

Analysis of the Influence of Competency and Motivation on Employee Performance in Government Agencies in Medan City

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Histori Artikel:

Dikirim 21 Oktober 2025; Diterima dalam bentuk revisi 20 November 2025; Diterima 15 Januari 2026; Diterbitkan 1 Februari 2026. Semua hak dilindungi oleh Lembaga Otonom Lembaga Informasi dan Riset Indonesia (KITA INFO dan RISET) – Lembaga KITA.

Suggested citation:

Alfahmi, M., Albahi, M., & Alfikri, M. (2026). Analysis of the Influence of Competency and Motivation on Employee Performance in Government Agencies in Medan City. *JEMSI (Jurnal Ekonomi, Manajemen, Dan Akuntansi)*, 12(1), 376-385. <https://doi.org/10.35870/jemsi.v12i1.5748>.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh kompetensi dan motivasi terhadap kinerja pegawai pada instansi pemerintah di Kota Medan. Jenis penelitian yang digunakan adalah kuantitatif dengan metode survei. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner yang disebarkan kepada 226 pegawai dari lima instansi pemerintah di Kota Medan. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan regresi linier berganda dengan bantuan program SPSS versi 26. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kompetensi berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kinerja pegawai, begitu pula motivasi memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan. Secara simultan, kompetensi dan motivasi memberikan kontribusi sebesar 62,2% terhadap kinerja pegawai, sementara sisanya dipengaruhi oleh faktor lain seperti lingkungan kerja dan kepemimpinan. Temuan ini memperkuat teori bahwa kinerja optimal dicapai melalui keseimbangan antara kemampuan teknis dan dorongan motivasi kerja. Oleh karena itu, Pemerintah Kota Medan disarankan untuk memperkuat program pengembangan kompetensi serta menciptakan sistem motivasi yang efektif guna meningkatkan kinerja aparatur dan kualitas pelayanan publik.

Kata Kunci: Kompetensi; Motivasi; Kinerja Pegawai; Instansi Pemerintah; Kota Medan.

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of competence and motivation on employee performance in government agencies in Medan City. The type of research used is quantitative with a survey method. The data was collected through a questionnaire distributed to 226 employees from five government agencies in Medan City. Data analysis was carried out using multiple linear regression with the help of the SPSS version 26 program. The results of the study show that competence has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, as well as motivation has a positive and significant influence. Simultaneously, competence and motivation contribute 62.2% to employee performance, while the rest are influenced by other factors such as work environment and leadership. These findings reinforce the theory that optimal performance is achieved through a balance between technical ability and motivation for work. Therefore, the Medan City Government is advised to strengthen competency development programs and create an effective motivation system to improve the performance of apparatus and the quality of public services.

Keyword: Competence; Motivation; Employee Performance; Government Agencies; Medan City.

1. Introduction

The dynamics of regional autonomy, coupled with escalating demands for public service excellence, position the effectiveness of government apparatus as a central pillar of successful governance. In metropolitan centers such as Medan, civil servants are required to transcend routine administrative functions to realize a bureaucracy that is both accelerative and responsive. This success hinges on the intellectual capacity and professional drive of individuals in executing organizational mandates. Individual capacity—encompassing knowledge, technical proficiency, and professional conduct is widely recognized as a fundamental determinant of public organization productivity. Scholarly evidence suggests that relevant qualifications enable personnel to execute assignments with superior quality standards (Rosmaini & Tanjung, 2019). Beyond technical proficiency, psychological stimulation in the form of motivation—both intrinsic and extrinsic—plays a vital role in mobilizing employee potential. Within the Medan City Government, data from the Regional Financial and Asset Management Agency (BPKAD) indicates a significant correlation between work morale and performance outcomes (Bancin & Nurwani, 2023). Nevertheless, empirical realities continue to reveal anomalies that challenge performance stability. Findings at the Medan Baru Sub-district Office, for instance, highlight that while quality and quantity indicators are rated favorably, the dimension of employee independence remains suboptimal, with disagreement levels reaching 47.6% (Cahya & Saraan, 2024). Such phenomena suggest an obstruction in the internalization of professional values that cannot be rectified through standard administrative procedures alone.

Theoretically, apparatus competence involves task mastery, problem-solving agility, and adaptability to regulatory frameworks and digital technologies. In local government ecosystems, competent individuals demonstrate greater speed in adjusting to digital service systems and rigorous accountability demands. Conversely, motivation triggered by reward schemes, organizational culture, and leadership patterns acts as a catalyst for employees to exert maximum effort. While studies regarding the nexus between psychological aspects and work performance are documented across Indonesia such as in Maybrat Regency (Tenau, 2024) specific research in Medan that integrates competence and motivation as primary predictors remains scarce. Most localized studies have historically focused on isolated variables or combinations involving work discipline; for example, research at the Medan Area Sub-district Office reported an adjusted R^2 of 0.893 when focusing on the work environment (Sinaga, 2023). This empirical gap necessitates a re-evaluation of how the synergy between technical capacity and professional drive collectively influences organizational output. From a practical standpoint, accurately identifying the impact of these variables provides a foundation for more precise human resource policies, ranging from mentoring programs to the restructuring of incentive systems. Amidst the requirements of Bureaucracy 4.0, performance is no longer measured by physical attendance, but rather through innovation and public satisfaction regarding service delivery. Strengthening capacity and facilitating professional drive is predicted to create a domino effect on transparency and institutional reputation. Consequently, this study seeks to analyze the partial and simultaneous influence of competence and motivation on apparatus performance in Medan. The resulting analysis is expected to offer strategic policy propositions for city-level human resource management, ensuring that personnel development programs yield a tangible impact on accelerated regional development.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Competence

Competence represents a synthesis of knowledge, technical skills, and behavioral attributes utilized to execute professional responsibilities effectively (Spencer & Spencer, 2008). Within the framework of government apparatus, such capacity is a prerequisite for achieving standardized public service quality. Pursuant to Government Regulation Number 11 of 2017 regarding Civil Servant Management, this

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variable is categorized into three primary dimensions: technical, managerial, and socio-cultural competencies. Higher levels of competence enhance an individual's ability to interpret and fulfill assignments in alignment with organizational benchmarks (Wibowo, 2017). Empirical evidence from Surabaya indicates that competence exerts a substantial impact on administrative performance, accounting for a determination value of 48.5% (Adina, 2025). Furthermore, aligning individual capabilities with specific position requirements facilitates operational efficiency, particularly in frontline service agencies (Noor *et al.*, 2025). In Medan, assessments within the Regional Financial and Asset Management Agency (BPKAD) reveal that professional proficiency determines the accuracy and punctuality of financial reporting (Permatasari *et al.*, 2023). Consequently, competence serves as the cornerstone for the merit-based systems currently being integrated by the Medan City Government.

2.2 Work Motivation

Motivation is conceptualized as the internal or external impetus that directs behavior toward the attainment of specific organizational objectives (Judge & Robbins, 2013). Classical frameworks, such as the Hierarchy of Needs, suggest that optimal output is reached when foundational requirements are satisfied, progressing toward self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). Alternatively, the Two-Factor Theory differentiates between intrinsic motivators such as achievement and responsibility and hygiene factors, including compensation and the physical work environment (Alshmemri *et al.*, 2017). In public institutions, the drive to excel is frequently modulated by career transparency and the quality of leadership. Research conducted within the North Sumatra Provincial Government confirmed that motivation significantly influences performance, yielding a t-count of 4.27, exceeding the t-table threshold of 1.97 (Widodo & Sari, 2024). Similarly, data from the Medan Tuntungan Sub-district Office attributed 42.6% of performance improvements to motivational factors (Hasibuan, 2016). Robust motivation fosters accountability and discipline, enabling personnel to remain resilient amidst the complexities of bureaucratic shifts and technological transitions.

2.3 Employee Performance

Performance constitutes the qualitative and quantitative outcomes achieved by personnel in accordance with their designated mandates (Anwar Prabu, 2017). Government Regulation Number 30 of 2019 stipulates that performance metrics for civil servants must prioritize service orientation, integrity, commitment, and collaborative synergy. Scholarly perspectives suggest that performance is a product of three interacting dimensions: ability, motivation, and opportunity (Afshari *et al.*, 2020). This implies that technically proficient and highly driven individuals can only reach peak productivity when the organization provides the necessary structural support. Investigations within the Medan City Government found that the convergence of motivation and competence explains 71.6% of the variance in apparatus performance (Simamora, 2023). Parallel findings in the Department of Transportation underscore the critical role these variables play in maintaining productivity and institutional discipline (Yuningsih, 2019). Thus, performance is not a static attribute but a dynamic result of personal capacity and psychological engagement.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Types and Approaches to Research

This study uses a quantitative approach with a type of causal associative research. The quantitative approach is used because this study aims to test the influence between variables statistically, namely the influence of competence (X_1) and motivation (X_2) on employee performance (Y). Causal associative research was chosen because it wanted to find out the cause-and-effect relationship between measurable variables in the context of government agencies in Medan City. According to (Sugiyono, 2017), quantitative research is used to test hypotheses based on existing theories, with research instruments in the form of questionnaires distributed to respondents.

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3.2 Research Location and Time

This research was carried out in several government agencies in Medan City, including:

- 1) Regional Financial and Asset Management Agency (BPKAD)
- 2) Department of Transportation
- 3) Population and Civil Registration Office
- 4) Medan Area and Medan Baru District Offices

The selection of locations is carried out purposively, with the consideration that these agencies have organizational structures and public service functions that are representative of the performance of the state civil apparatus (ASN). The research period was carried out for four months, from July to October 2025.

3.3 Population and Research Sample

The population in this study is all ASN and non-ASN employees who work in government agencies in Medan City which is the location of the research, with a total population of around 510 employees. The number of samples was determined using the Slovin formula with a margin of error of 5%, so that the sample size was obtained as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} = \frac{510}{1+510(0.05)^2} = 225,5 \approx 226 \text{ responden}$$

The sampling technique used is proportional random sampling, so that each agency gets a proportional proportion of respondents that is balanced with its total employees.

3.4 Data Types and Sources

The data used in this study are:

- 1) Primary data, namely data obtained directly from the results of the distribution of questionnaires to employees in Medan City government agencies.
- 2) Secondary data, obtained from agency documents, annual reports, and literature such as scientific journals, books, and relevant laws and regulations (for example, Government Regulation No. 30 of 2019 concerning ASN Performance Assessment and Government Regulation No. 11 of 2017 concerning Civil Servant Management).

3.5 Data Collection Techniques

The data collection technique is carried out in the following ways:

- 1) Questionnaire (questionnaire) – as the main instrument to measure respondents' perception of competency, motivation, and performance variables.
- 2) Limited interviews – conducted with several structural officials to reinforce supporting qualitative data.
- 3) Documentation – collects administrative data and performance reports from each agency.

Table 1. Variable Measurement

| Variable | Indicators | Source |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| Competencies (X_1) | 1) Knowledge, 2) Skills, 3) Work attitude, 4) Work experience | (Spencer & Spencer, 2008); Government Regulation No. 11 of 2017 |
| Motivation (X_2) | 1) Physiological needs, 2) Rewards, 3) Recognition, 4) Responsibility, 5) Achievement | (Alshmemri <i>et al.</i> , 2017); (Judge & Robbins, 2013) |
| Employee Performance (Y) | 1) Work quality, 2) Quantity of work, 3) Punctuality, 4) Cooperation, 5) Discipline | Government Regulation No. 30 of 2019; (Anwar Prabu, 2017) |

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To ensure high data integrity, the research instrument underwent rigorous psychometric evaluation using SPSS version 25. Instrument validation was achieved through the Pearson Product Moment correlation, confirming that each questionnaire item met the requirement of $\alpha = 0.05$. Furthermore, the internal consistency of the scales was verified using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, where a threshold of $\alpha > 0.70$ served as the benchmark for reliability. These preliminary tests ensure that the measurement tools are both accurate and stable for subsequent statistical modeling. The analytical phase followed a structured multi-stage progression, beginning with descriptive analysis to characterize respondent demographics and the distribution of responses across all variables. Before testing the primary hypotheses, the data were subjected to classical assumption tests specifically normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity to guarantee that the regression model fulfilled the criteria for the Best Linear Unbiased Estimator (BLUE). Finally, multiple linear regression analysis was executed to quantify the impact of competence and motivation on employee performance, utilizing a standard regression equation to determine the magnitude of these functional relationships.

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$$

Description:

Y = Employee Performance
X₁ = Competence
X₂ = Motivation
 α = Constant
 β_1, β_2 = Regression Coefficient
 ε = Error term

Statistical hypothesis testing is conducted through two primary assessments: the t-test and the F-test. The partial t-test evaluates the individual significance of each independent variable, determining whether competence and motivation independently exert a meaningful effect on employee performance. Simultaneously, the F-test measures the collective influence of these variables to verify if they significantly affect the dependent variable when considered together. To quantify the explanatory power of the model, the Coefficient of Determination (R^2) is calculated, indicating the proportion of variance in performance that is attributable to the studied predictors. Throughout the investigation, strict adherence to research ethics is maintained. The researcher ensures full confidentiality of respondent identities and secures informed consent prior to data collection. Furthermore, all gathered information is utilized exclusively for academic advancement, ensuring that participant privacy and professional integrity are upheld at every stage of the study.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

This study involved 226 respondents who were employees of five government agencies in Medan City, namely: the Regional Financial and Asset Management Agency (BPKAD), the Department of Transportation, the Population and Civil Registration Office, the Medan Area Sub-district Office, and the Medan Baru Sub-district Office. Based on demographic data, the composition of the respondents is presented in the following table.

Table 2. Characteristics of Respondents Based on Gender and Education

| Characteristic | Category | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|----------------|----------|-----------|----------------|
| Gender | Man | 128 | 56.6 |
| | Woman | 98 | 43.4 |

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| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Final Education | High School/Vocational School | 32 | 14.2 |
| | D3 | 47 | 20.8 |
| | S1 | 118 | 52.2 |
| | S2 | 29 | 12.8 |
| Total | | 226 | 100.0 |

The majority of employees hold an S1 degree (52.2%), which indicates that, in general, the educational level of employees aligns with the qualifications required for ASN positions within the Medan City Government.

4.1.1 Description of Research Variables

Data were collected using a Likert scale questionnaire (1–5). The average score for each variable is presented in the following table.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

| Variable | Number of Items | Average Score | Category |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------|
| Competencies (X_1) | 10 | 4,18 | Tall |
| Motivation (X_2) | 10 | 4,11 | Tall |
| Employee Performance (Y) | 10 | 4,24 | Very High |

The results indicate that employees possess a high level of competence and motivation, with performance rated as very high. This suggests that employees in Medan City government agencies demonstrate strong professional awareness and a high level of responsibility in their work.

4.1.2 Validity and Reliability Test

Prior to conducting the regression analysis, the research instrument was first tested for validity and reliability.

Table 4. Validity and Reliability Test Results

| Variable | Number of Items | Range r-count | r-table (n=226; $\alpha=0.05$) | Cronbach's Alpha | Information |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Competencies (X_1) | 10 | 0,472 – 0,812 | 0,138 | 0,891 | Valid & Reliable |
| Motivation (X_2) | 10 | 0,428 – 0,776 | 0,138 | 0,875 | Valid & Reliable |
| Employee Performance (Y) | 10 | 0,487 – 0,823 | 0,138 | 0,902 | Valid & Reliable |

All items have an r-count value greater than the r-table (0.138) and a Cronbach's Alpha value exceeding 0.70, which confirms that the instrument is valid and reliable. The classical assumption tests were then conducted to ensure the data met the necessary regression assumptions. The normality test, using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method, showed a significance value of 0.200, which is greater than 0.05, indicating that the data is normally distributed. The multicollinearity test revealed VIF values for both competency and motivation as 1.432, suggesting no multicollinearity. Additionally, the heteroscedasticity test, using the Glejser method, showed a significance value greater than 0.05, confirming the absence of heteroscedasticity. These results indicate that the regression model fulfills all classical assumptions and is suitable for further analysis.

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Table 5. Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

| Variable | Regression Coefficient (β) | t-count | Sig. | Information |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|---------|-------|-------------|
| (Constant) | 8,212 | - | - | - |
| Competencies (X_1) | 0,423 | 5,812 | 0,000 | Significant |
| Motivation (X_2) | 0,367 | 4,926 | 0,000 | Significant |
| F-count = 78,216 | Sig. = 0.000 | | | |
| R = 0.789 | R ² = 0.622 | | | |

The resulting regression equation is:

$$Y = 8,212 + 0,423X_1 + 0,367X_2$$

Interpretation of the results:

- 1) The value of the coefficient $\beta_1 = 0.423$ indicates that every increase in one unit of competency will increase employee performance by 0.423 units, assuming that other variables are constant.
- 2) The value of the coefficient of $\beta_2 = 0.367$ shows that increasing work motivation also has a positive impact on employee performance.
- 3) The value of $R^2 = 0.622$ means that 62.2% of the variation in employee performance can be explained by competency and motivation variables, while the remaining 37.8% is influenced by other factors such as work environment, leadership, and organizational culture.
- 4) The value of F-calculation = 78.216 with a Sig. of $0.000 < 0.05$ shows that competence and motivation simultaneously have a significant effect on employee performance.

4.2 Discussion

The results of this study indicate that both competence and motivation have a significant positive effect on employee performance in government agencies in Medan City. In terms of competence, the analysis shows a t-count value of 5.812 and a significance of 0.000, which is less than 0.05, meaning that the higher the level of competence among employees, the better their performance in carrying out their responsibilities. These findings align with Spencer & Spencer's (2008) assertion that competence, encompassing knowledge, skills, and attitudes, is essential for effective work performance. Employees who possess strong technical skills, understand bureaucratic processes, and demonstrate a high level of professionalism are more likely to deliver optimal performance. This result is consistent with Rivai's (2013) research, which found that competence significantly influences the performance of ASN in the North Sumatra Provincial Government. Competent employees are able to fulfill their tasks more efficiently and respond better to community needs. Similarly, Patonengan & Setiawan (2021) emphasized the importance of mastering functional competencies and professional behavior in enhancing civil servant performance. In practice, this is reflected in Medan City's employees who are increasingly adept at managing administrative tasks and public services, particularly through the use of digital tools such as the e-Government system. Therefore, competence remains the foundation for building employee performance, and it is crucial for the Medan City Government to continue enhancing employee competencies through targeted training and performance evaluations. The analysis of motivation also shows a significant positive effect on employee performance, with a t-count value of 4.926 and a significance of 0.000, indicating that higher levels of motivation are associated with better performance. These findings are supported by Sobaih & Hasanein (2020), who distinguished between motivator factors (such as achievement, recognition, and responsibility) and hygiene factors (like salary, work conditions, and relationships with colleagues). Government employees who feel appreciated, valued, and supported in their work environment tend to show higher levels of motivation and performance. Research by Kartikasari & Cherny (2017) also highlighted the pivotal role of work motivation in driving productive employee behavior, emphasizing that incentives, non-financial rewards, and career development opportunities can enhance intrinsic motivation.

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Additionally, Nining *et al.* (2023) found that highly motivated employees display better loyalty, responsibility, and performance. In Medan City, employees demonstrate a strong work ethic when provided with clear goals, recognition, and leadership support. A collaborative work environment and open communication between supervisors and subordinates further strengthen motivation. Motivation, therefore, is as crucial as technical competence. The Medan City Government should foster a culture of appreciation, improve internal communication, and provide transparent career advancement opportunities to sustain employee motivation. Furthermore, the study's simultaneous test reveals that both competence and motivation together significantly influence employee performance, with an F-count value of 78.216 and a significance of 0.000. The R^2 value of 0.622 indicates that 62.2% of the variation in employee performance can be explained by the combination of these two factors, with the remaining variance influenced by other elements such as leadership, organizational culture, and the work environment. These results align with Armstrong *et al.* (2018), who argue that employee performance is driven by a combination of ability (competence), motivation, and the opportunity to perform effectively. When employees possess both strong skills and robust motivation, productivity and service quality are significantly enhanced. Similar studies, such as those by Mularto *et al.* (2024), confirm that competence and motivation, when considered together, greatly contribute to the performance of ASN. Research by Hariyasasti (2025) in Deli Serdang showed that combining improvements in technical competence with intrinsic motivation can boost work effectiveness by up to 60%. Conceptually, competence provides the ability to "perform tasks," while motivation drives the desire to "perform well." The synergy of these two factors leads to optimal performance. Employees who are competent but lack motivation may work mechanically, while those who are motivated but lack competence are prone to mistakes. Thus, the synergy between competence and motivation is critical for the effectiveness of government organizations.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that both competence and motivation have a positive and significant impact on employee performance in government agencies in Medan City. Employees with high competence are more capable of performing tasks effectively, while strong work motivation enhances enthusiasm and responsibility in carrying out their duties. Together, these two factors account for 62.2% of the improvement in employee performance. Therefore, it is crucial for the Medan City Government to strengthen competency development programs and work motivation systems to cultivate a professional, productive, and high-quality public service workforce.

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