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## **Impact of staff competencies and organizational culture on service performance of local government: mediating role of organizational innovativeness**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study proposes a model of service performance of local government influenced by staff competencies and organizational culture and mediated by organizational innovativeness. This is an empirical study using quantitative approach and a descriptive survey method to get the data from 130 staffs of the local government office as respondents. Data were collected through questionnaire and analyzed using Partial Least Square (PLS). The findings of this study are (1) organizational innovativeness is positively affected by staff competencies and organizational culture, (2) service performance is positively affected by staff competencies, organizational culture, and organizational innovativeness, (3) organizational innovativeness can serve as mediating variable for the relationship between staff competencies and service performance, also for the relationship between organizational culture and service performance. This study fulfills an understanding of the impact of staff competencies and organizational culture on the service performance of local government, mediated by organizational innovativeness.

**Keywords:** Local Government, Organizational Culture, Organizational Innovativeness, Service Performance, Staff Competencies

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Local government bodies play a pivotal role in serving the community, and achieving optimal service delivery is of paramount importance. The performance of these local government entities is influenced not only by the competence of their employees but also by the prevailing organizational culture. In this context, understanding the direct and indirect impacts of employee competence and organizational culture on the performance of local government services, mediated through organizational innovation, becomes the primary focus of this article.

Employee competence is a critical factor in determining their ability to efficiently and effectively carry out government tasks. Competent employees tend to possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and experience required to deliver high-quality services to the public. However, employee competence extends beyond individual capabilities and is closely linked to teamwork and the organizational culture within which they operate. Therefore, this article delves into how employee competence directly and indirectly influences the performance of local government services, with organizational innovation serving as the mediator.

In addition to employee competence, organizational culture plays a significant role in shaping the performance of local government services. Organizational culture encompasses the values, norms, and beliefs that prevail within an organization. A positive and service-oriented

culture can motivate employees to work collaboratively and enthusiastically, whereas an unhealthy culture may hinder performance. Within this framework, organizational innovation is considered a mediator between organizational culture and the performance of local government services. This article explores how an innovation-friendly organizational culture can enhance the performance of local government services through the mediation of organizational innovation.

West Bandung Regency (WBR) is a new regency in West Java formed in 2007 as an expansion of Bandung Regency. The local government has been experiencing various opportunities and challenges in managing its government. As a new local government, WBR is often the concern of many parties, both the community and external parties, especially related to the service performance of the local government. The vision of the local government is to realize the condition of aspirational, creative, excellent, and religious WBR based on economic development, optimization of natural resources, and the quality of human resources. The missions of WBR in 2018 – 2023 focus on (1) increase the coverage and quality of education, health, and other essential services for the wider community to build quality human resources; (2) realizing agroindustry and tourism as leading sectors along with other industries and potential resources to produce equitable, sustainable, and competitive economic growth; (3) improving the quality and quantity of physical, social, and economic infrastructure; and (4) realizing good governance based on the development of information technology and innovation. The local government has been implementing these visions and missions to achieve the goals by prioritizing service performance.

Service performance is an important concept and application to delivering public service (James, 2011). An established government can provide excellent service performance, but it is difficult for a newborn government to run its affairs. A new structural change may have disruptive effects on managerial behavior and organizational outcomes (Andrews & Boyne, 2012). WBR as the relatively new government does not yet have a high capacity to perform the service delivery. It is then essential to consider the aspects of service performance of the local government that can characterize the concept.

From several previous studies, service performance can be formed from five dimensions: effectiveness, efficiency, productivity, satisfaction, and accountability (Ammons, 2007; Beeri et al., 2019; Boyne, 2002; Osman et al., 2014). Effectiveness here is related to the level of process implementation and the achievement of organizational goals. Efficiency is the ratio of desired output to the required input for any local government activities. Productivity is a measure of economic performance that compares the amount of goods and services produced (output) with the amount of inputs used to produce those goods and services. Satisfaction is the act of fulfilling a need, desire, or appetite, or the feeling gained from such fulfillment for the stakeholder, internal (staff) and external (local community, partners, other governments). Accountability is an assurance that an individual or an organization will be evaluated on their performance or behavior related to something for which they are responsible. Nevertheless, service performance measurement in a local government is a complex task because the local government offer a wide range of services with both tangible and intangible outputs (Ghobadian & Ashworth, 1994).

Staff competencies can affect the service performance. The intercorrelation between staff competency and service performance has been proved by several previous study. The staff competency has a significant positive influence on enterprise financial performance and contextual performance of service-oriented manufacturing enterprises (Zhu et al., 2019). Furthermore, the level of personnel competency can optimize job performance (Chen et al., 2022). The competency and motivation of the staff can be the drivers of their satisfaction and performance (Adam & Kamase, 2019). In the service sector such as in higher education, the competency of administrative staffs has a significant contribution to their job performance (Amias & Segumpan, 2017).

Several previous studies outline the factors that reflect the staff competency: Strategic, Opportunity, Relationship, Conceptual, Organizing, dan Commitment competencies (Al Mamun et al., 2018; Man et al., 2002, 2008; Wickramaratne et al., 2014). Strategic competencies measure the ability to set the goal and vision, formulate the strategy, focus on benefits, adapt to growth, and accommodate sustainability. Opportunity competencies refer to customer orientation, environmental scanning, and opportunity recognition. Relationship competencies concern

cooperation and networking, using networks and connections, negotiation and persuasiveness. Conceptual competencies involve initiative-creativity-innovativeness, understanding complex information, and risk-taking. Organizing competencies relate to communication clarity, vision clarity, competitiveness and result orientation, flexibility and willingness to adapt. Finally, commitment competencies comprise passion, long and irregular hours, motivation and ambition, willingness to learn new things, accountability, and emotional coping.

Organizational culture also affects the service performance. The conducive culture in an organization can contribute to employee performance, that their performance in deliver the services is higher when the employees works in a favorable workplace (Kuswati, 2020). It has long been recognized that organizational culture is a critical factor in improving performance (Latif & Ullah, 2016). To achieve desired organizational outcomes such as higher performance, organizational culture is essential (Hogan & Coote, 2014). The quality of public service reflects the service performance that is influenced by managing organizational culture and change (Hadian, 2017). Additionally, organizational culture has a direct and indirect impact on employees' job performance (Shahzad et al., 2013).

Several previous studies have developed some dimensions of organizational culture because culture can be defined in different dimensions. The effective organizational culture comprises four dimensions: involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission (Abuzarqa, 2019; Davidson et al., 2007; Zakari et al., 2013). Involvement and consistency focus on internal environment, while adaptability and mission focus on external environment. At the same time, adaptability and involvement have a flexible element, while mission and consistency have a stable element. Involvement comprises empowerment, team orientation, and capability development. Consistency includes core values, agreement, and coordination. Adaptability consists of creating change, customer focus, and organizational learning. Finally, mission prioritizes strategic direction, goals, and vision.

Organizational innovativeness in this study presents as a mediating role for staff competencies and organizational culture with service performance. Several researches have studied the mediating role of organizational innovativeness on performance (Damanpour, 2018). Increasing organizational effectiveness through organizational innovativeness means moving toward a future state that is better than the present state (Jones, 2013). By implementing innovation, organizations are more likely to survive and prosper, and they are more likely to compete, be legitimate, and receive trust from the internal and external stakeholders. Aside from increasing productivity, efficiency, and performance, organizational innovativeness can also improve customer satisfaction, competition, and service quality (Demircioglu, 2016). Innovation can also reduce the costs of the products and services. Essentially, organizational innovativeness involves creating, introducing, and implementing new ideas, objectives, and tools to promote intentional and planned changes within an organization.

Most previous studies measure the organizational innovativeness from process innovation, structural innovation, cultural innovation, and human resources innovation (Aboramadan et al., 2020; Al Mamun et al., 2018; Damanpour, 2018; Demircioglu, 2016; Hogan & Coote, 2014). Process innovation refers to the deliver the core business to the public, paying attention to the changing public needs, and the accessibility of services to the public. Structural innovation may focus on the organization's propensity to innovation, knowledge creation of organizational innovativeness, and inter-functional cooperation. Cultural innovation involves adaptability to environmental shifts, technological changes, and readiness to embrace the paramount culture. Finally, human resources innovation has to do with knowledge and skills improvement of the staff and the implementation of relevant training for them.

The objective of this study is to propose a model of service performance of local government influenced by staff competencies and organizational culture and mediated by organizational innovativeness. First, we estimate the effect of staff competencies and organizational culture on organizational innovativeness. Second, we also estimate the effect of staff competencies organizational culture, and organizational innovativeness on service performance. Finally, we calculate the mediation effect of organizational innovativeness for the

relationship between staff competencies and service performance, also for the relationship between organizational culture and service performance.

**METHOD**

This empirical study utilizes a quantitative approach and a descriptive survey method to get the data from respondents. The population (and also the sample) was 130 staff of the local government office. Data were collected through a questionnaire and analyzed by Partial Least Square (PLS) to evaluate the measurement and structural model.

The construct of Staff Competencies (X1) is an exogenous variable that consists of six manifest variables: strategic competencies, opportunity competencies, relationship competencies, conceptual competencies, organizing competencies, and commitment competencies. Organizational Culture (X2) is also an exogenous variable that comprises involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission.

Organizational Innovativeness (M) functions as mediating variable as well as endogenous variable for Staff Competencies (X1) and Organizational Culture (X2). This mediating variable consist of four manifest variables: process innovation, structural innovation, cultural innovation, and human resources innovation. Finally, Service Performance (Y) is the endogenous variable that consist of five indicators: effectiveness, efficiency, productivity, satisfaction, and accountability.

Table 1 presents the measurement of each latent variable, manifest variable, and indicator in detail.

**Table 1. Measurement of Construct, Manifest Variable, and Indicator**

Latent Variable	Manifest Variable	Indicator
1. Staff Competencies (X1)	● Strategic competencies (X11)	1. ability to set the goal and vision 2. formulate the strategy 3. focus on benefits 4. adapt to growth 5. accommodate sustainability
	● Opportunity competencies (X12)	1. customer orientation 2. environmental scanning 3. opportunity recognition
	● Relationship competencies (X13)	1. cooperation and networking, 2. using networks and connections 3. negotiation and persuasiveness
	● Conceptual competencies (X14)	1. initiative-creativity-innovativeness 2. understanding complex information 3. helpful
	● Organizing competencies (X15)	1. communication clarity 2. vision clarity 3. competitiveness and result orientation, 4. flexibility and willingness to adapt
	● Commitment competencies (X16)	1. passion 2. long and irregular hours 3. motivation and ambition 4. willingness to learn new things 5. accountability 6. emotional coping

<b>Latent Variable</b>	<b>Manifest Variable</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
2. Organizational Culture (X2)	● Involvement (X21)	1. empowerment 2. team orientation 3. capability development
	● Consistency (X22)	1. core values 2. agreement 3. coordination
	● Adaptability (X23)	1. creating change 2. customer focus 3. organizational learning
	● Mission (X24)	1. strategic direction 2. goals 3. vision
3. Organizational Innovativeness (M)	● Process Innovation (M1)	● deliver the core business to the public ● paying attention to the changing public needs ● accessibility of services to the public
	● Structural Innovation (M2)	● organization's propensity to innovation ● knowledge creation of organizational innovativeness ● inter-functional cooperation
	● Cultural Innovation (M3)	● adaptability to environmental shifts ● adaptability to technological changes ● readiness to embrace the paramount culture
	● Human Resources Innovation (M4)	● staff knowledge improvement ● staff skills improvement ● implementation of relevant staff training
4. Service Performance (Y)	● Effectiveness	● level of process implementation and achievement of organizational goals
	● Efficiency	● ratio of desired output to the required input for any local government activities
	● Productivity	● measure of economic performance that compares the amount of goods and services produced (output) with the amount of inputs used to produce those goods and services.
	● Satisfaction	● act of fulfilling a need, desire, or appetite, or the feeling gained from such fulfillment for the stakeholder
	● Accountability	● assurance that an individual or an organization will be evaluated on their performance or behavior

Latent Variable	Manifest Variable	Indicator
		related to something for which they are responsible

Figure 1 presents the conceptual model of service performance of local government influenced by staff competencies and organizational culture and mediated by organizational innovativeness.

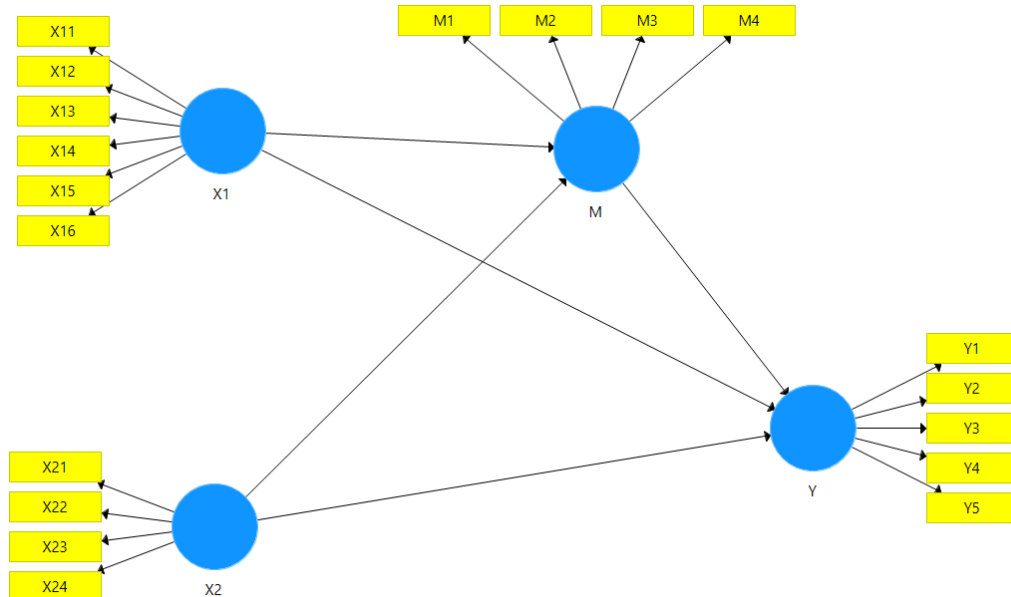


Figure 1 Conceptual Model

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### Finding

The output of PLS here reported the estimated measurement and structural models based on the modeling and analysis of composite variables or indicators (see Figure 2).

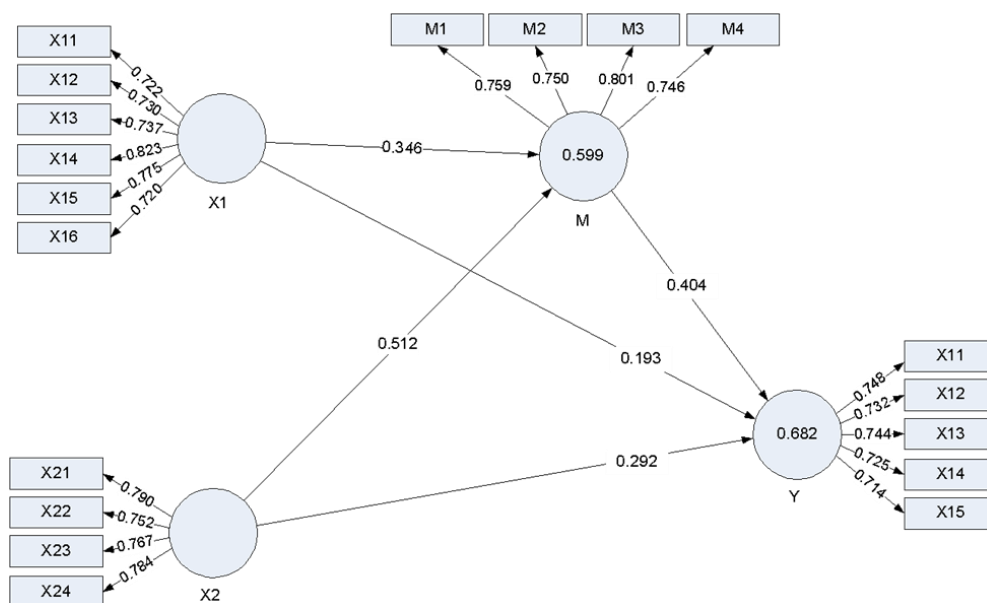


Figure 2 Estimated Model

Based on the output of the estimated model, the path coefficient of  $X1 \rightarrow M$  is 0.346,  $X2 \rightarrow M$  is 0.512,  $X1 \rightarrow Y$  is 0.193,  $X2 \rightarrow Y$  is 0.292, and  $M \rightarrow Y$  is 0.404. The indirect effect of  $X1 \rightarrow Y$  via  $M$  is 0.140 (from  $0.346 * 0.404$ ), so the total effect of  $X1 \rightarrow Y$  is 0.486 (from  $0.346 + 0.140$ ). The indirect effect of  $X2 \rightarrow Y$  via  $M$  is 0.207 (from  $0.512 * 0.404$ ), so the total effect of  $X2 \rightarrow Y$  is 0.719 (from  $0.512 + 0.207$ ). The equations of this model are:

$$M = 0.346 X1 + 0.512 X2, \text{ with R-Square} = 0.599 \tag{1}$$

$$Y = 0.193 X1 + 0.292 X2 + 0.404 M, \text{ with R-Square} = 0.682 \tag{2}$$

Referring to Equation (1), the overall effect of the value of R-Square is 0.599 which means that 59.9% of the variance of organizational innovativeness can be explained by the staff competencies and organizational culture. Referring to Equation (2), the overall effect of the value of R-Square is 0.682 which means 68.2% of the variance of service performance can be explained by staff competencies, organizational culture, and organizational innovativeness.

**Table 2. Describes the outer loadings of each construct.**

<b>Table 2. Outer Loadings</b>				
	X1	X2	M	Y
X11	0.722			
X12	0.730			
X13	0.737			
X14	0.823			
X15	0.775			
X16	0.720			
X21		0.790		
X22		0.752		
X23		0.767		
X24		0.784		
M1			0.759	
M2			0.750	
M3			0.801	
M4			0.746	
Y1				0.748
Y2				0.732
Y3				0.744
Y4				0.725
Y5				0.714

Refer to the quality criteria of PLS, the values of Cronbach’s Alpha (CA) of all latent variables are more than 0.7 and the values of composite reliability (CR) are also more than 0.7. The values of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of all latent variables are more than 0.5 (see Table 3). These values indicate that all constructs are reliable and valid consistent with the construct reliability and validity.

**Table 3. Construct Reliability and Validity**

	CA	CR	AVE
X1	0.904	0.846	0.574
X2	0.856	0.776	0.598
M	0.849	0.763	0.584
Y	0.853	0.784	0.537

To estimate of effect size, the value of f-square is used as the measure of practical significance in terms of the magnitude of the effect. These effect-size values indicate that the local effect size of each construct within the context of a multivariate regression model is significant. Table 4 reports the effect-size value of each path.

**Table 4. Effect-Size Value**

Path	f <sup>2</sup>	Effect
X1 → M	0.186	Moderate
X1 → Y	0.053	Small
X2 → M	0.407	Substantial
X2 → Y	0.101	Small
M → Y	0.176	Moderate

Table 5 recapitulate the results of hypothesis testing. In model M, organizational innovativeness is influenced by staff competencies and organizational culture (with the path coefficient = 0.345 and 0.512 respectively) with the t-stat = 4.855 (< 0.05) and 7.188 (< 0.05). Based on these criteria, it can be emphasized that the hypotheses can be accepted. Model Y shows that service performance can be influenced by staff competencies, organizational culture, and organizational innovativeness. Through the t-test, it is found that the t-stat value for each path is significant. Based on these criteria, we accept all hypotheses. Furthermore, the indirect effect from X1 on Y via M is 0.140 and from X2 on Y via M is 0.207. The mediation effect of both paths is partial mediation. It implies that organizational innovativeness has a mediation effect for staff competencies and organizational culture to influence service performance. In this case, organizational innovativeness will strengthen the effect of staff competencies and organizational culture on service performance.

**Table 5. Recapitulation of Hypotheses Testing**

Model M	X1	X2
path	0.346	0.512
tstat	4.855	7.188
ttab	1.962	1.962
p	0.000	0.000
signif	Sig.	Sig.
Hypothesis	Accept	Accept

Model Y	X1	X2	M
path	0.193	0.292	0.404
tstat	2.582	3.572	4.709
ttab	1.962	1.962	1.962
p	0.010	0.000	0.000
signif	Sig.	Sig.	Sig.
Hypothesis	Accept	Accept	Accept

Indirect	M	Mediation Effect
X1	0.140	Partial mediation
X2	0.207	Partial mediation



## **Discussion**

The result outputs show that the effect of staff competencies on organizational innovativeness is significant, indicating the vital role of staff competencies in determining the level of organizational innovativeness. The conceptual and organizing competencies are the most aspects that shape cultural innovation in organizational innovativeness (Škerlavaj et al., 2010). Conceptual competence puts forward aspects of initiative, creativity, and innovativeness to adapt better to the environment and technological changes (Yu et al., 2020). The communication and vision clarity, supported by competitiveness and result orientation, may help the employees to be more flexible and adaptive to embrace the organizational culture innovatively (Holtorf, 2018).

The adaptability to environmental shifts and technological changes is also affected by organizational culture, characterized by involvement and adaptability that empower the employee's capability development to focus on customers and build organizational learning (Chiva et al., 2014). However, to improve human resources innovation, local governments need to focus on the internal environment by improving staff knowledge and skills through relevant training (Yousef, 2017). The right direction in organizational culture will determine the innovation in process, structural, cultural, and human resources.

The findings of this study confirm several previous studies related to the effect of staff competencies and organizational culture on organizational innovativeness. Changes in human resources to improve employee competencies make a major contribution to organizational innovativeness (Sung & Kim, 2021). Conducive organizational culture can eventually boost the implementation of cultural innovation (Škerlavaj et al., 2010).

Based on result outputs, staff competencies, organizational culture, and organizational innovativeness affect the service performance level in local government. The results confirm that staff competencies can directly influence service performance as proven by several previous studies (Adam & Kamase, 2019; Amias & Segumpan, 2017; Chen et al., 2022; Zhu et al., 2019). Furthermore, this research confirms several previous studies that organizational culture affects service performance significantly (Abuzarqa, 2019; Hadian, 2017; Kuswati, 2020; Shahzad et al., 2013, 2013).

Partially, organizational innovativeness has greatly influenced the service performance of local government. Besides that, organizational innovativeness has a mediating effect on the relationship between staff competencies and organizational culture with service performance. Besides that, organizational innovativeness has a mediating effect on the relationship between staff competencies and service performance, also the relationship between organizational culture and service performance. The aspects of the process and cultural innovation in organizational innovativeness have a dominant facet affecting the effectiveness and productivity of service performance. Refer to several previous studies (Aboramadan et al., 2020; Hogan & Coote, 2014; Škerlavaj et al., 2010), these findings confirm the mediating role of organizational innovativeness in the relationship between staff competencies and organizational culture with service performance.

## **CONCLUSION**

The service performance of local government cannot be separated from the staff competencies, organizational culture, and organizational innovativeness. The estimation shows the importance of staff competencies and organizational culture on organizational innovativeness, also the importance of staff competencies, organizational culture, and organizational innovativeness on service performance. In this case, organizational innovativeness is positively affected by staff competencies and organizational culture. Service performance is positively affected by staff competencies, organizational culture, and organizational innovativeness. Organizational innovativeness can serve as mediating variable for the relationship between staff competencies and service performance, also for the relationship between organizational culture and service performance. To improve the staff competencies, the local government must pay attention to commitment and strategic competencies. Organizational innovativeness can be enhanced by fixing the aspects of structural and human resources. Finally, the service

performance can be better if the local government can adjust the satisfaction and accountability. This study, as a whole, fulfills an understanding of the impact of staff competencies and organizational culture on the service performance of local government, mediated by organizational innovativeness.

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