

## Improving Employee Performance Based on Competency and Work Environment for Employees in Subdistricts throughout Jember Regency



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**ABSTRACT:** The importance of human resources is in line with the increasing demands of organizations. More intensive and optimal performance is needed to increase work results and organizational profits. This research was motivated by the non-achievement of employee performance targets in sub-districts in Jember Regency. The research carried out was aimed at analyzing and finding out whether the competencies possessed by employees and also the work environment in which employees work can have a positive impact on employee performance in sub-districts in Jember Regency. The total sample for this research was 157 using a sampling technique using a census technique or the entire population was used as a sample. Descriptive statistical analysis to find out about respondents. Validity tests and reliability tests are also carried out so that the questionnaire used is valid and reliable. There is a need for hypothesis testing to answer the hypotheses that have been developed. The results of data analysis show that the competencies possessed by employees can improve performance. The work environment provided by the Subdistrict Office in Jember Regency turns out to be very comfortable and has been proven to improve employee performance.

**KEYWORDS:** competency; work environment; employee performance; ward.

### INTRODUCTION

Human resource functions start from administrative functions, management functions and strategic functions. In line with the increasing demands of the organization, the greater responsibility that must be assumed by the human resources department in managing and developing employees because employees must be able to carry out their duties and responsibilities in accordance with the demands of the organization (Mahmudah et al., 2021). Organizational goals can be achieved by employee behavior in the workplace or can be said by performance as the application of skills, abilities and knowledge as a form of contribution to the organization (Wiguna et al., 2022).

The sub-district is a regional apparatus organization domiciled in the sub-district area, it is an important element which as the spearhead that deals directly with the community, it is appropriate for every sub-district apparatus to have improved performance (Panjaitan, 2019). Thus, more intensive and optimal performance is needed to increase work results and organizational profits.

Performance is a description of the level of achievement of implementing an activity program or policy in realizing an organization's goals, objectives, vision and mission as outlined through an organization's strategic planning (Sudarmanto et al., 2022). According to (Mangkunegara, 2019), performance is the result of work in terms of quality and quantity achieved by an employee in carrying out his duties in accordance with the responsibilities given to him. According to (Grote, 2021), performance is an employee's ability to achieve the desired results in carrying out their duties, by paying attention to aspects of quality, productivity, innovation, and compliance with organizational rules and values. Meanwhile, State Civil Apparatus Performance is the ability of a State Civil Apparatus to achieve the desired results in carrying out their duties, by paying attention to aspects of quality, productivity, innovation, and compliance with organizational rules and values (Yudistira, 2020). Higher performance implies an increase in efficiency, effectiveness, or higher quality of completing a series of tasks assigned to an employee in an organization or company (Bukhari & Pasaribu, 2019). In order for performance to increase, many factors influence it, including employee competency and the environment in which employees work.

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The factor that is thought to be able to improve performance is employee competence. (Hendrawan & Sanosra, 2023) states that competence is the overall characteristics possessed by an individual, which includes knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, which can influence employee performance and contribution to achieving organizational goals. (I. Hapsari et al., 2022) stated that competence is the ability possessed by a person to carry out a task or job which is linked by several aspects such as skills, knowledge and behavior to be able to complete the tasks set by the agency. (Wibowo, 2019) states that competence is the ability to carry out work or tasks that are based on skills and knowledge and supported by the work attitudes required by the job. (President of the Republic of Indonesia, 2003) article 1 paragraph 10 states that competency is the work ability of each individual which includes aspects of knowledge, skills and work attitudes that are in accordance with established standards.

Based on the experts' understanding regarding the importance of competency in improving performance, in this research, researchers refer to the results of similar previous research. Research conducted by (Bukhari & Pasaribu, 2019); (Faizal et al., 2019); (Fathiah et al., 2019); (Wagiyono et al., 2020); (Kurniawan et al., 2020); (Ditta Amelia et al., 2020); (Idayati et al., 2020); (Astuti & Kurnia, 2020); (Mahmudah et al., 2021); (Wardana & Prasetyo, 2022); (Dayrobi & Raharjo, 2020); (Nyoto et al., 2020), (Yamin & Ishak, 2018), (Amdani et al., 2019), (Bahri et al., 2018), (Widyanto & Mersa, 2018); (Rahmadani et al., 2020); (Rusmayanti et al., 2022); (Puspitasari et al., 2024); (Hendrawan & Sanosra, 2023); (Hapsari et al., 2022); (Qomariah et al., 2023); (Setiawan et al., 2022) shows that competence influences performance. Meanwhile research (Utomo et al., 2019); (Hidayat, 2021) and (Waspanji et al., 2021) (Qomari & Meiske Claudia, 2023) show that competence has no effect on performance.

Performance improvement cannot be separated from work environment factors. The work environment is a condition around the workplace that can affect an employee's performance. A comfortable work environment can support employee performance to increase, while a work environment that is not conducive means employee performance will decrease because they are uncomfortable when working (Nirvandhi et al., 2023). According to (Sedarmayanti, 2019), the work environment is the entire material encountered, the surrounding environment where a person works, his work methods, and his work arrangements as an individual or as a group. According to (Murtiningsih et al., 2023), the work environment is the condition or atmosphere around the employee, during the time the employee carries out activities where these activities have an influence on the employee when carrying out work activities in order to carry out company operations. Meanwhile (Bukhari & Pasaribu, 2019) states that the work environment is components that refer to institutions or forces that interact directly or indirectly according to certain patterns regarding the organization or company which cannot be separated from the environment in which the organization or company is located.

Based on the experts' understanding regarding the importance of the work environment in improving performance, in this research, researchers refer to the results of similar previous research. Research conducted by (Utomo et al., 2019); (Adha et al., 2019); (Fathiah et al., 2019); (Wagiyono et al., 2020); (Ditta Amelia et al., 2020); (Idayati et al., 2020); (Nina Andriyani et al., 2020); (Mahmudah et al., 2021); (Nursaid et al., 2021); (Ayuningtias et al., 2021); (Setiawan et al., 2022); (Wahyudi et al., 2022); (Qomariah et al., 2020); (Saputra et al., 2024); (Priyono et al., 2018); (Sukowidodo et al., 2022); (Adi et al., 2022); (Nursaid et al., 2020); (Qomariah et al., 2021); (Qomariah & Utamy, 2023); (Utomo et al., 2019); (Triastuti, 2018); (Ilmi et al., 2023); (Ilmi et al., 2023); (Lumentut & Dotulong, 2015); (Marwanto & Nugroho, 2014); (Darmadi, 2020); (Yantika et al., 2018); shows that the work environment influences performance. Meanwhile research (Astuti & Kurnia, 2020); (Hermanto et al., 2023); (Prihatini et al., 2024) shows that the work environment has no effect on performance. So, from the existing research results, researchers added work environment variables to improve performance. The performance in this research is the result of an assessment of the performance of sub-district employees in Jember Regency. Based on the results of the 2023 Jember District employee performance assessment, performance assessments are carried out periodically every quarter via the J-SILAKON SKP ASN application on the link <https://jasa-bkd.jember.go.id/>, for the period from Quarter I to Quarter III. Identification of the performance analysis of employees in sub-districts in Jember Regency shows that the performance of employees in sub-districts in Jember Regency shows that there has been no increase in performance or has not reached the target and there are even employees who have not carried out performance assessments. This shows that in carrying out the main tasks and functions carried out by sub-districts, in this case the employees of sub-districts in Jember Regency are still not optimal. Based on the problems that occur at the DI Jember Regency Subdistrict Office and also the research results which still provide inconsistent results, this research needs to be carried out again regarding competency and the work environment which is linked to employee performance.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Employee Performance**

According to (Campbell, 1991) performance theory states that performance is behavior related to the achievement of expected, specified, or formal role requirements on the part of an individual or organization. Performance is a description of the level of

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achievement of implementing an activity program or policy in realizing an organization's goals, objectives, vision and mission as outlined through an organization's strategic planning (Sudarmanto et al., 2022). According to (Mangkunegara, 2019) defines employee performance as the quality and quantity of work results achieved by an employee in carrying out his duties in accordance with the responsibilities given to him.

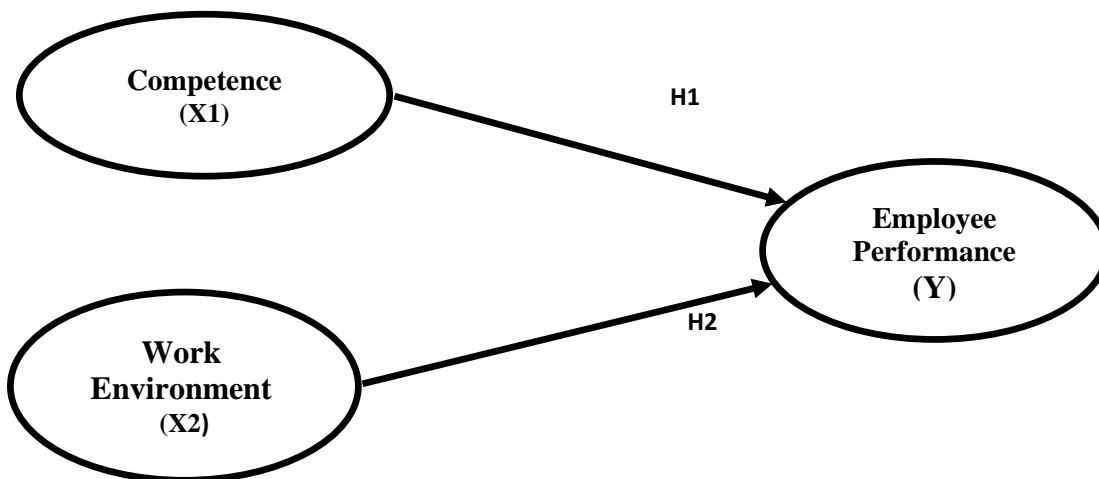
## Competence

According to (Wardana & Prasetyo, 2022), competence is part of a person's personality and characteristics that influences the way of thinking, the way of acting, based on knowledge, skills and attitudes that can produce the ability to carry out a work task. According to (Wibowo, 2019) competency is the ability to carry out work or tasks that are based on skills and knowledge and supported by the work attitudes required by the job. According to (Hendrawan & Sanosra, 2023), competency is the overall characteristics possessed by an individual, which includes knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, which can influence employee performance and contribution to achieving organizational goals.

## Work Environment

According to (Lailussabil, 2022) work environment theory suggests that a person's behavior is influenced by the surrounding environment (including interactions with other people) and what happens within him, such as imagination and knowledge. According to (Sedarmayanti, 2019), the work environment is the entire material encountered, the surrounding environment where a person works, his work methods, and his work arrangements as an individual or as a group. According to (Nirvandhi et al., 2023), the work environment is a condition around the workplace that can influence an employee's performance.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



## METHODS

This research uses quantitative methods. Quantitative methods are scientific methods because they fulfill scientific principles, namely concrete, empirical, objective, measurable, rational and systematic (Sugiyono, 2019). Research variables are anything in any form that is determined by the author to be studied so that information about it is obtained, then conclusions are drawn (Sugiyono, 2019). The variables in this research are categorized into two types of variables, including exogenous variables consisting of competence and work environment, then endogenous variables, namely employee performance. The population in this study was all sub-district employees in Jember Regency, totaling 157 employees. The sample is part of the number and characteristics of the population (Sugiyono, 2019). The sampling technique used in this research is census sampling or total sampling where all members of the population are sampled. The data analysis carried out was descriptive analysis of respondents, analysis of measuring instrument tests (validity and reliability tests), and direct influence hypothesis testing.

## RESULTS

### Validity test

This validity test shows the suitability of each indicator with the theories used to define a construct (Hartono, 2008). The validation test criteria use factor loadings criteria with a value of more than 0.70. The results of the construct validity test are presented in Table 1 below.

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**Table 2. Validity Test of Variable Indicators**

Variable Indicator	Validity Test Value	P-value
X1.1	0.779	<0,001
X1.2	0.797	<0,001
X1.3	0.785	<0,001
X1.4	0.753	<0,001
X1.5	0.795	<0,001
X1.6	0.709	<0,001
X1.7	0.773	<0,001
X2.1	0.730	<0,001
X2.2	0.825	<0,001
X2.3	0.701	<0,001
X2.4	0.744	<0,001
X2.5	0.747	<0,001
Y1	0.803	<0,001
Y2	0.827	<0,001
Y3	0.862	<0,001
Y4	0.844	<0,001

The results of statistical calculations in Table 1 show that each value of the cross-loadings factor has reached a value above 0.7 with a p value below 0.05. It can be concluded that all measuring indicators for each variable have met the validity criteria.

### Reliability Test Results

Reliability testing is carried out with the aim of ensuring that the research instruments used can present concept measurements consistently without any bias. The results of data processing related to construct reliability tests are presented in Table 2 below.

**Table 4. Reliability Test**

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Results
Competence (X1)	0,839	Reliable
Work Environment (X2)	0,754	Reliable
Employee Performance (Y)	0,854	Reliable

The basis used in the reliability test is a Cronbach's alpha coefficient value above 0.7. The results in Table 2 show that the questionnaire instrument in this study has met the requirements for the reliability test.

### Calculation of Direct Influence Path Coefficients

This section describes each path in the model using path analysis. Each path tested shows the direct influence of competence (X1) and work environment (X2) on employee performance (Y) in sub-districts in Jember Regency. The path coefficient values can be seen in Table 3.

**Table 3. Direct Influence Path Coefficient Values**

No	Hypothesis	Path Coefficients	P values	Results
1.	Competence → Employee Performance	0,315	0,001	Significant
2.	Work Environment → Employee Performance	0,167	0,016	Significant

## DISCUSSION

### The Influence of Competency on Employee Performance

Based on the first hypothesis, the influence of competence on performance obtained a coefficient value of 0.315 with a p-value of 0.001. Because the p-value is smaller than  $\alpha$  ( $0.001 < 0.05$ ),  $H_0$  is rejected so that competency has a significant effect on the performance of sub-district employees in Jember Regency. It is proven true or  $H_1$  is accepted. This could be due to the fact that aspects related to employee competency have been able to improve employee performance. According to (Setiawan et al., 2023), the relationship between employee competency and performance and states that employee competency has an effect on performance, it can be said that employee competency can improve employee performance. (Ditta Amelia et al., 2020) also

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supports their research study which states that competence is one of the factors that influence performance. Competency is a basic characteristic that can be linked to increased individual or team performance. The results of this research have significant similarities to previous research conducted by (Bukhari & Pasaribu, 2019); (Faizal et al., 2019); (Fathiah et al., 2019); (Wagiyono et al., 2020); (Kurniawan et al., 2020); (Ditta Amelia et al., 2020); (Idayati et al., 2020); (Astuti & Kurnia, 2020); (Mahmudah et al., 2021); (Nursaid et al., 2021), (Manik & Syafrina, 2018); (Adam & Kamase, 2019); (Mustikawati & Qomariah, 2020); (Pinca, 2015); (Mukhtar, 2018); (Wongso et al., 2020); (Basalamah, 2017); (Indiyaningsih et al., 2020); (Rande, 2016); (Hasibuan & Afrizal, 2019); (Kotamena et al., 2020), (Marhayani et al., 2019), (Basriani, 2016), (Renyut et al., 2017); (Abusama et al., 2017); (Raffie et al., 2018); (Muhammad Arifin, 2015); (Hasibuan & Afrizal, 2019) states that competence influences employee performance. Meanwhile, research conducted by (Chandra et al., 2020); (Utomo et al., 2019) is not in line with this research because competency does not influence employee performance.

### The Influence of the Work Environment on Employee Performance

Based on the second hypothesis, which states that the work environment influences employee performance, a coefficient value of 0.167 is obtained with a p-value of 0.016. Because the p-value is smaller than  $\alpha$  ( $0.016 < 0.05$ ),  $H_0$  is rejected so that the work environment has a significant effect on the performance of employees in sub-districts in Jember Regency. This is proven to be true or  $H_2$  is accepted. This could be due to the fact that aspects related to the work environment have been able to improve employee performance. These aspects of the work environment include lighting, or light, air circulation, noise, unpleasant odors and security. Adha et al. (Adha et al., 2019) explains the relationship between the work environment and employee performance and states that the work environment has a direct influence on employees in completing work. (Nirvandhi et al., 2023) also supports their research study which states that the work environment is a condition around the workplace that can influence an employee's performance. A comfortable work environment can support employee performance to increase, while a work environment that is not conducive means employee performance will decrease because they are uncomfortable while working. (Utamy et al., 2022) stated that the benefit of the work environment is the ability to create passion for work, so that work productivity increases. The results of this research have significant similarities to previous research conducted by (Utomo et al., 2019); (Adha et al., 2019); (Fathiah et al., 2019); (Wagiyono et al., 2020); (Ditta Amelia et al., 2020); (Idayati et al., 2020); (Nina Andriyani et al., 2020); (Mahmudah et al., 2021); (Nursaid et al., 2021); (Wardana & Prasetyo, 2022) states that the work environment influences employee performance

### CONCLUSIONS, SUGGESTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Based on the research results, the conclusion of this research is that the test results prove that competency has a positive and significant effect on the performance of employees of sub-districts in Jember Regency. The test results prove that the work environment has a positive and significant effect on the performance of sub-district employees in Jember Regency. As a suggestion to sub-districts in the Jember Regency area, it is to always improve the competence of employees in order to improve their performance. The work environment where employees work is made as comfortable as possible so that employees work comfortably so that they can improve performance. The practical implication of this research is that it has an impact on the development of human resource management theory related to increased performance caused by competence and a comfortable work environment.

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