

## THE EFFECT OF COMPETENCY IMPROVEMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS ON THE PERFORMANCE OF CIVIL SERVANTS MEDIATED BY WORK MOTIVATION AT THE DIRECTORATE OF INSTRUCTOR AND TRAINING PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

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### Abstract

*This study aims to analyze the effect of competency improvement and training programs on the performance of civil servants (ASN) and the role of work motivation as a mediating variable in the Directorate of Instructor and Training Personnel Development. ASN performance is an important factor in supporting the effectiveness of public organizations, thus requiring human resource management that emphasizes competency strengthening and the implementation of appropriate training programs. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method. The research population consists of all ASN employees, including civil servants and PPPK employees at the Directorate of Instructor and Training Personnel Development, with a census sampling technique. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using Partial Least Squares (PLS)-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The results showed that competency improvement and training programs had a significant effect on ASN employee performance. Improvement also had a significant effect on work motivation, while training programs did not have a significant effect on work motivation. Furthermore, work motivation does not significantly affect the performance of ASN employees. The mediation test results show that work motivation does not mediate the effect of competency improvement and training programs on the performance of ASN employees. These findings indicate that the performance of ASN employees is more directly influenced by competency and training programs as actual work abilities and formal task fulfillment than by work motivation as a psychological incentive.*

**Keywords:** *Competency Improvement, Training Programs, Work Motivation, Civil Servant Performance.*

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh peningkatan kompetensi dan program pelatihan terhadap kinerja pegawai negeri sipil (ASN) dan peran motivasi kerja sebagai variabel mediasi di Direktorat Pengembangan Instruktur dan Personel Pelatihan. Kinerja ASN merupakan faktor penting dalam mendukung efektivitas organisasi publik, sehingga membutuhkan manajemen sumber daya manusia yang menekankan penguatan kompetensi dan pelaksanaan program pelatihan yang tepat. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode survei. Populasi penelitian terdiri dari seluruh pegawai ASN, termasuk pegawai negeri sipil dan pegawai PPPK di Direktorat Pengembangan Instruktur dan Personel Pelatihan, dengan teknik pengambilan sampel sensus. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner dan dianalisis menggunakan Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) berbasis Partial Least Squares (PLS). Hasil penelitian

menunjukkan bahwa peningkatan kompetensi dan program pelatihan berpengaruh signifikan terhadap kinerja pegawai ASN. Peningkatan kompetensi juga berpengaruh signifikan terhadap motivasi kerja, sedangkan program pelatihan tidak berpengaruh signifikan terhadap motivasi kerja. Lebih lanjut, motivasi kerja tidak berpengaruh signifikan terhadap kinerja pegawai ASN. Hasil uji mediasi menunjukkan bahwa motivasi kerja tidak memediasi pengaruh peningkatan kompetensi dan program pelatihan terhadap kinerja pegawai negeri sipil. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa kinerja pegawai negeri sipil lebih dipengaruhi secara langsung oleh kompetensi dan program pelatihan sebagai kemampuan kerja aktual dan pemenuhan tugas formal daripada oleh motivasi kerja sebagai insentif psikologis.

**Kata kunci:** *Peningkatan Kompetensi, Program Pelatihan, Motivasi Kerja, Kinerja Pegawai Negeri Sipil.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background**

Improving the competence of Indonesia's workforce through vocational training and productivity enhancement is the goal and role of the Directorate General of Vocational Training and Productivity, which is an echelon II unit under the Ministry of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia. This directorate is tasked with formulating and implementing policies for the development of instructors and training personnel so that they have the competence, professionalism, and quality standards in line with the needs of the world of work and industry. As the implementing agency under the Directorate General of Vocational Training and Productivity Development, the Directorate of Instructor and Trainer Development oversee the development of trainers and instructors. Its main objective is to achieve excellence in vocational education and training at public and private Vocational Training Centers (BLK) in Indonesia. As civil servants who oversee the creation of professional and competent instructors and training personnel, civil servants in the Directorate of Instructor and Training Personnel Development must also improve their competencies and training programs to increase work motivation so that employee performance improves and organizational goals can be achieved properly. One of the main efforts in achieving these goals is through competency improvement and the implementation of continuous training programs.

Previous studies have shown that competency improvement and training programs have a significant effect on civil servant performance and work motivation. However, empirical findings still show inconsistent results, particularly those related to the mediating role of work motivation. This study aims to fill this research gap by empirically examining the role of work motivation as a mediating variable in the relationship between competency improvement, training programs, and the performance of civil servants in Indonesian government organizations.

### **Research Questions**

Based on the background and objectives of the study, the research questions in this study are as follows:

1. Does competency improvement affect the performance of civil servants?
2. Does training programs affect the performance of civil servants?
3. Does competency improvement affect work motivation?
4. Does training programs affect work motivation?
5. Does work motivation affect the performance of civil servants?
6. Does work motivation mediate the effect of competency improvement on the

performance of civil servants?

7. Does work motivation mediate the effect of training programs on the performance of civil servants?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1. Main Theory**

This study is based on Human Capital Theory, which states that employees are organizational assets whose value can be increased through investment in education, training, and competency development. In the context of this study, competency improvement and training programs are forms of human capital investment that are expected to increase work motivation and have an impact on improving the performance of civil servants. This theory forms the conceptual basis for understanding the relationship between competency improvement, training programs, work motivation, and the performance of civil servants in this study.

### **2. Competency Improvement**

Competency improvement is the ability to perform work well, which includes having the right information, skills, and behavior at work (Wibowo, 2022).

### **3. Training Programs**

Training programs are very important for improving productivity and performance in the workplace by increasing workers' understanding of key material and their attitude towards it (Wahyuningsih, 2019).

### **4. Civil Servant Performance**

How well someone performs their job in fulfilling their duties is a measure of their performance (Stephen P Robbins, 2022).

### **5. Work Motivation**

Enthusiasm for one's work to the point of being ready to collaborate, working efficiently with every effort to achieve job satisfaction is the core of work motivation (Hasibuan, 2023).

## **Previous Studies and Research Gap**

The performance of civil servants (ASN) is one of the important aspects in supporting the achievement of public organization goals. In the context of the Directorate of Instructor and Training Personnel Development, Ministry of Manpower, employee performance greatly determines the effectiveness of the implementation of national training programs and the improvement of the quality of instructors and training personnel throughout Indonesia.

Improving employee competence is one of the strategic factors in improving performance. Competency encompasses a combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to perform tasks effectively and professionally (Spencer & Spencer, 2010). In addition, the implementation of continuous training programs is the main medium for developing the potential and technical and managerial abilities of employees.

However, the success of competency and training improvement is not necessarily directly proportional to an increase in employee performance if it is not supported by

strong work motivation. Work motivation, both intrinsic (internal drives such as the desire to advance and responsibility) and extrinsic (external drives such as salary, promotion, work environment), is the main driver for a person to give their best performance (Hasibuan, 2023).

Although previous studies have shown that competency improvement and training programs affect the performance of civil servants, and place work motivation as an important factor in employee work behavior, there are still research gaps that need to be further explored. First, most studies place work motivation only as an independent variable, while the role of work motivation as a mediating variable in the relationship between competence, training, and ASN performance has not shown consistent results, especially in the context of government bureaucracy. Second, studies that specifically examine this relationship in technical vocational training units, such as the Directorate of Instructor and Training Personnel Development, are still very limited. Third, there are indications that improvements in competency and training are not always followed by increases in work motivation, raising the question of whether motivation truly acts as a mediating mechanism in improving ASN performance.

Therefore, this research is important to fill this gap by empirically testing the effect of competency improvement and training programs on civil servant performance, as well as confirming the role of work motivation as a mediating variable in the context of public organizations, in order to enrich the development of theory and practice in human resource management in the government sector.

### **Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses**

The research hypothesis is formulated as follows:

1. H1: Competency improvement affects the performance of civil servants.
2. H2: Training programs affect the performance of civil servants.
3. H3: Competency improvement affects work motivation.
4. H4: Training programs affect work motivation.
5. H5: Work motivation affects the performance of civil servants.
6. H6: Work motivation mediates the effect of competency improvement on the performance of civil servants.
7. H7: Work motivation mediates the effect of training programs on the performance of civil servants.

### **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study uses a quantitative research model. The research population consists of civil servants at the Directorate of Instructor and Training Personnel Development, Ministry of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia. Data were collected through a Likert scale questionnaire and analyzed using SEM-PLS with SmartPLS software. The analysis included validity and reliability tests, path coefficient evaluation, and mediation analysis using the bootstrapping procedure.

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **1. Research Findings**

At the outer model evaluation stage, all indicators and variables were found to meet the established validity and reliability criteria. This is indicated by factor loading values greater than 0.70, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values above 0.50, Composite Reliability value exceeding 0.70, cross-loading value greater than 0.70, Heterotrait

Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) value below 0.90, and Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.70. Thus, it can be concluded that all measurement instruments in this study are valid and reliable for measuring the constructs of competency improvement, training programs, civil servant performance, and work motivation.

The analysis of the significance of the path coefficients in the PLS-SEM model was conducted using the bootstrapping procedure to test the direction and strength of the relationship between independent variables, mediating variables, and dependent variables. Hypothesis testing in Partial Least Square (PLS) aims to determine whether the relationship between variables in the structural model is statistically significant. This test is based on the t-statistic and p-value. At a significance level of 5%, the alternative hypothesis is accepted if the t-statistic value is  $\geq 1.96$  or the p-value is  $\leq 0.05$ . Conversely, the hypothesis is rejected if the t-statistic value is  $< 1.96$  and the p-value is  $> 0.05$  (Hair et al., 2022).

Based on the results of the inner model evaluation, the following findings were obtained:

- Competency Improvement (X1)  $\rightarrow$  ASN Employee Performance (Y): The test results show that competency improvement has a positive and significant effect on civil servant performance. The coefficient value of 0.342 indicates that the higher the competency of employees (knowledge, skills, and work attitude), the higher the performance of civil servants in terms of quality, timeliness, and quantity. The p-value = 0.010  $<$  0.05 and t-Statistics = 2.589  $>$  1.96 confirm that this relationship is statistically significant, thus H1 is accepted.
- Training Program (X2)  $\rightarrow$  ASN Employee Performance (Y): The results of testing the training program on civil servant performance show that the training program has a positive and significant effect on civil servant performance. The coefficient value of 0.354, p-value = 0.008  $<$  0.05, and t-statistic = 2.667  $>$  1.96 prove the significance of this relationship, thus, H2 is accepted.
- Competency Improvement (X1)  $\rightarrow$  Work Motivation (Z): The results of the study show that competency improvement has a positive and significant effect on work motivation with a path coefficient value of 0.555, indicating a positive direction of influence, a t-statistic of 4.570  $>$  1.96, and a p-value of 0.000  $>$  0.05, so H3 is accepted.
- Training Program (X2)  $\rightarrow$  Work Motivation (Z): Unlike the previous results, the effect of the training program on work motivation was not found to be significant. The coefficient value of 0.239 indicates a positive direction of influence, but the p-value = 0.132  $>$  0.05 and the t-statistic = 1.505  $<$  1.96, so this relationship is not significant or is rejected. Therefore, H4 is rejected.
- Work Motivation (Z)  $\rightarrow$  ASN Employee Performance (Y): The results on the effect of work motivation on civil servant performance show a positive direction (0.262), but are not statistically significant because the p-value = 0.078  $>$  0.05 and the t-statistic = 1.761  $<$  1.96, thus H5 is rejected.
- Competency Improvement (X1)  $\rightarrow$  Work Motivation (Z)  $\square$  ASN Employee Performance (Y): The results of the above study show that the p-value is 0.137  $>$  0.05 and the coefficient value is 0.146, and the t-statistic = 1.488  $<$  1.96, indicating that the relationship is not significant, so H6 is rejected.
- Training Program (X2)  $\rightarrow$  Work Motivation (Z)  $\rightarrow$  ASN Employee Performance (Y): Similarly, the results of the work motivation test show that it cannot mediate the relationship between the training program and ASN employee performance,

with a p- value of  $0.226 > 0.05$  and a t-statistic of  $1.21 < 1.96$ , indicating that the effect is not significant, so H7 is rejected.

## 2. Discussion

This study aims to examine the effect of competency improvement and training programs on the performance of civil servants and the mediating role of work motivation in public organizations. The discussion in this study integrates empirical findings with established theories and previous research results.

- **Competency improvement has a significant effect on civil servant performance.** These findings indicate that improving employees' knowledge, skills, and work attitudes directly enhances their ability to carry out their duties and responsibilities. Thus, competency acts as a functional capacity that supports the effective achievement of civil servant performance. This is in line with the competency theory proposed by Wibowo (2022).
- **Training programs have a significant effect on the performance of ASN employees.** This finding is consistent with Goldstein and Ford's (2002) Training Transfer model, which is a theoretical framework. This approach emphasizes that the effectiveness of training in transferring knowledge to daily work performance is the main determinant of training effectiveness, not just the learning process itself.
- **Competency improvement has a significant effect on work motivation.** This finding is in line with the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) proposed by Deci and Ryan (2000) and Hasibuan (2023), which states that intrinsic motivation arises when employees feel competent, capable, and empowered. Motivation grows from self-confidence and the ability to overcome tasks.
- **Training programs do not have a significant effect on work motivation.** This shows that training programs are not yet perceived as psychological drivers that can increase employees' enthusiasm, excitement, or intrinsic motivation at work, but are rather viewed as an administrative obligation in the context of the civil service bureaucracy.
- **Work motivation does not have a significant effect on the performance of civil servants.** This finding indicates that the performance of civil servants is more influenced by the formal work system, standard operating procedures, and the obligation to meet administrative performance targets than by the level of individual work motivation.
- **Work motivation does not mediate the effect of competency improvement on ASN employee performance.** This shows that competency improvement has a direct effect on employee performance as actual work ability, without going through the mechanism of work motivation as an intermediary variable. This condition reflects that ASN competency functions more as a tool for fulfilling tasks than as a motivational trigger.
- **Work motivation does not mediate the effect of training programs on ASN employee performance.** These results indicate that training programs have not been able to activate work motivation as a mechanism that bridges training and performance. Limited post-training structural support, such as assignments, results-based evaluations, and reward systems, means that training has not had an indirect impact on performance through work motivation.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that:

1. Competency improvement has a significant effect on employee performance.
2. Training programs have a significant effect on employee performance.
3. Competency improvement has a significant effect on work motivation.
4. Training programs do not have a significant effect on work motivation.
5. Work motivation does not have a significant effect on employee performance.
6. Work motivation does not mediate the effect of training programs on employee performance.
7. Work motivation does not mediate the effect of competency improvement on employee performance.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the research findings, several recommendations can be provided for the company and future researchers:

### **For the Company**

1. Prioritize the continuous improvement of ASN employee competencies through the development of knowledge, skills, and work readiness relevant to the needs of the job's duties and responsibilities, as competency improvement has been proven to directly impact employee performance.
2. Training programs need to be designed and evaluated based on a more specific training needs analysis (TNA) to ensure that training materials align with job requirements and can be effectively applied in daily work activities.
3. The Directorate of Instructor and Training Personnel Development is expected to strengthen post-training support, such as providing relevant assignments, monitoring the implementation of training outcomes, and evaluating work outputs so that training outcomes are not limited to knowledge enhancement alone but also impact employee performance.
4. Performance reward and recognition systems need to be more clearly linked to competency improvement and the determination of training outcomes, so that employees have a clear understanding of the functional benefits of their self-development.
5. Although work motivation has not been proven to significantly impact performance, organizations still need to create a conducive, fair, and transparent work environment to maintain the stability of ASN employee performance within the framework of the bureaucratic work system.

### **For Future Research**

1. Future researchers are advised to develop the research model by adding other variables, such as bureaucratic culture, performance-based reward systems, or organizational commitment, which are thought to be more relevant in explaining ASN performance than work motivation.
2. Further research can use a mixed methods approach by adding interviews or qualitative studies to delve deeper into the meaning of respondents' neutral responses and understand ASN perceptions of competence, training, and work motivation.
3. Further research can examine the role of motivation as a moderating variable, rather

than a mediator, to determine whether motivation strengthens or weakens the relationship between competence, training, and performance in the context of public organizations.

4. It is recommended to revalidate and adjust the work motivation instrument to better contextualize it to the characteristics of ASN and the bureaucratic work environment, thereby more accurately capturing employee motivational states.

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