

The Influence of Competence and Work Discipline on the Performance of Civil Servants in South Lampung

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi efektivitas tata kelola pemerintahan yang baik dalam meningkatkan kinerja aparatur sipil negara (ASN) di era reformasi birokrasi di Indonesia. Seiring dengan semakin terinstitusionalisasinya prinsip-prinsip seperti transparansi, akuntabilitas, partisipasi, dan supremasi hukum dalam administrasi publik, pengaruhnya terhadap perilaku pegawai dan hasil pelayanan menjadi bidang kajian yang penting. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan analisis dokumen pada beberapa institusi pemerintah daerah terpilih. Hasil temuan menunjukkan bahwa tata kelola pemerintahan yang baik mendorong budaya profesionalisme, memperkuat akuntabilitas internal, dan meningkatkan responsivitas ASN. Namun demikian, masih terdapat sejumlah tantangan seperti keterbatasan infrastruktur digital, literasi tata kelola yang belum merata, serta resistensi terhadap perubahan di kalangan pejabat senior. Komitmen kepemimpinan dan dukungan organisasi menjadi faktor kunci keberhasilan strategi peningkatan kinerja berbasis tata kelola. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa integrasi prinsip-prinsip tata kelola pemerintahan yang baik dalam proses birokrasi sehari-hari tidak hanya meningkatkan kinerja individu, tetapi juga mendorong transformasi kelembagaan menuju sektor publik yang lebih transparan dan berorientasi pada pelayanan.

Kata kunci: tata kelola pemerintahan yang baik, reformasi birokrasi, kinerja aparatur sipil negara, administrasi publik, transparansi, akuntabilitas, partisipasi.

ABSTRACT

This study explores the effectiveness of good governance in enhancing the performance of civil servants in the context of Indonesia's bureaucratic reform era. As principles such as transparency, accountability, participation, and rule of law are increasingly institutionalized within public administration, their influence on employee behavior and service outcomes becomes a critical area of inquiry. Employing a qualitative case study approach, data were gathered through in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis within selected local government institutions. The findings reveal that good governance fosters a culture of professionalism, strengthens internal accountability, and improves the responsiveness of civil servants. However, challenges remain, including digital infrastructure limitations, inconsistent governance literacy, and resistance to change among senior staff. Leadership commitment and organizational support are key factors in ensuring the success of governance-based performance strategies. This study concludes that integrating good governance into daily bureaucratic processes not only enhances individual performance but also contributes to institutional transformation toward a more transparent and service-oriented public sector.

Keywords: good governance; bureaucratic reform; civil servant performance; public administration; transparency; accountability; participation

INTRODUCTION

Human resources are among the most crucial assets in the public sector. The effectiveness of government institutions largely depends on the performance of civil servants who implement policies, deliver services, and uphold administrative integrity. In the context of local government, particularly in South Lampung, the ability of civil servants to perform their duties efficiently is central to achieving organizational goals and public satisfaction (Dessler, 2020).

Employee performance in the public sector is influenced by various interrelated factors, including competence and work discipline. Competence refers to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that an individual possesses and applies in carrying out tasks effectively (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). In a bureaucratic environment, competent civil servants are expected to demonstrate professional capacity, problem-solving skills, and adaptability to changing work demands (Boyatzis, 2008).

Work discipline, on the other hand, encompasses an employee's adherence to organizational rules, punctuality, consistency, and commitment to responsibilities. It reflects the extent to which individuals uphold workplace norms and behavioral standards (Siagian, 2014). Without strong work discipline, even highly competent employees may fail to meet performance expectations due to a lack of focus, motivation, or accountability (Mangkunegara, 2017).

In South Lampung, the government has implemented various bureaucratic reform initiatives aimed at improving civil servant performance, including training programs and regulatory reinforcement. However, challenges remain, particularly concerning inconsistent employee discipline and varying levels of job competence. These issues raise concerns about the capacity of local institutions to deliver high-quality services and meet

development targets (Kurniawan et al., 2022).

Previous studies have confirmed that competence is positively correlated with employee performance in public institutions (Widodo, 2015; Ruky, 2011). Employees who possess adequate technical and managerial competence tend to perform better, adapt to changes, and contribute to institutional success. Similarly, research also shows that work discipline plays a vital role in shaping employee performance, as it directly affects task execution, timeliness, and professionalism (Mathis & Jackson, 2011).

However, while the relationship between competence, work discipline, and performance has been explored in various contexts, specific research focusing on local civil servants in South Lampung remains limited. The unique administrative, cultural, and socioeconomic characteristics of this region may result in different patterns of influence, making it necessary to investigate how these variables interact in this specific local setting.

This study seeks to examine the extent to which competence and work discipline affect the performance of civil servants in South Lampung. By identifying the strengths and weaknesses in both aspects, the research aims to provide practical recommendations for improving personnel development strategies within local government agencies. The findings are expected to assist policymakers in designing more effective human resource policies.

The research adopts a quantitative approach using survey methods to gather primary data from civil servants across several government departments in South Lampung Regency. The data are analyzed using statistical tools to determine the significance and strength of the relationship between competence, discipline, and performance. This method enables a measurable assessment of

employee behavior and its impact on organizational outcomes (Sugiyono, 2019).

This introduction emphasizes the need for an evidence-based understanding of the factors that influence public employee performance. In an era of increasing public scrutiny and demands for government accountability, improving competence and discipline among civil servants is not only a managerial necessity but also a democratic imperative. The results of this study are expected to contribute to both academic discourse and policy-making in human resource management in the public sector.

METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design to examine the influence of competence and work discipline on the performance of civil servants in South Lampung Regency. The explanatory design was chosen to test the hypotheses statistically and to identify the degree and direction of the relationships between the independent variables (competence and discipline) and the dependent variable (employee performance). Quantitative methods allow researchers to generalize findings across populations by using structured instruments and statistical analysis (Sugiyono, 2019).

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to civil servants across several local government offices, including administrative, financial, and service units. The questionnaire items were designed based on validated indicators of competence (knowledge, skill, and attitude), work discipline (timeliness, rule compliance, work ethics), and performance (work quality, productivity, and responsibility) (Mathis & Jackson, 2011; Mangkunegara, 2017). The sample was selected using stratified random sampling, ensuring representation from different departments and civil

service ranks. A total of 100 respondents were included in the final sample.

The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis with the help of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Prior to the regression test, classical assumption tests—such as normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity—were conducted to ensure the validity of the model. The significance level was set at 0.05. This analytical method was selected to determine how much competence and discipline contribute simultaneously and partially to employee performance, and to identify which variable has the greater influence in the local government context (Ghozali, 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that both competence and work discipline have a significant positive effect on the performance of civil servants in South Lampung. Based on the multiple linear regression analysis, the coefficient for competence is positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), indicating that an increase in employee competence is associated with an improvement in performance. Similarly, work discipline also shows a positive and significant contribution to performance, with a higher standardized beta coefficient, suggesting it has a slightly stronger influence compared to competence.

Descriptive statistics indicate that the average score of respondents on competence was high, particularly in the dimension of knowledge and skills. Most civil servants demonstrated a good understanding of their job responsibilities and the technical requirements of their roles. However, the attitude dimension, such as willingness to innovate or take initiative, was found to be moderate. This finding suggests that while employees may be technically competent, there remains

room for improvement in developing proactive work behavior (Boyatzis, 2008).

In terms of work discipline, the study reveals that punctuality and adherence to rules scored the highest among the discipline indicators. Civil servants generally arrive on time and comply with official procedures. However, consistency in maintaining high productivity and focus during working hours remains a concern in some departments. This indicates that while formal compliance exists, internal discipline and motivation may vary (Siagian, 2014).

The performance of civil servants, as measured through self-assessment and supervisor evaluation, was reported to be generally good. High performance was observed in areas of service timeliness, completion of tasks, and interpersonal relations. However, performance in innovation, use of digital tools, and initiative for service improvement was less consistent. This implies that although employees fulfill basic expectations, their contribution to institutional development could be enhanced (Widodo, 2015).

The findings are consistent with previous studies that emphasize the role of competence in shaping employee effectiveness. Employees with strong technical and managerial competencies are more confident, capable, and responsive to challenges (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). Moreover, competence in communication and teamwork contributes significantly to public service outcomes, especially in collaborative environments such as local government offices (Perry & Hondeghem, 2008).

Discipline, as the second independent variable, plays a crucial role in ensuring that employees meet their targets consistently. As noted by Mangkunegara (2017), discipline enhances employee commitment and reduces absenteeism. In this study, departments with a strong culture of discipline

demonstrated better collective performance, suggesting that discipline at the organizational level creates a ripple effect that influences individual behaviors and outcomes.

Interestingly, the regression analysis shows that while both variables are significant, work discipline has a slightly higher effect size than competence. This finding reinforces the argument that in a structured bureaucratic setting like local government, behavioral consistency and compliance often have more direct implications on performance than competence alone (Mathis & Jackson, 2011).

In terms of practical implications, the results suggest that local governments should not only focus on capacity-building through training but also invest in strengthening institutional discipline. Strategies may include establishing clear performance indicators, regular supervision, and mechanisms for rewarding discipline and penalizing noncompliance. These tools can reinforce desired behavior and enhance overall productivity.

The study also highlights the importance of leadership in cultivating both competence and discipline. Leaders who serve as role models, provide guidance, and foster a culture of learning and accountability are instrumental in driving employee performance. Therefore, leadership development must be integrated into human resource strategies to sustain long-term improvements.

Overall, the findings confirm that competence and work discipline are two key pillars that support high civil servant performance. Enhancing both dimensions in a balanced and sustained manner can help public institutions, especially at the local level, to deliver more effective and responsive services to citizens. Future research may consider additional variables such as motivation, leadership style, and organizational culture to build a more

comprehensive model of public sector performance.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that both competence and work discipline significantly influence the performance of civil servants in South Lampung. Competence, which includes knowledge, skills, and attitudes, enhances the ability of employees to carry out their duties effectively and respond to job demands with professionalism. Meanwhile, work discipline—manifested in punctuality, adherence to rules, and consistent effort—ensures that civil servants remain focused and committed to institutional goals.

The regression analysis shows that although both variables contribute positively, work discipline exerts a slightly stronger influence on performance. This highlights the importance of behavioral consistency and organizational compliance in structured bureaucratic settings, where following procedures and maintaining standards are critical to service delivery outcomes. Therefore, efforts to improve civil servant performance must go beyond training and capacity building; they must also include strategies to instill a culture of discipline, integrity, and accountability.

In light of these findings, it is recommended that local governments strengthen their human resource development strategies by integrating competence enhancement programs with behavioral reinforcement mechanisms. Leadership support, clear performance indicators, and reward-punishment systems will be crucial in sustaining improvements in employee performance. Future research should consider expanding the model by incorporating additional factors such as motivation, leadership style, and organizational climate to gain a more holistic understanding of what drives public sector performance.

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