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## The Influence of Competence and Work Environment on the Performance of State Civil Apparatus Through Motivation at The Regional Secretariat of Merangin District

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this research is to obtain an overview and describe the competencies, work environment, motivation, and performance of Civil Servants, as well as to understand and analyze the direct and indirect effects of competencies and work environment on the motivation and performance of Civil Servants. The population in this study consists of 54 Civil Servants at the Regional Secretariat of Merangin Regency in the year 2024. The data analysis technique used in this research is path analysis, followed by hypothesis testing using the F-test (simultaneous) and t-test (partial). The path analysis results indicate that competencies and work environment have both direct and indirect effects on Civil Servants performance through work motivation. This illustrates why civil servants are more driven to raise their performance levels inside the company if they feel that their work environment is improving and they possess greater capabilities in carrying out their primary jobs and functions. According to the study's findings, civil servants' performance is high, their motivation is strong, their work environment is good, and their competences are in excellent shape.

**Keywords:** Competence, Work Environment, Motivation, Performance of Civil Servants.

### INTRODUCTION

Merangin Regent Regulation Number 118 of 2019 on the Position, Organizational Structure, Main Duties and Functions, and Work Procedures of the Regional Secretariat established the Regional Secretariat of Merangin Regency as a government agency. The regional secretariat as a staff element is led by the Regional Secretary who is under and responsible to the Regent. Therefore, the Regional Secretariat is the center of government in Merangin Regency which has a strategic role in providing services to the community and departments in Merangin Regency.

It is undeniable that the Setda of Merangin Regency is expected to perform its duties and functions well. Therefore, the effectiveness of human resource management within the

Setda of Merangin Regency needs to be improved by optimizing the performance of Civil Servants.

Competence, work environment, and motivation are three elements that impact public servants' effectiveness in an organization. Since competence is a fundamental requirement for any work, it plays a significant role in determining an individual's performance. A mix of knowledge, abilities, and character traits that improve performance and support an organization's success is referred to as competence.

Sutrisno (2014) defines competence as the capacity to carry out tasks and jobs in accordance with predetermined requirements. It is built on knowledge and skills that are bolstered by a work ethic. Because it improves civil servant performance and influences the organization's future, competence is therefore valued highly in governmental organizations.

The work environment is the second factor that affects civil servant performance after competence. The setting in which workers perform their everyday tasks is referred to as the work environment. Employee productivity is enhanced and a sense of security is provided by a supportive work environment. Nitisemito (2016) asserts that an employee's immediate surroundings include everything that may interfere with their ability to complete their allocated responsibilities.

The work environment is not only related to physical aspects; non-physical elements, such as a pleasant, secure, and comfortable atmosphere that makes employees feel at ease, are equally important in influencing employee performance (Sedarmayanti, 2013). Therefore, the work environment has a significant impact on creating a positive and supportive workplace. The presence of complete and well-functioning facilities at the Setda of Merangin Regency, including infrastructure such as buildings, office amenities, equipment, and vehicles, are factors that can influence performance.

Additionally, motivation is an equally important factor in enhancing the performance of civil servants. According to Siagian (2014), motivation is the driving force that compels an individual to contribute as much as possible to the organization's success in achieving its goals. Motivation can stimulate employees' enthusiasm in completing their tasks and improve the performance of civil servants both qualitatively and quantitatively. Motivation also stems from an individual's attitude toward the work situation within the organization. It is a state or energy that drives individuals to achieve the organization's objectives. A professional attitude and a positive mindset towards team work situations strengthen work motivation to achieve optimal performance (Mangkunegara, 2017).

Motivation aims to improve the performance of employees and the organization. Here, performance is crucial for an organization, especially the performance of its employees, who can lead the organization to achieve its desired goals, whether it is a private company or a government organization. The quality of civil servants' performance can significantly influence the overall performance of the organization.

The performance of civil servants can be measured in terms of both individual and organizational performance. Individual performance refers to the achievement of a series of tasks performed by an individual, increasingly involving a combination of improved efficiency, effectiveness, and quality. The measurement of individual performance in government organizations can be observed through the annual Employee Performance Target assessment. The Employee Performance Target is a plan and performance target set by the employee, which must be achieved within a certain period. Therefore, the Employee Performance Target must at least show a good rating, serving as an indicator of a civil servant's ability to meet the performance expectations and targets set for them.

## **METHOD**

The Merangin Regency's Regional Secretariat was the site of this study. This study's main goal is to examine how the work environment and competence of civil servants at the

Setda of Merangin Regency affect each other's motivation and performance. The performance (Z) of government servants at the Setda of Merangin Regency is the dependent variable in this study, and the independent factors are competence (X1) and work environment (X2). The intervening variable is motivation (Y).

The cross-sectional/one-shot time frame employed for this research's observation indicates that the information or data came from data collecting done at a particular moment in time (Sugiyono, 2016). The study's population comprises 117 civil servants who work at the Merangin Regency's Regional Secretariat (Setda). With a 20% margin of error, the sample size for this study was calculated using Slovin's technique, yielding a sample of 54 people.

To address all the formulated hypotheses, the researcher utilized a questionnaire as a tool to gather information. Subsequently, respondents were entrusted with the responsibility to answer the provided questions and provide feedback on the posed inquiries.

The questionnaire in this study was designed to be closed-ended, meaning that the questions were structured in such a way that respondents were limited to providing answers on a scale of 1 to 5, following the Likert Summated Rating (LSR) method, with specifications ranging from strongly agree (5), agree (4), neutral (3), disagree (2), to strongly disagree (1).

After all the information gathered from the questionnaire is collected, the next step is to conduct a data quality test. The purpose is to determine whether the questions asked are suitable/reliable and consistent for further testing.

This study employs a quantitative and descriptive methodology. Based on already-existing facts that are converted into data, descriptive research is a form of study that describes the operations of civil officials at the Regional Secretariat of Merangin Regency. After that, this data is examined to make inferences. Meanwhile, in quantitative research, the focus is on the relationship between research variables and testing hypotheses formulated earlier. Although its explanation also contains narration or is descriptive in nature, as a correlational study (relationship), its focus lies in explaining the relationships between variables.

Path analysis is the data analysis method employed in this study, which is followed by the use of SPSS 22.0 for Windows to test hypotheses using the t-test, F-test, and coefficient of determination (R2). Following route analysis of the data, hypothesis testing was done with the F-test and partial t-test applied concurrently. However, the validity and reliability of the questionnaire instrument were assessed before doing the hypothesis testing.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Description of Respondent Characteristics

The demographic description of employees at the Regional Secretariat of Merangin Regency is shown through their characteristics in Table 1 as follows:

**Table 1 Respondent Characteristics**

No	Respondent Characteristics	Amount	Percentage (%)
1	Gender		
	Man	28	51,85
	Woman	26	48,15
2	Age Group		
	< 30 Years	3	5,56
	31 - 40 Years	6	11,11
	41 - 50 Years	31	57,41
	> 50 Years	14	25,92
3	Education		
	Senior High School	13	24,07
	Associate Degree	3	5,56
	Bachelor degree	31	57,41

4	Master	7	12,96
	Group II	11	20,37
	III	36	66,67
	IV	7	12,96

Source: Primary Data Processing, 2024

### Description of Respondents' Answers to Research Variables

Descriptive statistics of the research variables were used to determine the extent to which the indicators, serving as question items for each variable in this study, were relevant. These variables include the performance of civil servants in the Regional Secretariat of Merangin Regency as well as their motivation, competence, and work environment. Every inquiry item for each of the study variables' indicators fits into a category that faithfully captures the real circumstances at the Regional Secretariat of Merangin Regency. The following table displays these research variables' descriptive results.

**Table 2 Description of Research Variables**

No	Variable	Score	Scale Range	Information
1	Competence (X1)	1.749	1.468,8 – 1.814,3	Tall
2	Work environment (X2)	1.531	1.285,2 – 1.587,5	Good
3	Motivation (Y)	3.700	3121,2 – 3855,5	Tall
4	Performance (Z)	4.134	3488,4 – 4309,1	Tall

Source: Primary Data Processing, 2024

### Test Research Instruments

#### Validity test

The statement items created based on each variable indicator—competence, work environment, motivation, and public servant performance—are tested for validity to see how much they may be used for additional data analysis in a study. Stated differently, the purpose of the validity test is to ascertain the reliability of the questionnaire utilized in this study. As to Ghozali's (2013) findings, the validity test's decision-making criteria are as follows: an indicator is deemed dependable if its estimated r value exceeds the r table value. On the other hand, the indicator is regarded as unreliable if the computed r value is smaller than the r table value. Using the formula  $df = 54 - 2 = 52$ , the r table value is calculated, and the result is 0.2681. The findings of the validity tests conducted on the research variables are shown below.

**Table 3 Research Variable Validity Test Results**

Item	Competence (X1)	Work environment (X2)	Motivation (Y)	Performance (Z)
1	0,726	0,694	0,666	0,776
2	0,764	0,690	0,660	0,823
3	0,753	0,722	0,765	0,862
4	0,817	0,864	0,838	0,796
5	0,850	0,882	0,678	0,905
6	0,876	0,856	0,895	0,752
7	0,840	0,913	0,830	0,791
8	0,911		0,905	0,800
9			0,715	0,905
10			0,705	0,752
11			0,782	0,770
12			0,838	0,776
13			0,859	0,699
14			0,884	0,779
15			0,830	0,805
16			0,905	0,823
17			0,838	0,862
18				0,819

Sumber: Output SPSS 22.0 for windows

The validity test results for each variable, as shown in Table 3 above, indicate that all items have a calculated r value greater than the r table value. Thus, it can be concluded that all items are valid, and no elimination is necessary. The highest calculated r value is shown in item 7 of the work environment variable ( $0.913 > 0.2681$ ), while the lowest calculated r value is shown in item 2 of the motivation variable ( $0.660 > 0.2681$ ).

**Reliability Test**

Conducting a reliability test comes next, following the determination that the claims stated in this study are legitimate. The purpose of the reliability test is to evaluate the questionnaire's stability over time or its consistency in assessing the same construct. The testing process's resultant high or low Cronbach's alpha coefficient indicates the consistency of results. The reliability and consistency of the measurement tool is indicated if the Cronbach's alpha value is higher than 0.60. The reliability test findings for the research variables are as follows.

**Table 4 Reliability of Research Variables**

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Measurement Limitations	Information
Competence	0.929	0.6	Reliable
Work environment	0.909	0.6	Reliable
Motivation	0.965	0.6	Reliable
Performance	0.971	0.6	Reliable

Source: SPSS 22.0 for windows output

All four of the research variables had Cronbach's Alpha values more than 0.6, according to the reliability statistics data. The work environment variable has the lowest Cronbach's Alpha value ( $0.909 > 0.6$ ). This suggests that every N variable satisfies the reliability requirements. Stated otherwise, the respondents' responses to the statements on the questionnaire for each of the four study variables are consistent.

**Path Analysis Results**

The direct and indirect linkages or effects between independent (exogenous) and dependent (endogenous) variables are identified and their magnitudes are evaluated through the use of path analysis. This test is carried out following the completion of the previously mentioned required data tests and data analysis tests. The software known as Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) Version 22 is used to perform the actual path analysis.

To address the six objectives of this research, the main model, as shown in Figure 1, is divided into three substructures. This division is necessary due to the limitations of the analytical tool used, SPSS, which cannot process all results simultaneously. The second and third objectives are addressed using substructure 1, the fourth and fifth objectives using substructure 2, the sixth objective using substructure 3, and the seventh objective using structure 4, which combines the three previous substructures. The output path coefficients for the three substructures in this study are summarized in the following table.

**Table 5 Output Path Coefficient for Three Sub Structures**

No	Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Beta
		B	Std. Error	
1	X <sub>1</sub> - Y	1,868	0,182	0,894
2	X <sub>2</sub> - Y	0,247	0,212	0,102
3	X <sub>1</sub> - Z	1,629	0,244	0,692
4	X <sub>2</sub> - Z	0,829	0,284	0,303
5	Y - Z	1,113	0,025	0,987

$r_{X_1X_2} = 0,985$

Source: SPSS 22.0 for windows output.

Based on the SPSS output summarized in Table 5 above, the research model results are as follows.

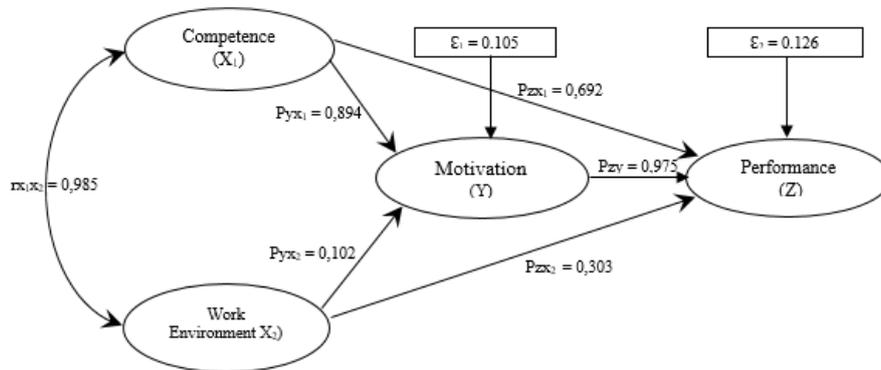


Figure 1. Path Analysis Model Results

Following model testing, hypothesis testing is done to look at the simultaneous and partial effects of the independent factors on the dependent variables. The F-test is used for simultaneous testing, and the crucial F value (F-table) of 3.18 at a 5% error level ( $p < 0.05$ ) is compared to the computed F value (F-hitung). Using the t-test, partial testing is carried out at a 5% error level ( $p < 0.05$ ) by comparing the calculated t value (t-hitung) to the critical t value (t-table) of 1.669.

A positive and significant influence between latent variables is indicated if the calculated values meet these thresholds, meaning that the research model hypothesis is accepted (proven). Conversely, if the thresholds are not met, the influence between latent variables is not accepted (hypothesis not proven). The following table provides an overview of the findings from the hypothesis testing conducted for this study.

Table 6 Summary of calculated F and t calculated values

Hypothesis	F and t-count	Sig.	Information
X1 & X2 -> Y	2234,308	0,000	Hypothesis Accepted
X1 -> Y	10,257	0,000	Hypothesis Accepted
X2 -> Y	1,167	0,034	Hypothesis Accepted
X1 & X2 -> Z	1566,507	0,000	Hypothesis Accepted
X1 -> Z	6,664	0,000	Hypothesis Accepted
X2 -> Z	2,919	0,005	Hypothesis Accepted
Y -> Z	44,679	0,000	Hypothesis Accepted

Source: SPSS 21.0 for windows output.

From the hypothesis testing results summarized in Table 6 above, it can be concluded that all proposed hypotheses are accepted, both simultaneously and partially. This indicates that job motivation and performance are positively and significantly impacted by competence and the work environment. In a similar vein, performance is positively and significantly impacted by motivation as well.

**Discussion**

**Overview of Competency Implementation, Work Environment, Motivation and Performance**

With a total score for the competence variable of 1749 within a scale range of 1468.8 to 1814.3, the findings of the descriptive analysis of the competence variable held by civil officials at the Regional Secretariat of Merangin Regency fell into the "High" category. Therefore, excellent competence can inspire employees and improve their work output at the Merangin Regency Regional Secretariat. These results are due to civil servants having a good

level of education relevant to their job fields, receiving job-specific training, possessing sufficient work experience, having the ability to analyze tasks, being able to control their emotions to avoid negative actions, and having the ability to adapt to various situations or groups.

The Regional Secretariat of Merangin Regency's descriptive analysis of the work environment variable yielded data that place the work environment in the "Good" category, with a total score of 1531 on a scale that runs from 1285.2 to 1587.5. This suggests that employees' motivation and productivity at the Regional Secretariat of Merangin Regency might be improved by providing a positive work environment. These results are attributed to the availability of good workplace buildings, adequate work equipment, supportive transportation facilities, harmonious relationships among colleagues, and good relationships between supervisors and subordinates.

With a total Motivation variable score of 3700 and a scale range of 3121.2 to 3885.5, the results of the descriptive analysis of the motivation variable among civil servants at the Regional Secretariat of Merangin Regency show that motivation at the Regional Secretariat falls into the "High" category. It will eventually be able to improve the performance of civil personnel at the Merangin Regency Regional Secretariat with strong motivation. These results are attributed to civil servants receiving fair wages and bonuses, having access to a pension fund ensuring future needs, receiving health and accident insurance, showing mutual respect, receiving awards for job performance, and receiving education and training to enhance performance.

The descriptive analysis of the performance variable among civil servants at the Regional Secretariat of Merangin Regency falls into the "High" category, with a total Performance variable score of 4134 and a scale range of 3488.4 to 4309.1. This is evidenced by the performance results achieved in accordance with the organization's targets. These results are attributed to civil servants being able to complete tasks assigned to them efficiently and on time, possessing good knowledge relevant to their job fields, being meticulous in their work, demonstrating creativity in trying new approaches to achieve organizational goals, having the capacity to handle various tasks within a job, and being able to work independently without supervision.

### **Competence and Work Environment Towards Motivation**

According to the research findings, motivation is positively and significantly impacted by competence at the Merangin Regency's Regional Secretariat. These findings support research by Arumwanti (2013), Bukri et al. (2023), Hardiani & Prasetya (2018), Rahim et al. (2017), Anisatuzzuhriah et al. (2023), and Triyanto (2014) that found a substantial relationship between competence and worker motivation.

The influence of competence on motivation stems from several factors: civil servants have a good level of education relevant to their job fields, receive job-specific training, possess sufficient work experience, demonstrate analytical abilities, exhibit self-control to avoid negative behaviors, and show adaptability in various situations or groups.

Subsequently, the research results show that motivation is favorably and considerably influenced by the work environment in the Regional Secretariat of Merangin Regency. The present findings corroborate the findings of the following studies: Sumantri et al. (2023), Said et al. (2023), Rahim et al. (2017), Nuswantari et al. (2016), Laoli et al. (2023), Khoiriah et al. (2019), and Bukri et al. (2023). These studies explicate the positive and noteworthy influence of the work environment on individual work motivation.

The influence of the work environment on motivation is due to several factors: the availability of good workplace buildings, adequate work equipment, supportive transportation facilities, harmonious relationships among peers, and good relationships between superiors and subordinates.

Thus, the influence of Competence and Work Environment on Motivation is 98.9%, while 1.1% is attributed to other variables. Therefore, with a high influence of competence, it will also yield high motivation. Similarly, with a good work environment, it will also generate high motivation.

### **Competence and Environment Towards Performance**

The study's findings suggest that employees' performance at the Merangin Regency Regional Secretariat is influenced by their level of competence. The aforementioned findings support and corroborate those of research by Yuliana (2017), Sugiyanto & Santoso (2018), Rahim et al. (2017), Pratama et al. (2023), Fadillah et al. (2017), Bukri et al. (2023), and Anisatuzzuhriah et al. (2023), which found that competence significantly and favorably affects performance.

The influence of competence on performance is due to several factors: civil servants have a good level of education relevant to their job fields, receive job-specific training, possess sufficient work experience, demonstrate analytical abilities, exhibit self-control to avoid negative behaviors, and show adaptability in various situations or groups.

Subsequently, the research findings suggest that civil officials in the Regional Secretariat of Merangin Regency perform differently depending on their work environment. The research of Yanti et al. (2023), Yahyo et al. (2013), Sumantri et al. (2023), Said et al. (2023), Rahim et al. (2017), Nuswantari et al. (2016), Laoli et al. (2023), Khoiriah et al. (2019), Hartanto (2019), Fadillah et al. (2017), Edi et al. (2023), and Bukri et al. (2023) have found that the work environment has a positive and significant impact on employee performance. These findings are consistent with and reinforce the research of these studies.

The influence of the work environment on the performance of civil servants is due to the availability of good workplace buildings, adequate work equipment, supportive transportation facilities, harmonious relationships among peers, and good relationships between superiors and subordinates.

Thus, the influence of Competence and Work Environment on the performance of civil servants is 98.5%, with the remaining 1.5% attributed to other variables. Therefore, with a high influence of competence, it will lead to high performance. Similarly, with a good work environment, it will result in high performance.

### **Motivation Towards Civil Servants' Performance**

The results of the study show that employees' performance at the Merangin Regency Regional Secretariat is highly influenced by their motivation. The analysis above strengthens the findings presented by Yuliana (2017), Yahyo et al. (2013), Sasongko & Yuniawan (2016), Said et al. (2023), Rahim et al. (2017), Pratama et al. (2023), Nuswantari et al. (2016), Mundakir & Zainuri (2018), Laoli et al. (2023), Khoiriah et al. (2019), Hartanto (2019), Farlen (2011), Edi et al. (2023), Bukri et al. (2023), and Anisatuzzuhriah et al. (2023), who positively and significantly assert that motivation affects performance.

The influence of motivation on the performance of civil servants is due to several factors: civil servants receive fair wages and equitable bonuses, are provided with a pension fund that ensures future needs, have health and accident insurance, show mutual respect, receive recognition for their work achievements, and undergo education and training to enhance performance. Therefore, with high work motivation, it will result in high performance as well.

### **Competence and Work Environment Towards Civil Servants' Performance Through Motivation**

The findings of the study show that, at the Regional Secretariat of Merangin Regency, Competence and Work Environment have an impact on employees' motivation to work well.

Competence influences work environment and motivation through work environment 60.3% and motivation through work environment and motivation 6.1%, respectively, for a total impact of 66.4%.

Additionally, the work environment has a 9.0% influence on civil servants' motivational performance, a 7.9% affect on their competence and motivational performance, and a 16.9% overall influence. Therefore, the performance of civil servants is influenced by both competence and the work environment through motivation. This combination has a direct influence of 69.3% and an indirect influence of 14.0%, for a total influence of 83.3%.

## CONCLUSION

Regarding the description and research results on the variables of competence, work environment, motivation, and performance of civil servants conducted using a sample of 54 respondents at the Regional Secretariat of Merangin Regency, the following conclusions can be drawn.

1. Competence falls into the "High" category with a total competence variable score of 1749, within a scale range of 1468.8 to 1814.3. The Work Environment is categorized as "Good" with a total work environment variable score of 1531, within a scale range of 1285.2 to 1587.5. Motivation is classified as "High" with a total motivation variable score of 3700, within a scale range of 3121.2 to 3855.5. And Civil Servants' Performance falls into the "High" category with a total variable score of 4134, within a scale range of 3488.4 to 4309.1.
2. Competence has a 79.9% direct influence on motivation, a 9% indirect influence, and an overall influence of 88.9%. The Work Environment has a 1.0% direct influence, a 9% indirect influence, and a 10% overall affect on motivation. Competence and the Work Environment together have a 98.9% direct and indirect impact on motivation.
3. Competence has a 47.9% direct influence, a 20.7% indirect influence, and a 68.6% overall influence on public servant performance. The work environment has a 9.2% direct influence, a 20.7% indirect influence, and a 29.9% total influence on the performance of federal servants. Competence and the Work Environment together have a 98.4% direct and indirect impact on civil servant performance.
4. The performance of government workers is positively and significantly impacted by motivation in a 95.1% way.
5. Competence, the work environment, and motivation all have a combined direct influence of 69.3% and 14.0% on the performance of civil servants through motivation, for a total influence of 83.3%.

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