of institutional relocation on work motivation indicates that relocation created adjustment pressure for employees, even though the new environment may have offered certain physical advantages. Changes in commuting patterns, work routines, access, and psychological comfort likely reduced the sense of enthusiasm and ease in performing daily work. At the same time, the positive effect of institutional relocation on work discipline suggests that relocation may have improved aspects of work structure, procedural

order, and behavioral control. This means that employees may have become more disciplined not because they felt more motivated, but because the new organizational arrangement made compliance easier or more visible. This result is theoretically important because it shows that discipline in a public higher education institution can be shaped directly by structural and environmental arrangements, even when motivation does not improve.

The second finding shows that institutional relocation had a significant positive effect on work discipline. This indicates that a better relocation experience was associated with stronger discipline. One plausible explanation is that improved facilities, a more organized work environment, and better accessibility can create working conditions that make it easier for employees to comply with schedules, work rules, and task standards. In this sense, organizational change does not always weaken work behavior. When the new arrangement is managed properly, it can also strengthen behavioral order and responsibility. This result supports the view that organizational factors are important in shaping discipline and work outcomes (Justina et al., 2022; Pamungkas et al., 2024).

The third finding indicates that work motivation did not significantly affect work discipline. Although motivation is theoretically important in shaping employee effort and persistence, the present result suggests that discipline in the studied context was driven more strongly by direct organizational arrangements than by motivational states. One possible interpretation is that employees in a formal public institution may continue to comply with rules and schedules because of structural control, norms, and routine obligations, even when their motivation is not particularly strong (Fatimah et al., 2025; Syahrani et al., 2026).

The indirect effect test confirms that work motivation did not mediate the relationship between institutional relocation and work discipline. In practical terms, institutional relocation influenced discipline primarily through a direct route rather than through a motivational mechanism. This is also consistent with the low coefficient of the motivation-to-discipline path and the modest explanatory power of the model. Therefore, although motivation remains managerially important, it did not function as the main transmission channel in this study (Mardalena et al., 2020; Sukarman et al., 2021).

The findings generate three practical implications. First, post-relocation management should not focus only on physical infrastructure, but also on change communication and psychosocial support so that adaptation pressure does not weaken employee motivation. Second, the university should maintain the discipline-enhancing aspects of relocation, especially facility adequacy, access, and work arrangement clarity. Third, future intervention design should consider other predictors outside the current model because the low R^2 values indicate that employee discipline and motivation are influenced by additional factors such as leadership, rewards, organizational climate, and personal conditions (Marlapa & Mulyana, 2020; Rožman & Štrukelj, 2021).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that institutional relocation significantly reduced work motivation but significantly improved employee work discipline at Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang. Work motivation did not significantly affect work discipline and did not mediate the effect of institutional relocation on discipline. These results indicate that institutional relocation in a higher education institution can produce mixed consequences: it may create psychological adjustment burdens while simultaneously strengthening discipline through more supportive physical and organizational arrangements. The study contributes to the literature by placing institutional relocation as the main organizational antecedent, work discipline as the primary outcome, and work motivation as a tested mediating mechanism in a public Islamic university context. The main limitation is that the study was conducted in one institution using accidental sampling and a model with relatively low explanatory power. Future research should include

broader samples and additional variables such as leadership, reward systems, organizational climate, and perceived organizational support.

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