

The Influence of Competency Development, Employee Management, and Rewards on Regional Apparatus Performance with Work-Life Balance as a Mediating Variable

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Abstract: This study examines the influence of competency development, employee management, and rewards on the performance of regional apparatus in Jember Regency, with work-life balance as a mediating variable. Utilizing a quantitative approach, data were collected through questionnaires distributed among employees across 31 sub-districts, focusing on the impact of HR practices on work-life balance and performance. Findings indicate that competency development, employee management, and rewards positively affect both work-life balance and performance, highlighting the importance of structured HR practices in fostering a supportive work environment. Additionally, work-life balance significantly mediates the relationship between these variables and performance, emphasizing its role in enhancing employee well-being and productivity. The integration of Scientific Management Theory, Spillover Theory, and Self-Determination Theory provides a comprehensive framework, illustrating how HR practices contribute to optimizing performance by addressing both skill development and personal well-being. The study underscores the need for public sector organizations to adopt HRM strategies that balance professional growth and personal fulfillment, thereby promoting sustainable organizational success..

Keywords : Competency Development 1; Employee Management 2; HRM 3

INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Management (HRM) is essential for optimizing organizational performance through strategic and effective practices. Key HRM practices, such as selective recruitment [1], continuous training [2], career development [3], and objective performance evaluations [4], significantly contribute to employee productivity and satisfaction. A well-managed HR system creates a supportive and motivating work environment, driving both individual and team performance [5]. The ultimate goal of HRM is to ensure that employees possess the necessary skills and motivation, thereby enhancing organizational outcomes and contributing to long-term success [6].

Employee performance is influenced by HRM practices such as training, development, and reward systems [3]. Moreover, empowerment and support from supervisors are critical in boosting engagement and job satisfaction [7]. Effective HRM includes fostering a positive work culture that enhances overall organizational performance [1]. Practices like skill development and continuous training have been shown to boost job satisfaction, ultimately leading to improved individual performance [5]. Furthermore, fair and objective performance evaluations are crucial for constructive feedback and self-improvement (Somu et al., 2020), en-

hancing both individual and team performance and, ultimately, contributing to the organization's long-term objectives [6]

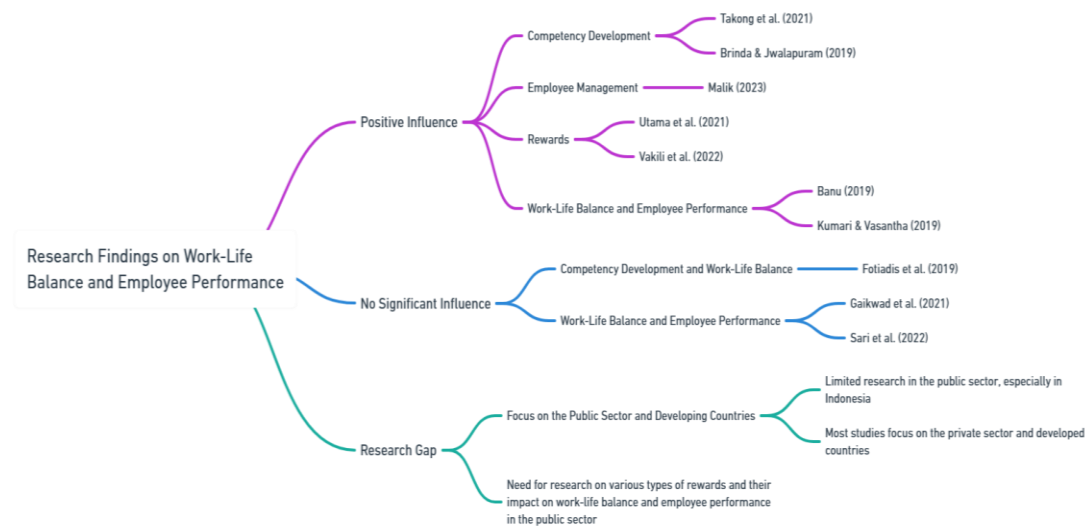
Work-life balance is a key concept in managing the equilibrium between job demands and personal life, including family, hobbies, and personal well-being. When employees achieve a healthy work-life balance, they are likely to experience lower stress levels, enhancing their ability to meet work targets, which in turn improves performance [8]. Work-life balance positively influences job satisfaction, commitment, and employee engagement, which collectively enhance individual and organizational performance [9]. Studies have shown that work-life balance policies reduce employee stress and improve mental and physical well-being, contributing to greater productivity and performance [10]. Organizations prioritizing work-life balance tend to attract and retain top talent, fostering loyalty and creating a positive and productive work environment [11].

Employee competency, encompassing the skills and abilities necessary to effectively execute job responsibilities, plays a crucial role in performance [12]. High levels of competency not only enhance productivity but also support better work-life balance [13]. Competent employees typically manage time and stress more effectively, balancing work demands with personal life [11]. Achieving work-life balance is vital, as it positively affects employees' psychological and physical health [14]. Employees with a balanced work-life experience are likely to feel satisfied with their jobs and committed to the organization, thus enhancing performance [15].

Effective employee management encompasses various practices that promote work-life balance and employee performance. Practices such as flexible working arrangements, supervisor support, and adequate leave policies help employees manage the demands of work and personal life, positively impacting their performance [16]. Research suggests that a good work-life balance reduces stress and boosts job satisfaction, which, in turn, enhances productivity and employee performance [17]. Additionally, good management practices create a supportive work environment, where employees feel valued and motivated to perform at their best [18]. Work-life balance also contributes significantly to employee retention, as employees who achieve a healthy balance are more loyal to the organization [8]. Consequently, employee management that emphasizes work-life balance not only improves employee well-being but also bolsters overall organizational performance [19].

Rewards play a significant role in employee management, with a substantial impact on both work-life balance and performance. Providing appropriate rewards boosts motivation and commitment to the organization, which positively affects performance [20]. Studies show that rewards that integrate work-life balance policies reduce work-related stress and improve well-being, thus enhancing productivity and job satisfaction [21]. Fair and consistent rewards create a supportive work environment where employees feel valued and engaged [16]. Implementing structured reward programs not only strengthens work-life balance but also enhances employee retention, as appreciated employees are more likely to remain loyal to the organization [10].

Figure 1: Research Findings



Previous research highlights the significant influence of competency development, employee management, and rewards on work-life balance and performance. Competency development, including emotional intelligence, contributes significantly to work-life balance [22]. Self-management skills are also essential for achieving better work-life balance [23]. Effective employee management is vital in enhancing work-life balance and reducing work stress [16]. Moreover, fair and consistent rewards have been shown to positively impact work-life balance and job satisfaction [20]. A strong work-life balance is positively associated with employee performance, as supported by prior studies [8], [10]. However, research gaps exist, as some studies indicate no significant correlation between these variables. For example, psychological competency does not significantly impact work-life balance in certain studies, and work-life balance did not significantly affect employee performance in the IT sector [24]). Additionally, some studies report that work-life balance does not directly influence employee performance, though it has a positive impact on emotions that later enhance performance [25].

In Jember Regency, regional apparatus, particularly at the kecamatan (sub-district) level, play a crucial role in implementing governmental policies and delivering essential public services, including administrative support, healthcare, education, and infrastructure, all aimed at enhancing community welfare. However, these apparatus face notable challenges, such as elevated absenteeism rates and fluctuating job satisfaction, which may adversely impact service effectiveness and public satisfaction. Recent data highlights significant variations in absenteeism across sub-districts. Sub-districts like Balung, Silo, and Ledokombo report high absenteeism averages exceeding 19%, suggesting potential issues with internal management or working conditions, whereas sub-districts such as Summersari and Jenggawah display lower rates, averaging between 12% and 15%, indicating more effective employee management practices and attendance control. This disparity underscores an urgent need for thorough evaluation and enhancement of employee management practices in sub-districts with high absenteeism to foster consistent attendance and improved service quality. These issues emphasize the importance of well-implemented Human Resource Management (HRM) strategies, particularly in competency development, employee management, and balanced reward systems, to foster a supportive work environment that promotes work-life balance, job satisfaction, and employee commitment.

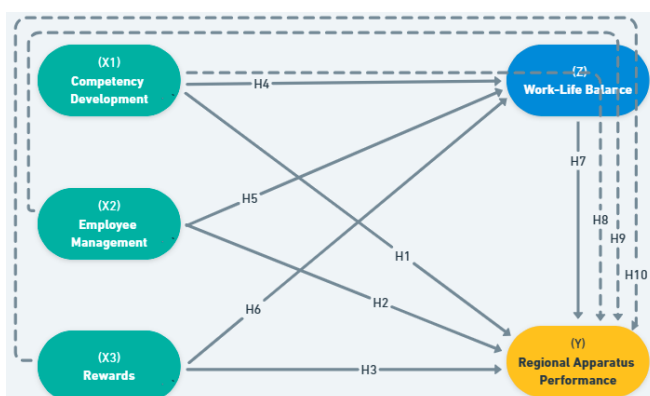
This study seeks to examine the impact of competency development, employee management, and rewards on the performance of regional apparatus with work-life balance serving as a mediating variable. Specifically, it

aims to assess whether these HRM practices influence work-life balance and, in turn, employee performance in the public sector, particularly within Jember Regency. By addressing existing research gaps, this study aims to provide practical insights and recommendations to optimize performance through improved HRM practices in local government contexts.

Literature Review

This research integrates three foundational theories: Scientific Management Theory, Spillover Theory, and Self-Determination Theory, to comprehensively analyze the impact of competency development, employee management, and rewards on the performance of regional apparatus in Jember Regency. Scientific Management Theory, developed by Frederick Winslow Taylor in 1911, provides a structured approach emphasizing work efficiency and productivity through scientific methods, optimizing work processes, and performance-based incentives [26]. Spillover Theory, introduced by Nippert-Eng in 1980, offers insights into how experiences in one life domain, such as work, can influence other areas, like personal life, either positively or negatively, which is crucial for understanding work-life balance effects on performance [27]. Meanwhile, Self-Determination Theory, formulated by Deci and Ryan in 1985, explores how external factors, including competency development, employee management, and rewards, impact both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation through the fulfillment of basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness, leading to enhanced employee motivation and well-being [28], [29]. Despite their valuable perspectives, each theory holds limitations when applied individually: Scientific Management Theory may overlook the dynamic human factors like work-life balance and intrinsic motivation [30]; Spillover Theory lacks specific focus on how competency development and rewards interact with these factors [31]; and Self-Determination Theory, while addressing psychological needs, may not fully capture the complex interactions within employee management practices [32]. This study aims to bridge these gaps by integrating these theories to provide a holistic framework for enhancing the performance of regional apparatus through competency development, employee management, and rewards, with particular emphasis on the mediating role of work-life balance.

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 2 highlights the relationships between competency development, employee management, and rewards, and their direct and indirect influences on regional apparatus performance, with work-life balance acting as a mediating variable. The model proposes that competency development (X1), employee management (X2), and rewards (X3) not only directly impact regional apparatus performance (Y) but also affect work-life balance (Z), which subsequently influences perfor-

mance. Specifically, the framework includes hypotheses suggesting that competency development, employee management, and rewards positively impact both work-life balance and regional apparatus performance (H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6). Additionally, it posits that work-life balance positively influences regional apparatus performance (H7) and may mediate the effects of competency development, employee management, and rewards on performance (H8, H9, H10). This integrated model provides a comprehensive approach to understanding how these HRM practices and work-life balance contribute to optimizing performance within regional apparatus

METHOD

This research employs a quantitative approach to evaluate the impact of competency development, employee management, and rewards on work-life balance and the performance of regional apparatus in Jember Regency. The study focuses on all employees working in the 31 sub-districts within the regency, collecting data through questionnaires that utilize a Likert scale to measure various research variables, including competency development, employee management, rewards, work-life balance, and performance. The Likert scale ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), allowing respondents to indicate their level of agreement with each statement. Data collection is conducted both online, via electronic survey platforms, and in person to ensure participation from employees with limited internet access, enhancing response rates and data representativeness. The collected data will be analyzed using WarpPLS software, chosen for its ability to handle complex models and latent variables while delivering accurate estimates even with smaller sample sizes.

The study identifies several key variables: performance as the dependent variable, work-life balance as the mediating variable, and competency development, employee management, and rewards as independent variables. Performance is measured based on the extent to which employees meet organizational goals, encompassing both qualitative and quantitative aspects of their work output. Work-life balance is assessed based on employees' ability to balance work demands and personal life, with a focus on the effect this balance has on well-being and productivity. The independent variables are defined through specific indicators, such as training, performance evaluations, and various forms of rewards, to capture a comprehensive picture of HR practices within the public sector. A sample of at least 120 respondents, representing the larger population, is required to ensure sufficient data for accurate analysis. Through a systematic data collection and analysis process, this study seeks to provide practical insights and recommendations to enhance employee well-being and optimize performance, ultimately aiming to improve public service quality within Jember Regency.

Table 1: Outer Model Result

Variable	Composite Reliability (CR)	Cronbach's Alpha	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Description
Competency Development (X1)	0.903	0.873	0.550	Valid and reliable
Employee Management (X2)	0.765	0.789	0.552	Valid and reliable
Rewards (X3)	0.811	0.708	0.565	Valid and reliable
Work-Life Balance (Z)	0.749	0.798	0.503	Valid and reliable
Performance (Y)	0.744	0.742	0.523	Valid and reliable

The outer model analysis confirms that all constructs in this study are valid and reliable based on Composite Reliability, Cronbach's Alpha, and Average Variance Extracted values. Each variable, namely Competency

Development (X1), Employee Management (X2), Rewards (X3), Work-Life Balance (Z), and Performance (Y), has a Composite Reliability value above the threshold of 0.7, indicating high internal consistency and reliability. Cronbach's Alpha values are also above 0.7 for all constructs, further confirming the reliability of each variable. Additionally, Average Variance Extracted values exceed the 0.5 standard, which supports adequate convergent validity, meaning that the indicators for each construct are sufficient in capturing the intended latent variable. These results affirm that the measurement model is robust, allowing for accurate assessment of relationships among the constructs in the structural model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The following section presents an analysis of the inner model to examine the relationships among the constructs within the structural framework. This analysis aims to assess the influence of each independent variable on the dependent variables, providing insight into the direct and mediated effects within the model. The findings are expected to offer a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between competency development, employee management, rewards, work-life balance, and performance in the context of regional apparatus in Jember Regency.

Figure 2: Path Coefficients

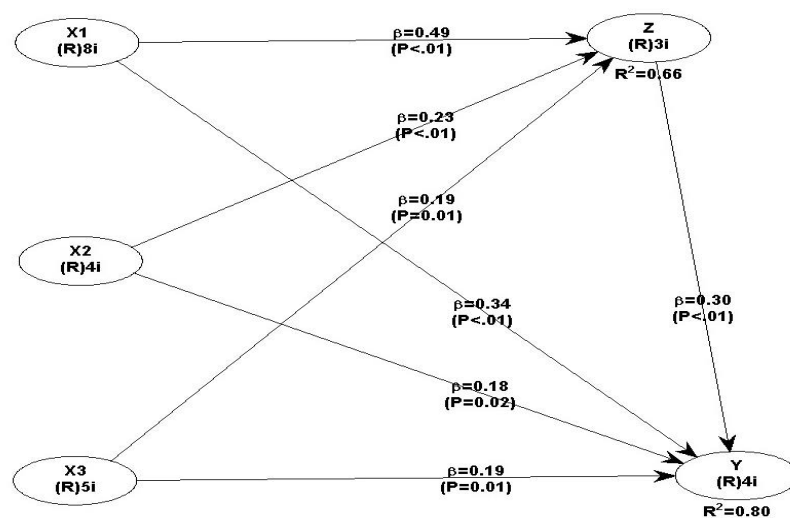


Table 2: Inner Model Results

Path	Path Co-efficient (β)	p-value	Result
Competency Development (X1) → Performance (Y)	0.184	0.022	Significant
Employee Management (X2) → Performance (Y)	0.337	<0.001	Significant
Rewards (X3) → Performance (Y)	0.195	0.014	Significant
Competency Development (X1) → Work-Life Balance (Z)	0.486	<0.001	Significant
Employee Management (X2) → Work-Life Balance (Z)	0.225	0.05	Significant
Rewards (X3) → Work-Life Balance (Z)	0.191	0.0	Significant

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Work-Life Balance (Z) → Performance (Y)	0.304	<0.001	Significant
Competency Development (X1) → Work-Life Balance (Z) → Performance (Y)	0.148	0.010	Significant
Employee Management (X2) → Work-Life Balance (Z) → Performance (Y)	0.168	0.014	Significant
Rewards (X3) → Work-Life Balance (Z) → Performance (Y)	0.148	0.012	Significant

The inner model analysis confirms that all hypothesized relationships (H1 to H10) are statistically significant. The direct effects indicate that Competency Development, Employee Management, and Rewards positively impact both Work-Life Balance and Performance. Additionally, Work-Life Balance significantly influences Performance, as shown by the path coefficient of 0.304. The mediation effects (H8, H9, H10) are also significant, underscoring the mediating role of Work-Life Balance between the independent variables and Performance. This model highlights the importance of Work-Life Balance in enhancing regional apparatus performance in Jember Regency. The R^2 values for Work-Life Balance (Z) and Performance (Y) are 0.66 and 0.80, respectively, indicating that the model explains 66% of the variance in Work-Life Balance and 80% in Performance, demonstrating a strong model fit.

Discussions

Impact of Competency Development on Performance

The study reveals that competency development positively influences performance, indicating that equipping employees with relevant skills and knowledge effectively enhances their output. This finding aligns with prior research emphasizing the importance of continuous training and development in boosting job performance [3]. Through structured competency-building programs, organizations can foster a skilled workforce capable of meeting organizational goals, supporting the premise of Scientific Management Theory, which advocates for optimized productivity through efficient practices [26]. Integrating competency development as part of employee management practices can significantly benefit organizations by addressing skill gaps and increasing productivity..

Impact of Employee Management on Performance

The results show a substantial positive effect of employee management on performance. Effective management practices such as regular feedback, performance monitoring, and supportive supervision contribute to higher levels of engagement and commitment, which are critical for enhancing individual and team productivity [7]. This aligns with the principles of Self-Determination Theory, where fulfilling psychological needs through supportive management fosters intrinsic motivation [28]. The findings imply that well-structured employee management strategies can create a conducive work environment that enhances motivation and organizational performance.

Impact of Rewards on Performance

The study confirms that rewards, both financial and non-financial, significantly enhance employee performance by reinforcing positive behaviors and driving motivation. This is consistent with previous research, highlighting that fair and consistent rewards increase employee engagement and organizational loyalty [21]. The use of rewards supports the Spillover Theory, which suggests that satisfaction gained in one domain, such as rewards, positively influences overall well-being and productivity [27]. Therefore, establishing a bal-

anced reward system can help retain talent, reduce turnover, and elevate performance levels within public sector organizations..

Influence of Competency Development on Work-Life Balance

The findings indicate that competency development positively affects work-life balance by enhancing employees' abilities to manage work demands effectively. This supports previous studies that link skill development with better time management and reduced stress [13]. The integration of competency development in HR practices not only fosters productivity but also contributes to improved work-life balance, a key factor in reducing burnout and maintaining employee well-being. This outcome underscores Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes competence as a fundamental need in fostering overall well-being [29].

Influence of Employee Management on Work-Life Balance

The positive impact of employee management on work-life balance reflects the role of supportive supervision and adequate leave policies in helping employees balance work and personal life. This finding is consistent with existing research, which suggests that flexible management practices reduce stress and promote job satisfaction [17]. Employee management strategies that promote work-life balance align with the Spillover Theory, as reducing work-related stress positively influences personal life, further enhancing job satisfaction and commitment [33]

Influence of Rewards on Work-Life Balance

Rewards are shown to positively influence work-life balance by acknowledging employees' contributions and motivating them, leading to lower stress levels and enhanced work satisfaction. Prior studies corroborate this, suggesting that rewards integrated with work-life balance policies improve well-being and reduce burnout [10]. By linking rewards with work-life balance, organizations reinforce the importance of employee well-being in achieving sustained productivity, supporting Spillover Theory by promoting satisfaction across life domains [11].

Role of Work-Life Balance in Enhancing Performance

Work-life balance has a direct positive effect on performance, affirming the role of well-being in enhancing productivity and job commitment. When employees achieve work-life balance, they tend to be more engaged and less stressed, which translates into better performance outcomes. This finding aligns with the conclusions of previous studies, indicating that a healthy balance between work and personal life increases productivity [9]. The role of work-life balance highlights Self-Determination Theory's emphasis on relatedness and autonomy as critical drivers of intrinsic motivation and performance [32].).

Mediating Effect of Work-Life Balance on the Relationship between Competency Development and Performance

The study demonstrates that work-life balance mediates the relationship between competency development and performance, suggesting that skill development indirectly enhances performance by promoting a healthier work-life balance. This finding resonates with the understanding that competency leads to better stress management, ultimately enhancing job satisfaction and productivity [15]. This mediation reflects the integration of Scientific Management Theory, as structured competency development indirectly optimizes productivity by promoting balance..

Mediating Effect of Work-Life Balance on the Relationship between Employee Management and Performance

Work-life balance also mediates the effect of employee management on performance, indicating that supportive and flexible management practices indirectly boost performance by improving work-life balance.

Previous studies support this, showing that management practices that foster balance enhance engagement and job satisfaction [16]. The mediating role of work-life balance aligns with Spillover Theory, reinforcing that improved work conditions positively influence personal life, thereby increasing performance [20]

Mediating Effect of Work-Life Balance on the Relationship between Rewards and Performance

Finally, work-life balance mediates the relationship between rewards and performance, emphasizing that a well-structured reward system indirectly improves performance by enhancing work-life balance. Rewards that support balance help reduce stress and encourage loyalty, fostering a productive workforce [21]. This finding aligns with Self-Determination Theory by illustrating that fulfilling extrinsic motivators, such as rewards, influences intrinsic outcomes like well-being, ultimately leading to higher performance.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significant role of competency development, employee management, and rewards in enhancing the performance of regional apparatus, with work-life balance serving as an essential mediating factor. Findings suggest that fostering employee skills, supportive management practices, and a well-structured reward system not only directly improve performance but also contribute to a healthier work-life balance, further enhancing productivity. By integrating HR practices that support both professional development and personal well-being, organizations, particularly in the public sector, can optimize performance and foster a sustainable, motivated workforce in Jember Regency.

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