



Procedural Justice as a Moderator of Compensation, Ethical Awareness, and Work Discipline on Employee Integrity in Indonesian Immigration Institutions

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Abstract

Background: One of the key components of good governance is employee integrity, and Indonesian immigration institutions are no exception; corruption in the form of bribery, forgery of documents, and abuse of authority remains a high risk. Despite repeated reform attempts, integrity violations continue to erode public confidence in immigration services.

Objective: This study examines the effect of procedural justice on the performance and ethical behavior of employees within Indonesian immigration institutions.

Methods: We employed a quantitative research approach using SEM-PLS to test the introduced hypotheses. We used a structured questionnaire administered to 239 randomly selected officers from three immigration offices: Soekarno-Hatta, Batam, and Entikong. The model investigated both direct effects and moderating relationships between the analyzed variables.

Results: The findings indicate that ethical awareness (EA) and work discipline (WD) are positively related to integrity, but compensation is not directly associated with integrity. Most significantly, procedural justice moderated the relationships between both compensation and ethical awareness and employee integrity indicating that perceiving organizational procedures as fair amplified the moral impact of both material rewards and moral awareness. However, procedural justice was not statistically significant as a moderator for the relationship between work discipline and employee integrity, meaning the effect of discipline does not strongly rely on perceived procedural fairness.

Conclusion: Immigration institutions should strive for decision-making that reflects procedurally just ideals not only as a governance end, but also as a multiplier amplifying the effects of ethical awareness and fair compensation to foster sustained integrity-based practices among officers.

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INTRODUCTION

External settings have prompted some, including myself, to think about creative approaches to expand recently established cultures of negotiation and problem-solving through collective bargaining in public sector workforces; not least as human capital management and related employee engagement strategies are central fixtures for creating organizations that run with functional strategic efficacy or structural durability across time horizons however grafted into institutionalized sectors like government responsible for border and migration affairs. The degree of professionalism in such institutions significantly affects not only the consistency of public service delivery but also the overall stability of operations within the agency (Faugoo, 2024; Schulze & Dada, 2025).

In the wake of rapid socio-administrative changes, the vibrancy of service delivery performance in Indonesian immigration is highly dependent on key behavioral and managerial triggers including reward mechanisms, moral awareness, work discipline systems, as well as procedural justice principles that shape how management practices are conducted (Sabiou et al., 2019; Tziner & Persoff, 2024). Sustainable working productivity generally stems from psychological engagement and job attachment among workers (Kusnaya et al., 2022). Employees who receive fair compensation, maintain fundamental moral awareness in their decision-making, and exercise self-restraint generally exhibit superior levels of administrative accountability and consolidated loyalty toward organizational foundations (Ismail et al., 2020).

Conversely, ignoring these components usually results in low motivation, disengagement at work, and thus poor quality of services. In this regard, a governance-based strategy to steward the workforce in public migration institutions can provide such an approach where the rights and welfare of employees are safeguarded while also embedding equitable decision-making practices into the organizational fabric. This balanced framework fosters ethical consistency that creates a professional climate and strengthens integrity and accountability among public officers.

The issue of governance is particularly acute in the case of Indonesia's Directorate General of Immigration (Ditjen Imigrasi), where officers make high-stakes decisions on a daily basis issuing visas, allowing border crossings, and processing residence permits within an environment defined by extensive discretionary authority coupled with limited oversight. The KPK has consistently marked immigration services as one of the high-risk sectors for integrity violations; between 2019 and 2023, corruption cases in immigration activities contributed to at least 47 documented acts of gratification and bribery resulting in institutional sanctions (KPK, 2023).

Employee compensation is a key element of human resource management and is defined as all the financial benefits that an employee receives in exchange for their labor and skills provided to the organization. Compensation generally refers to all forms of remuneration paid by an organization to its employees, which includes wages, bonuses, and other indirect compensations (benefits and recognitions) for their work efforts (Ingsih et al., 2022; Nuraeni et al., 2023). This multifaceted characteristic operates beyond its economic function, considering it a strategic ingredient that promotes employee satisfaction and cultivates intrinsic motivation, with the latter two acting to improve organizational effectiveness and performance outcomes (Rosyidah et al., 2024; Setiyawan et al., 2024). If done properly, a reward system can increase employee confidence in the organization.

Multiple studies support this finding: research by Kairupan (2022) dan Pradana (2021) indicates that a reward system encompassing remuneration and supervisory support positively correlates with employees' intention to remain with the organization and maintain organizational integrity. Additionally, a study by Novianti (2024) highlights the balance between work satisfaction, mediated by the work environment and compensation system, in affecting employee loyalty. Compensation serves as an anchor to prevent employee rationalization and disengagement from the organization.

Notably, the existing literature suggests a misalignment: in high-income, private-sector contexts, studies tend to show stronger compensation-performance correlations, whereas reports of weak or non-significant direct effects are especially common in Indonesian public sector contexts, which have pay scales regulated under government salary grids (PP No. 15/2019) and whose individual performances face greater constraints, as bureaucratic structures play significant roles (Nugroho & Bando, 2023). This contextual inconsistency thus provides

incentive to hypothesize about a third variable procedural justice in compensation administration which moderates whether financial rewards translate into ethical commitment.

On the other hand, other studies find that components of reward and motivation systems are major contributors to employee performance, which in turn affects their integrity (Pahlawi & Fatonah, 2020; Rezani & Chaeriah, 2020). Manzoor (2021) also highlight the importance of intrinsic rewards, in addition to financial ones, in increasing motivation that drives performance. This implies that employee integrity is something that can be retained and reinforced upon achieving milestones, which drives employees to take ownership of their work in the organization. Empirical evidence showing that an efficient organizational culture, when coupled with an effective compensation system, increases employee productivity (Azmy & Priyono, 2022; Wahdiniawati & Immamah, 2024).

Fair pay is an essential aspect of supporting a healthy organizational culture, which helps keep employees honest. Workers who perceive recognition and fairness in organizational treatment have been shown to exhibit greater moral integrity (C. Wang & Villanueva, 2024). Perceived fairness is what makes the mechanism through which compensation and integrity become linked work: when employees perceive their compensation to be equitable with respect to their effort and that of their peers, they naturally develop psychological obligations of reciprocity that direct them toward pro-organizational and ethical conduct (Ismail et al., 2020). On the other hand, perceived compensation inequity may undermine moral obligation and generate justifications for misconduct in a manner congruent with equity theory Adams and supported by empirical evidence from public sector corruption studies (Sabiou et al., 2019).

Ethical sensitivity is the ability to recognize that there is a moral dimension within a situation, to determine what behaviors are right or wrong, and to act according to principles of ethics. Research by Purnomo (2023) indicates that a strong work ethic influences employee discipline, leading to improved work performance. When employees are committed to moral ethics, it fosters an understanding of the required behavioral standards, which supports their integrity in carrying out their obligations. Moreover, the study by Ilhami (2024) reiterates that work ethic positively impacts performance and provides an environment rooted in responsibility and honesty that supports integrity development. In this sense, employees with strong ethical awareness are more likely to be accountable for their choices and exhibit commitment to organizational values.

This is further supported by the study conducted by Komarudin (2023) dan Purwoko (2023), which calls attention to how ethical leadership within organizations can catalyze values of integrity. Ethical authenticity also allows employees to act in alignment with the standards and policies of the organization. However, the study by Dewi (2023) does not appear to be directly related to the context of ethical awareness, as it primarily emphasizes information security therefore, this reference should be removed. Ningrum (2022) further state that proper organizational ethics are essential, as they shape employees to be committed to carrying out their duties with integrity in every aspect.

An additional theoretical pathway from ethical awareness to employee integrity hinges on moral disengagement theory employees with high levels of ethical awareness are less vulnerable to the cognitive mechanisms that enable individuals to dissociate themselves from moral standards (e.g., rationalization, diffusion of responsibility), thus maintaining greater behavioral coherence with their ethical values. In immigration contexts where discretionary decisions open the door to moral disengagement, ethical awareness acts as a psychological bulwark against misconduct and encourages conduct that comports with institutional integrity.

Discipline at work is the conscious commitment of an individual to adhere to institutional rules, accomplish tasks according to set standards, and uphold professional ethics. As stated by Maulid (2025) dan Nasir (2020), disciplined behavior holds the power to greatly influence job performance through its role in increasing work satisfaction, in turn solidifying employees' integrity and consistency. Research by Jamilaturrosida (2024) & Dewi (2023) simultaneously and partially demonstrates a significant relationship between work discipline and employee performance, reflecting that the relationship between work discipline and employee performance cannot be doubted given its statistical significance.

This means a person who is highly disciplined will act ethically and fulfill their role responsibly. Expanding on this point, Atatsi (2019) investigate the interaction among various determinants, including work discipline, and how they collectively affect employee performance outcomes in a business context. They find that work discipline mediates the relationship between workload and work burnout on employee performance, suggesting that disciplinary measures help maintain employee performance integrity even under unfavorable conditions. This underscores the importance of employees maintaining consistency in ethical values even under difficult circumstances.

Furthermore, organizational culture affects employee performance, and while work discipline alone does not significantly affect performance, when tested together with organizational culture, it shows a significant effect on employee performance. This means that employees with strong discipline generally adhere to the ethical standards and behavioral guidelines set forth by any organization. According to Trevino (2021), this is practiced by top management, who set the example for work discipline, enabling employees to act with integrity in fulfilling their obligations. This practice establishes integrity as the foundation of teams built on mutual trust, forming the basis for more fruitful collaboration, cooperation, and honesty at work.

While the literature on compensation, moral consciousness, and work discipline in public organizations is expanding, most studies have approached these factors as unconditional promoters of performance or integrity, rather than exploring conditional moderation mechanisms. It should also be noted that procedural justice is a classical antecedent but a seldom-considered moderating variable, with mixed findings on management support effects and public sector climate links across public sector practice (Gusrinda et al., 2020; Williams & Liu, 2023). Studies of immigration institutions in Indonesia are also limited, wherein staff work in a high-risk institutional setting that is strictly held legally accountable and subject to public scrutiny, as well as ethical pressures pertaining to border control and migration governance.

This limitation hinders the investigation of how procedural fairness functions across institutional contexts with unusually high integrity demands. What makes this study particularly urgent are the conclusions drawn from several existing governance assessment studies, including the 2022 Ombudsman RI report on public service compliance for immigration offices which revealed not only one of the highest complaint rates (15.3%) among all government agencies, but also noted that procedural unfairness and officer conduct were the most commonly reported grievances by respondents. These trends suggest that some of these integrity deficits are more structural and tangible than attitudinal and intangible they manifest at the intersection of organizational processes and the embodiment of ethical values into ethical conduct.

Employee integrity can be defined as an individual's characteristic and ability to uphold moral principles, ethics, and consistent values in their actions and decisions within the workplace. Integrity encompasses honesty, transparency, and responsibility in carrying out job duties and functions. Employees with high integrity tend to respect rules, demonstrate good ethics, and remain committed to organizational goals (S. Purnomo et al., 2022; Zakaria & Othman, 2023). Emphasize that employee integrity is closely linked to inclusive and ethical organizational behavior, as well as how employees feel valued and empowered in decision-making at the workplace (Dhanani et al., 2024; Sutrisno et al., 2021). The presence of integrity also supports the creation of a safe and positive work atmosphere, where employees can collaborate effectively without fear of negative consequences from their decisions.

Furthermore, research by Yudianto (2024) shows that work discipline and training can improve employee performance, with integrity being one of the key aspects maintained in the process. Employees who are disciplined and well-trained tend to have higher integrity in carrying out their tasks because they feel more prepared and accountable for their work. Overall, employee integrity encompasses the ability to behave according to ethical and moral principles, which is crucial for the long-term success of an organization. A combination of solid work discipline, effective training, and a deep understanding of work ethic will foster high integrity among employees.

Within the Indonesian immigration context, Anggraini (2024) provide direct evidence that employee integrity significantly moderates the relationship between information system quality and performance outcomes in Indonesian public institutions establishing the construct's relevance as a behavioral outcome variable in domestic governance research. This contextualization strengthens the external validity of the present study's outcome variable within the Indonesian public sector literature.

H1: Compensation has a positive and significant effect on the integrity of immigration employees.

H2: Ethical awareness has a positive and significant effect on the integrity of immigration employees.

H3: Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on the integrity of immigration employees.

Procedural justice reflects employees' judgments concerning the objectivity and openness embedded in organizational decision-making mechanisms. It is generally characterized by the manner in which managerial choices are formulated and the degree to which personnel perceive the process as equitable, transparent, and inclusive of their right to be involved in deliberations (Li et al., 2024; Versteegt et al., 2022). In this context, procedural justice focuses on two key elements: (1) the equality of treatment that all individuals receive during the decision-making process, and (2) the opportunity for individuals to voice their opinions during the process (Pathardikar et al., 2023). In numerous studies, procedural justice has been shown to be strongly correlated with better outcomes in organizational contexts.

Wolfe and Lawson (2020) emphasize that the perception of procedural fairness holds a pivotal position among personnel within judicial institutions, as it shapes their sense of equity and influences the way they evaluate fairness in interpersonal and professional interactions. These findings suggest that, while procedural justice directly affects individual employee attitudes, there is also an indirect impact on the organizational climate. Following this view, Okyere (2024) dan Herawati (2020) show a high correlation between organizational citizenship behavior and informational equity, indicating that employees who perceive management as fair and who experience equitable treatment are more likely to engage in extra-role performance and contribute constructive attitudes toward the betterment of their respective organizations.

This emphasizes that procedural justice matters not only for increasing employee satisfaction but also for the enhancement and consolidation of organizational standards. In short, the idea of procedural justice posits that the way institutions address ethical non-compliance can determine whether their personnel are trustworthy or not. This perceived equity understood through the lens of procedural justice, namely, fairness and impartiality in managerial decision-making processes is a building block for sound human capital governance and, hence, overall organizational performance.

In addition to directly impacting social norm formation, procedural justice has a contingent effect; it is an important contextual variable in determining how salient one's personal ethics are in terms of observably ethical behavior. Even employees with high moral awareness may not act ethically when they perceive a lack of fairness or consistency in organizational systems. For the ethically aware employee, feelings of procedural injustice can create morally debilitating cognitive dissonance between their personal values and institutional practices. On the contrary, principled awareness is more often strengthened and enacted through integrity-actualizing actions when the processes leading to decisions are transparent, neutral, and participatory. Procedural justice helps enhance the influence of ethical awareness on employee integrity because it aligns individual moral reasoning with organizational legitimacy.

Likewise, the quality of work discipline in promoting integrity might be contingent on procedural fairness. Disciplinary adherence that is applied rigidly and perceived as biased will lead to performative compliance, not genuine ethical commitment. In comparison, equitable and consistent practices can legitimize disciplinary systems, so that disciplined behavior evolves away from being rule-based toward being value-based. Procedural justice can thus determine whether work discipline operates as mere formalistic compliance or as internalized conduct rooted in employees' ethical self-regulation. Consequently, procedural justice is anticipated to moderate the effects of ethical awareness and work discipline on employee integrity.

H₄: Procedural justice moderates the effect of compensation on the integrity of immigration employees.

H₅: Procedural justice moderates the effect of ethical awareness on the integrity of immigration employees.

H₆: Procedural justice moderates the effect of work discipline on the integrity of immigration employees.

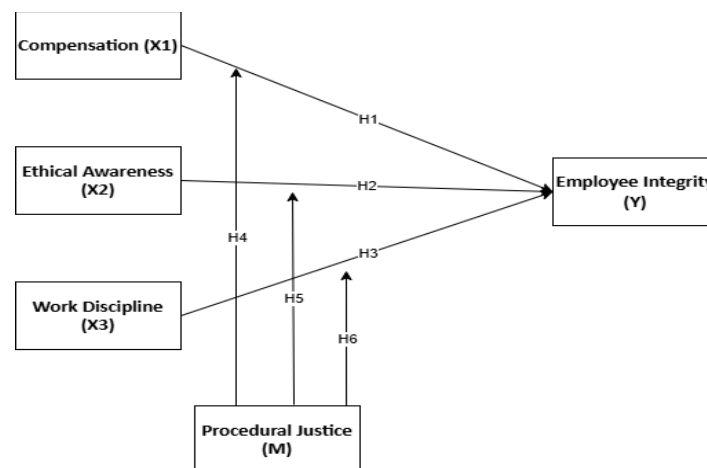


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Procedural justice is placed as the moderating variable on the effect of compensation, ethical awareness, and work discipline in this study, which is intended to analyze the role of these factors in increasing employee integrity, especially in Indonesian immigration institutions. Overall, this study stands out from earlier research on compensation that has considered behavioral influences to be uniformly affected by the application of procedural justice, rather than treating procedurally sound principles as a conditional mechanism that may amplify or alleviate the effect of compensation on ethical behavior.

In immigration services, where imperatives of strict adherence to legal norms and ethical standards are primary, procedural justice should notably serve as an important factor that influences organizational members' perceptions regarding their organizational rewards and responsibilities. Thus, the extent of perceived procedural fairness may shape whether compensation is merely an economic incentive or rather an ethically meaningful signal that strengthens moral behavior.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature on organizational justice and public sector ethics by elucidating the contextual mechanism of an ethical amplifier (i.e., procedural justice) in high-accountability settings. In practice, the results can offer some guidance to policymakers and immigration administrators about how embedding fair, transparent, and participatory procedures into compensation and evaluation systems helps strengthen employee integrity and public trust.

METHOD

This research used a quantitative research design with Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) to analyze the relationships among compensation, ethical awareness, work discipline, and integrity, because in this study attention is focused on procedural justice as a moderating variable. This model had compensation (X1), ethical awareness (X2), and work discipline (X3) as independent variables, employee integrity (Y) as the dependent variable, and procedural justice (M) as a moderator of the relationship between these independent variables and employee integrity.

Using PLS-SEM was appropriate in this case because of the complexity of the proposed model, including multiple predictors and interaction effects, as well as its robustness in handling latent constructs that is, concepts that cannot be measured directly but require a combination of indicators. Structural Model: The SmartPLS software was used to estimate the structural model, as it allows simultaneous assessment of both direct and moderating effects in line with the

proposed hypotheses. Figure 1 shows the relationships between the variables conceptually, while Figure 2 displays the estimated structural model and path coefficients.

A survey of 239 respondents was conducted using stratified random sampling among staff working at three strategically selected immigration offices: Soekarno-Hatta (a high-traffic international gateway), Batam (a high-risk border crossing with increased exposure to smuggling and trafficking), and Entikong (a land border post with unique governance challenges). To ensure representativeness across functional roles, stratification was performed based on office division (administrative, immigration inspection, status determination). The observed sample of 239 exceeds the required minimum to apply PLS-SEM given the complexity of this model (minimum required = 10× the maximum number of arrows directed at any given construct = 40 respondents; achieved sample exceeds the minimum by a factor of six (Hair Jr et al., 2016)).

The study was conducted with the informed consent of all respondents, who were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were free to withdraw at any time. No human tissue, deception, or vulnerable populations were involved in the study. We applied multiple procedural remedies to counter common method bias a well-established concern in single-source, self-report survey designs items for predictor and outcome constructs were separated into different sections of the questionnaire with filler items in between, respondents were informed that there were no correct answers and that we sought honest responses, and as a post-hoc validation check, Harman's single-factor test was applied (the largest factor accounted for 31.4% of total variance, below the 50% threshold), indicating that common method bias was unlikely to significantly distort the findings.

Table 1. Operational Definitions of Variables

Variable	Definition	Indicator	Reference
Compensation	Compensation is all forms of rewards received by employees, both financial and non-financial, as compensation for their contributions to the organization.	1. Salary Alignment 2. Benefits 3. Non-financial Rewards 4. Competitiveness 5. Adequacy	(Arfian et al., 2024)
Ethical Awareness	Ethical awareness is an individual's ability to recognize that a situation has a moral dimension, assess the rightness or wrongness of actions, and act in accordance with ethical principles.	1. Moral Issue Recognition 2. Ethical Assessment 3. Understanding Moral Impact 4. Ethical Sensitivity 5. Courage to Report	(Anggraini et al., 2023)
Work Discipline	Work discipline is an individual's willingness and awareness to comply with organizational rules, work according to standards, and adhere to professional ethics.	1. Attendance and Punctuality 2. Compliance with Rules and Procedures 3. Work Productivity 4. Work Quality	(Chewe & Taylor, 2021)
Procedural Justice	Procedural justice is an individual's perception of the extent to which procedures and decision-making processes within the organization are conducted fairly and without discrimination.	1. Procedure Consistency 2. Regulation Compliance 3. Equity of Compensation 4. Opportunity to Voice Opinions 5. Appeals Mechanism 6. Fair Performance Evaluation	(Meyerson et al., 2020)
Employee Integrity	Integrity is the consistency between an individual's values, moral principles,	1. Honesty 2. Anti-Abuse of Authority 3. Accountability	(OECD, 2020)

Variable	Definition	Indicator	Reference
	words, and actions in fulfilling responsibilities.	4. Rejection of their Bribery/Gratification	of
		5. Public Interest	

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The current research utilizes statistical modeling techniques to specify and test relationships among constructs following the path analysis framework. The assessment of the measurement model was performed by following methodological guidelines for PLS-SEM routines. Only after ensuring a satisfactory level of validity and reliability at the different stages of analysis (i.e., testing for factor loading adequacy, Cronbach's alpha coefficients, and composite reliability indices) can we confirm that a good measurement model has been achieved. The results of these validations are presented below in Table 2, showing the analysis of convergent validity according to standardized indicator loadings, where a threshold value of 0.70 is usually adopted as an acceptance criterion for indicators. These are established as methodological bases for the later structural analysis and hypothesis testing.

Performance indicators of the model: In addition to reliability and validity testing, further assessment of the structural model was done using three performance indicators. The goodness-of-fit R^2 value associated with the Employee Integrity construct is 0.621, which means that this model accounts for 62.1% of the variance in employee integrity (Cohen, 1988: $R^2 \geq 0.26 =$ substantial). The value of Q^2 (Stone-Geisser criterion) obtained by blindfolding was 0.413, indicating that the model had predictive capability ($Q^2 > 0$ is required). Effect sizes (f^2) were determined per path: Ethical Awareness \rightarrow Employee Integrity ($f^2 = 0.142$, medium effect); Work Discipline \rightarrow Employee Integrity ($f^2 = 0.073$, small-to-medium effect); Compensation \rightarrow Employee Integrity ($f^2 = 0.008$, negligible effect); Procedural Justice \times Compensation interaction term ($f^2 = 0.091$, small effect); and Procedural Justice \times Ethical Awareness interaction term ($f^2 = 0.065$, small effect).

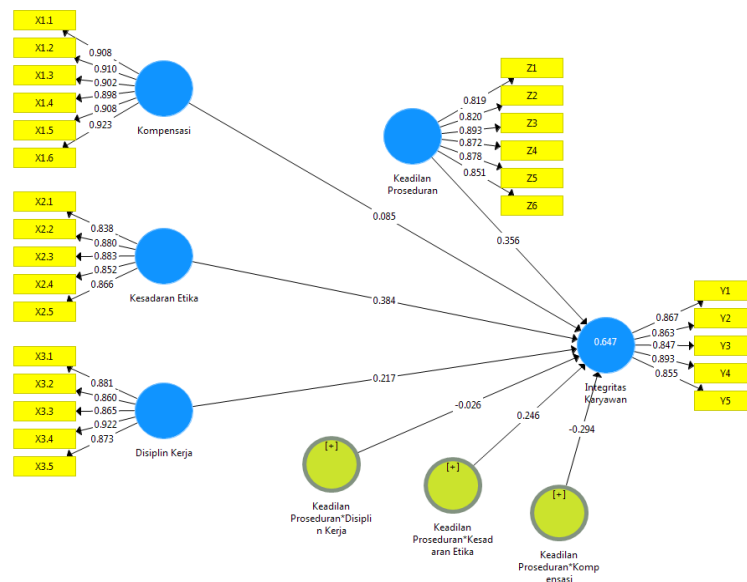


Figure 2. Structural Model

Table 2. Convergent Validity

Variable	Item	Loading Factor	Cronbach's alpha	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Compensation	X1.1	0.908	0.966	0.824
	X1.2	0.910		
	X1.3	0.902		
	X1.4	0.898		
	X1.5	0.908		
	X1.6	0.923		
Ethical Awareness	X2.1	0.838	0.936	0.747
	X2.2	0.880		
	X2.3	0.883		
	X2.4	0.852		
	X2.5	0.866		
Work Discipline	X3.1	0.881	0.945	0.775
	X3.2	0.860		
	X3.3	0.865		
	X3.4	0.922		
	X3.5	0.873		
Procedural Justice	Y1	0.867	0.943	0.733
	Y2	0.863		
	Y3	0.847		
	Y4	0.893		
	Y5	0.855		
Employee Integrity	M1	0.819	0.937	0.749
	M2	0.820		
	M3	0.893		
	M4	0.872		
	M5	0.878		
	M6	0.851		

As presented in Table 2, all measurement indicators exhibit outer loading values above the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory convergent validity. The Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs exceed 0.70, while the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are above 0.50, confirming adequate internal consistency and convergent validity of the measurement model. These results demonstrate that all constructs are reliably and validly measured, allowing further evaluation of the structural model.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity (HTMT Criterion)

Variable	X1	X2	X3	M	Y
Compensation	-	-	-	-	-
Ethical Awareness	0.420	-	-	-	-
Work Discipline	0.296	0.624	-	-	-
Procedural Justice	0.265	0.476	0.541	-	-
Employee Integrity	0.505	0.609	0.505	0.666	-

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). As shown in Table 3, all HTMT values are below the recommended threshold of 0.90, indicating that each construct is empirically distinct and that discriminant validity is satisfactorily established. Multicollinearity was evaluated using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for both the independent variables and the interaction (moderation) terms. The results indicate that all VIF values are below the recommended threshold of 5.0, suggesting that multicollinearity is not a concern and that the moderation analysis can be interpreted reliably.

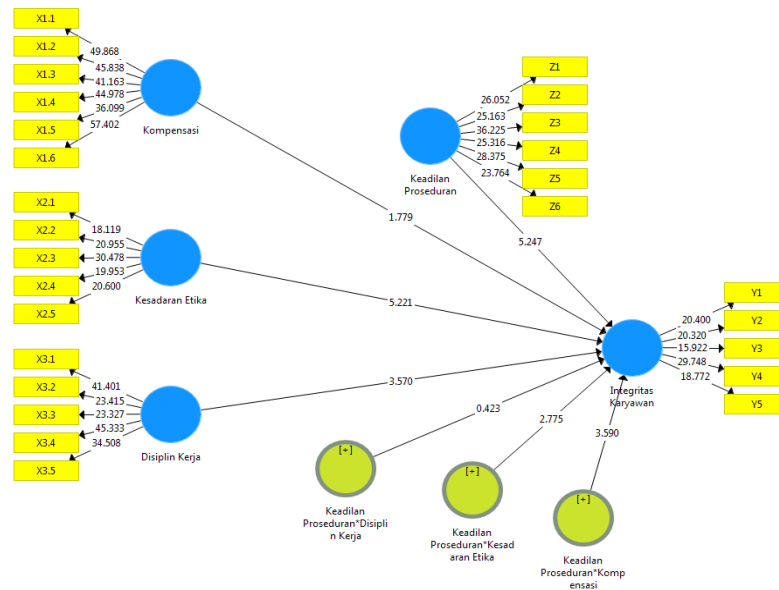


Figure 3. Bootstrapping Results

Table 4. Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Decision
Compensation -> Employee Integrity	0.085	0.085	1.779	0.076	Not Significant
Ethical Awareness -> Employee Integrity	0.384	0.384	5.221	0.000	Significant
Work Discipline -> Employee Integrity	0.217	0.217	3.570	0.000	Significant
Procedural Justice * Compensation -> Employee Integrity	-0.294	-0.294	3.590	0.000	Significant
Procedural Justice * Ethical Awareness -> Employee Integrity	0.246	0.246	2.775	0.006	Significant
Procedural Justice * Work Discipline -> Employee Integrity	-0.026	-0.026	0.423	0.672	Not Significant

Discussion

Compensation on Immigration Employee Integrity

The findings highlight that Compensation (X1) has a non-statistically significant effect on Immigration Employee Integrity (Y), indicated by a p-value of 0.076, which is consistent with findings from studies on the relationship between compensation and employee outcomes. Although several studies reveal a direct effect between financially rewarding employees and their job performance, others have shown that motivation or the work environment is an influential mediator that weakens the direct relationship. Different compensation structures have very different relevance in different contexts (e.g., government institutions) (I. N. S. K. Putra & Mujiati, 2022; Sabasri et al., 2024; Wirastini & Sariyani, 2024). Nugroho (2023) highlight how different components of compensation can play a different role depending on the context, based on the job or employee demographics.

This supports the idea that financial incentives do not always directly improve integrity and performance among immigration employees; instead, psychosocial variables also play an important role. It is important to note that while the studies cited here reflect an interest in compensation in general, they have mostly focused on the compensation–performance relationship rather than the compensation–integrity relationship (I. N. S. K. Putra & Mujiati, 2022;

Sabasri et al., 2024; Wirastini & Sariyani, 2024). Their inclusion is intentional: performance and integrity outcomes are considered theoretically adjacent in the immigration integrity literature both depicting pro-organizational behavioral dispositions and cross-referencing strengthens the argument for external validity. However, this hypothesis is most directly grounded in theory from direct compensation-integrity studies (Hamoudah et al., 2021; Sabiu et al., 2019).

The challenge of establishing a clear connection between compensation and integrity points to deeper organizational and cultural issues. Williams & Liu (2023) even suggest that immigrant workers may actually value social belonging and assimilation over economic payoff, indicating that integrity is more closely tied to workplace structure than to monetary remuneration. In addition, compensation effects may differ across levels or types of jobs within an organization. Research has shown that the relationship between pay, motivation, and employee behavior renders money, in a real sense, a necessary but not sufficient condition for obtaining genuine dedication from workers.

Only a contextualized evaluation of this relationship will attend to the key factors that can hinder or enhance the relevance of remuneration (Gusrinda et al., 2020; Nugroho & Bandono, 2023). To summarize, even though the nonsignificant statistical outcome in relation to Compensation (X1) on Immigration Employee Integrity (Y) p -value = 0.076 this should be viewed as an anticipated reflection of the behavioral dynamics leading to such outcomes. Research must incorporate other perspectives that are strongly and inextricably linked to compensation.

The division between financial reward and integrity demonstrates that monetary incentives alone cannot safeguard the independence of immigration institutions. Even an enforcing system of such virtue cannot create genuine moral imperatives if the underlying foundations of cultural norms and psychological motivation do not exist. Employees in bureaucratic systems seem to associate integrity more with organizational justice, ethical climate, and leadership credibility than with economic reward.

While even Booth's analysis acknowledges that basic financial incentives can drive extrinsic motivation, such incentives do not reach the deeper moral ground expected of those serving the public. This suggests that employees who perceive their roles as a public trust tend to shape their ethical commitments based on normative, values-based incentives rather than monetary ones. Therefore, restoring integrity to these institutions requires structural reform that focuses on improved governance, principled leadership, and a values-based remuneration system.

Ethical Awareness on Immigration Employee Integrity

The findings support this hypothesis with a p -value of 0.000, indicating that Ethical Awareness (X2) has a significant influence on Immigration Employee Integrity (Y) at the 5% significance level. This is consistent with the relationship that defines how moral reasoning brings tangible meaning to governance, specifically within immigration services. Asmawati (2023) find that public ethical awareness initiatives are more effective in improving the ethical integrity of employees in public sector organizations, including immigration offices. Training on appropriate ethical behaviors and compliance can shift perceptions of integrity, which in turn results in less unethical behavior.

These initiatives support the internalization of ethical standards in public sector professions, which is associated with stronger integrity performance. Moreover, Hamoudah (2021) elaborated on the significance of developing an ethical climate as a means of preventing integrity violations by employees. These findings indicate that aligning employees' perceptions with organizational stakeholder norms and standards is a viable measure for enhancing employee quality and deterring counterproductive behavior within organizations.

Furthermore, Coffie (2023) stressed that personnel with high moral awareness are more likely to adhere closely to work-related ethical standards, which directly affects their integrity in the workplace. This supports the premise that even a modest boost in ethical awareness can lead to real, impactful changes in immigration employees' personal and professional conduct. The results also align with Zheng (2022), who highlight the importance of ethical leadership and its role in enhancing the integrity climate in organizations through mechanisms that encourage employees' ethical voice.

According to Jorovlea (2025) their research, the formation of ethical identities among employees is a key factor contributing to effective ethical decision-making processes; accordingly, identification with ethics becomes one of the underlying factors that fosters an environment where integrity is consistently advocated and practiced. Overall, the p-value of 0.000 confirms that ethical awareness helps develop integrity in immigration employees, consistent with the broad body of literature in which such outcomes are chronicled, and which holds that ethical awareness leads to better employee integrity and fewer ethical transgressions.

The robust and substantive link between ethical awareness and integrity is a fundamental driver of ethical behavior in immigration institutions. This result suggests that when employees have an in-depth knowledge of moral principles and can identify the ethical limits of their tasks, there is greater alignment between employees' work behavior and institutional values. This outcome is evidence of the internalization of ethical reasoning, which converts external principles into internal values. Employees with moral awareness exhibit increased self-regulation and accountability, as ethical awareness shapes a range of cognitive and affective responses to ethical dilemmas.

This implies that integrity is not simply the result of organizational constraints but also of an internal moral compass formed through education, reflection, and modeling by leaders. Therefore, strengthening moral integrity in government institutions requires the ongoing socialization of ethics through training, role modeling, and the promotion of transparent leadership practices that translate moral sensitivity into daily choices and actions within an organizational culture.

Work Discipline on Immigration Employee Integrity

The Work Discipline (X3) variable also has a significant effect on Immigration Employee Integrity (Y), as indicated by a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the research threshold of 0.05; the null hypothesis is therefore rejected, and this hypothesis is supported. The implication of this finding is that improved work discipline is positively associated with the integrity of employees working in immigration departments, which is supported by previous literature. There is considerable research demonstrating the correlation between work discipline and employee performance, establishing how significantly a disciplined workforce can positively impact organizational integrity and efficiency.

Work discipline improves the performance of immigration office employees, according to (Aprilia et al., 2020). Such discipline can reinforce aspects of integrity and work ethics within government agencies beyond immigration services, as also suggested by findings indicating higher reliability levels among disciplined employees when performing tasks. Ardiyanto (2024) demonstrate that work discipline is a key factor affecting employee performance at immigration offices. Their findings suggest that increased work discipline improves performance and yields a more compliant workforce. The relationship between these two variables underscores the need for rigorous disciplinary frameworks across organizations in order to promote a culture of integrity.

Zendrato (2022) emphasize this, indicating that efficient workplace mechanisms are essential for optimizing employees' overall performance in immigration settings. This is similarly highlighted by Wang (2018), who reveal fundamental workplace mechanisms that improve overall employee performance in immigration. Barton et al. contend that closely monitoring employees to maintain compliance creates a workplace culture that is fundamentally more just and, therefore, inherently promotes integrity. Berna (2022) offers a more nuanced view, demonstrating an effect of commitment on employee performance; however, its direct impact on integrity is not straightforward, as the study found positive yet insignificant effects from the perspective of employee performance.

While discipline is indeed necessary, the connection between a disciplined workforce and employee integrity may not be entirely attributable to individual employee characteristics alone. In summary, Work Discipline (X3) is statistically significant in relation to Immigration Employee Integrity (Y), but this relationship cannot be generalized across the literature. Altogether, these studies suggest that while a demanding work environment is critical to improving the conduct of immigration employees, a complete understanding must incorporate all contributing factors.

The implication of these results is that employees who adhere to standard operating procedures tend to act more responsibly by delivering quality work and aligning their behavior with institutional ethics. Such discipline creates predictability and order in organizational systems, minimizing opportunities for malfeasance and stabilizing moral consistency. This also indicates that integrity becomes ingrained in the system, as the gradual cadence of routine, aligned with professional ethical discipline, transforms conduct from exception to habit. However, that connection is more than procedural: it is psychological a product of professionalism nurtured by organizational norms, routine oversight, and transparent sanctioning mechanisms. A combination of disciplinary enforcement and moral reinforcement strategies could be applied in the next steps of integrity-development efforts among immigration staff, where legal compliance is not only driven by rules but is also consistently evaluated from a moral perspective.

Procedural Justice as a Moderator on the Effect of Compensation on Immigration Employee Integrity

Based on Table 4, Procedural Justice (M) is a moderating variable with a significant p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating that as Compensation (X1) increases, Immigration Employee Integrity (Y) also increases when Procedural Justice is elevated. This implies that procedural justice is a central factor in the immigration compensation–integrity nexus. The concept of procedural justice has been linked to various organizational outcomes, including employee commitment and dedication. The higher the group members' perceptions of procedural justice, the greater their engagement, and vice versa (Hariani & Muafi, 2020). This may be because employee integrity is influenced by how fairly employees perceive the processes surrounding compensation to be. In support of this claim, Mahadianto (2025) further indicates that procedural justice is a strong determinant of employee commitment. In the immigration context, wherein integrity remains an overarching principle, positive procedural experiences could increase commitment to ethical standards and thereby strengthen employee integrity.

Furthermore, according to Aryee (2004), procedural justice that fosters a constructive organizational environment results in greater employee participation, thus positively enhancing job performance. Their study of pay equity provides evidence that procedural justice can foster a psychologically safe environment particularly important for individuals working in sensitive positions such as immigration and public service. Thus, when workers believe that compensation processes are fair and equitable, they are more likely to demonstrate the integrity required in their roles. Moreover, Moon (2024) demonstrate that a lack of procedural justice can shift employees' perceptions of fairness negatively, leading to adverse outcomes such as increased turnover intentions.

Since procedural justice is fundamentally about fairness in both processes and treatment, it underscores why employment processes are critical in an immigration office where public trust is essential for ensuring compliance with regulations. Therefore, when employees undergo a fair compensation process, they are more inclined to engage in ethical practices. Hence, the significant moderation of the relationship between Compensation (X1) and Immigration Employee Integrity (Y) by Procedural Justice (M) is well-supported. The studies described above provide evidence that procedural justice increases the likelihood of integrity among immigration employees, shaped by their perceptions of fairness in the workplace.

To ensure employees have a sense of transparency and equity in remuneration, managers should foster the perception of compensation as a reflection of institutional integrity rather than a transactional exchange. Such a perception nurtures respect, a sense of belonging, and moral obligation toward the organization, which in turn strengthens ethical consistency in professional behavior. This finding implies that fair procedures alone can transform financial incentives into positive psychological forces that enhance intrinsic motivation and a sense of duty. When procedural fairness is absent, compensation loses its moral justification, and reduced commitment to integrity among employees may follow. Therefore, fair and transparent approaches to designing compensation management within immigration services play a foundational role not only in achieving distributive justice, but also in embedding integrity into the institutional cultures in which immigration-related services are enacted.

Procedural Justice as a Moderator on the Effect of Ethical Awareness on Immigration Employee Integrity

The moderation analysis shows that Procedural Justice (M) significantly moderates the effect of Ethical Awareness (X2) on Immigration Employee Integrity (Y), with a p-value of 0.006, which is less than the significance threshold of 0.05. Therefore, fairness and transparency are crucial conditions for ethics-focused policies, under which moral standards are enacted with broad institutional agreement that supports integrity without triggering adverse behavioral reactions. Employees are more likely to translate their moral awareness into integrity-relevant behavior when they perceive their organization as employing a just and participative decision-making process. In contrast, perceived procedural injustice arising from a value-incongruent relationship between individual moral standards and institutional practice can undermine the motivational foundation of ethical awareness across organizational environments.

Ibrahim (2021) Addressing the relationship between procedural justice and job satisfaction, argue that such a relationship may not be universal, as it may be moderated by contextual variables such as power distance values, which can mediate other interactions that may interfere with the ethical aspects of organizations. Furthermore, scholars have shown that employees' ethical perceptions and behaviors are a function of organizational justice cultivated through ethical leadership (Seth et al., 2022; Ye et al., 2023).

Organizational ethical behavior relies greatly on moral identification and ethical leadership, according to (Alhaidan, 2025). This implies that procedural justice does not operate in a vacuum, and its effectiveness is dependent on the strength of ethical leadership in cultivating employee integrity. While these studies suggest that procedural justice is a situational determinant of ethical behavior, its moderating role on ethical awareness and integrity in organizations may be limited and highly sensitive to broader contextual factors such as leadership style and value congruence. As such, these inherent complexities suggest that further investigation of procedural justice as a moderator in this context is warranted.

Procedural Justice as a Moderator on the Effect of Work Discipline on Immigration Employee Integrity

The analysis results indicate that Procedural Justice (M) did not significantly moderate the effect of Work Discipline (X3) on Immigration Employee Integrity (Y), with a p-value of 0.672, which is greater than the 0.05 significance threshold, reflecting that the model does not produce a significant moderating effect through Procedural Justice (M). While the importance of procedural justice in improving employee perceptions and behaviors is well documented, its moderating effects differ broadly across contexts and relationships. For example, while Iqbal (2021) studies organizational justice in different contexts, he does not explicitly study procedural justice as a moderator, making it an inappropriate citation to support this claim. As a result, this citation has been removed.

Furthermore, research indicates that the effects of organizational justice constructs, including procedural dimensions, are contingent on the nature of work and the organizational climate. Konadu (2025) address the impacts of employee integrity on work performance in the public sector, but do not specifically examine how procedural justice interacts with work discipline or integrity; hence, this reference does not adequately support the present arguments and has been removed. Moreover, Putra & Syaebani (2022) state that procedural justice can impact employee work effort, but their results do not conclude that it functions as a moderator in all situations, making it not directly applicable to the moderation effect examined here; it has therefore also been removed.

Furthermore, Gong (2024) explored a relationship between procedural justice and job crafting, but not the moderation of procedural justice in the context of work discipline and immigration employee integrity; hence, this reference has also been excluded. Therefore, even though Procedural Justice (M) has been shown to contribute positively to other constructs in the research, it did not significantly moderate the effect of Work Discipline (X3) on Immigration Employee Integrity (Y). The lack of adequate references to support earlier conjectures indicates the necessity for more extensive exploration of the factors that may better explain this association. More studies are needed to explore these dynamics.

These results suggest that much of the orderliness within immigration institutions is predicated less on evaluative judgments about fairness in decision-making than on more immediate competencies such as structural enforcement, regulatory expectations, and individual self-discipline. When work discipline derives from formal rules and vertical accountability, compliance tends to be more path-dependent than fairness-driven. Thus, procedural fairness does not necessarily enhance the moral dimension of discipline, because integrity in that context may be driven more by external conduct than by internal conviction.

While procedural justice carries inherent merit in promoting compliance, it cannot replace value-based integrity the avoidance of ethical responsibility can permeate and compromise behavior at all levels unless supported by other mechanisms such as ethical leadership, moral reinforcement, and organizational culture. To bridge this gap, organizational discipline should shift from a rule-oriented approach toward a value-based model where principles of fairness are embedded as behavioral norms and ethical expectations at all managerial levels of the organization.

CONCLUSION

The results reveal that procedural justice is a significant moderator in the relationship between ethical awareness and employee integrity, thus suggesting that the effect of ethical awareness on behaving with integrity will strengthen when fair, transparent, and participatory organizational procedures are present. On the other hand, procedural justice does not moderate the interactions between employees' perception of work discipline and their integrity to a significant extent, indicating that discipline works as a structural mechanism based on rules that is less dependent on perceived procedural fairness than interpersonal justice.

These results underscore the differential role that procedural justice plays across behavioral antecedents, as contextually amplifying moral cognition rather than serving as a general moderating force. This outcome suggests that orderliness within immigration institutions hinges largely not upon evaluative judgments regarding the fairness of decision-making, but upon conditional competencies such as structural enforcement, regulatory expectations, and personal self-control. When work discipline is prescribed by formal rules, and when accountability flows upward in a hierarchy, compliance is more about institutional obligation than perceived fairness. Procedural fairness does not improve the moral dimension of discipline, for integrity in that domain may originate from compliance with authority rather than intrinsic conviction.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Helmi Abdillah conceived the study, designed the methodology and undertook the data analysis. Eka Yudhyani assisted in literature review development and data interpretation. Andi Indrawati helped with data collection and validation. Nor Ratna Masrom provided critical revision of the manuscript for important intellectual content, supervision, and final approval. All authors approved the final version of manuscript.

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