

**THE EFFECT OF LMX AND COMPETENCE ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE
WITH MOTIVATION AS A MEDIATING VARIABLE
(Study at the Regional Secretariat of Temanggung Regency)**



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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to see how the influence of LMX and Competence on Performance with Motivation as a mediating variable in the Regional Secretariat of Temanggung Regency. The population is the total number of civil servants in the Temanggung Regency Regional Secretariat of 101 employees. The study used non-probability sampling using a saturated sampling technique where the sample number was 101 employees. Data collection is based on questionnaires, and then data analysis uses multiple regression analysis techniques that function to find out how variables are interrelated. The findings of the study indicate that LMX has a significant and positive impact on motivation, competence has a positive and significant effect on motivation, competence is positively and significantly correlated with performance, motivation has a significant and positive effect on performance, motivation mediates the influence of LMX on performance, and motivation mediates the influence of competence on performance. LMX has no effect on performance.

Keywords: LMX, Competence, Motivation, Employee Performance

INTRODUCTION

Organizations are required to have good performance. According to Amstrong (2022), kinerja is a key factor in the success and survival of the organization. High performance allows organizations to achieve their goals, meet stakeholder expectations, and maintain competitiveness. In addition, to realize good and conducive governance within the scope of Government, one of which is through employee performance management.

Performance according to Mangkunegara (2017) is the result of work in terms of quality and quantity achieved by an employee in carrying out his duties in accordance with the responsibilities given to him. Amstrong (2022) identified several key factors that affect performance in organizations. These factors are individual factors (*Personal Factors*), which include the level of skills, competence, motivation, and commitment possessed by individuals. The second factor is *Leadership Factors* which include the quality of encouragement, guidance, and support provided by a manager or leader to his team. The third factor is team factors, including the quality of support and interaction between team members that can affect individual performance. The fourth factor is system factors, namely work systems, procedures, and the availability of facilities provided by the organization to support work. The last factor is *Contextual/Situational Factors*, which are the level of pressure and changes in the internal and external environment that can affect performance.

Based on the opinion of Timple (1999) that performance can be influenced by internal and external factors. One of the external factors is the relationship between superiors and subordinates (LMX). According to Graen & Uhl-Bien (1995) LMX is a theory that emphasizes the two-way relationship (dyadik) between the leader and each of his subordinates, where the quality of this relationship varies depending on the individual. According to Herzberg (1968), the two-factor theory states that motivational factors, namely rewards and responsibilities, play an important role in improving performance. The same thing is also conveyed by Robbins & Judge (2024) who states that motivation is one of the individual factors that affect performance.

Similar previous research, including Kuswibowo's (2021) research, shows that competence has a positive and significant effect on employee productivity or performance. Research conducted by Pitoyo and Sawitri (2016) shows that *Leader Member Exchange (LMX)* has a significant effect on performance. Research by Purnamarini and Kurniawan (2023) states that *Leader Member Exchange (LMX)* has a significant effect on motivation. Then Dwiyanti's (2019) research on competence has a positive effect on work motivation. A different thing was conveyed by Hidayat (2021) stating that competence does not affect performance. Furthermore, Ririnama and Risambessy (2024) stated that LMX does not have a significant effect on employee performance.

It is explained that in the performance data of employees of the Temanggung Regency Regional Secretariat in 2023 and 2024, there are still several employees whose performance has not been fully realized. In 2024, the performance gap is found in several employees where there is a considerable gap. The performance of these employees can affect the performance of the organization. This performance gap can be caused by several factors, one of which is that the realization of the budget in the current year is not fully absorbed. In principle, the planning department has targeted the budget according to needs, even exceeding the previous budget as a reserve in case of unexpected activities.

This study aims to analyze the influence of LMX on motivation, analyze the influence of competence on motivation, analyze the influence of LMX on employee performance, analyze the influence of competence on employee performance, analyze the influence of motivation on employee performance, analyze how motivation mediates the influence of LMX on employee performance, and analyze how motivation mediates the influence of competence on employee performance.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Conveyed by Liden and Maslyn (1998) LMX is a leadership approach that emphasizes the quality of the working relationship between a leader and each of his followers, which can affect the results of individuals, groups, and organizations. This understanding emphasizes that the quality of the relationship between leaders and members greatly influences the results of individual and organizational work. The LMX dimension according to Dienesch and Liden (1987) is divided into 3 dimensions, namely *Affect*, *Loyalty*, and *Contribution*.

According to Spencer and Spencer (1993), it is stated that competence is the underlying characteristic of a person related to the effectiveness of individual performance in his work or the basic characteristics of individuals who have a causal relationship or as a cause and effect with criteria that are used as a reference, effective or excellent or superior performance in the workplace or in certain situations. Then it was also conveyed by Amstrong (2014) explaining that the term competence refers to the fundamental characteristics of a person that produces effective or superior performance. The Competency Dimension according to Spencer and Spencer (1993) consists of *skills*, *knowledge*, *self concepts*, *Traits*, and *Motives*.

According to Sedarmayanti (2013), motivation is the desire found in an individual that stimulates him to take action. According to Luthans (2011), motivation is a process that begins with a need, which creates the drive to achieve goals that can satisfy needs. Mitchel (1974), stated that motivation is influenced by three main components, namely *expectancy*, *valence*, and the relationship between action and outcome (*instrumentality*). Within the framework of *Expectancy Theory*, a person's competence greatly affects expectations, namely the extent to which individuals believe that they are capable of achieving the expected performance. This means that the higher a person's competence, the greater his confidence that he can succeed, so his motivation increases. The dimensions of motivation according to McClelland (1971) are Need for achievement (nAch), Need for Power (nPow), and Need for Affiliation (nAff).

Mangkunegara in his book (2017) Performance is the result of work in terms of quality and quantity achieved by an employee in carrying out his duties in accordance with the responsibilities given to him. Similar to what Mathis and Jackson (2006) mentioned, Performance is basically what a person does and does not do, encompassing quantity, quality, punctuality, presence, and cooperation. The performance dimension according to Amstrong (2010) consists of work results, competence, behavior, and self-development.

Previous research explains (Purnamarini and Kurniawan, 2023) the relationship between LMX and motivation which states that LMX has a significant effect on motivation.

This explains that the better the relationship between superiors and subordinates, the better the motivation will be created. In addition, motivation is also influenced by competence as explained by (Dwiyanti, 2019) stating that the better the competence possessed by an employee has a positive effect on motivation.

Employee performance is inseparable from LMX. In the research conducted by (Pitoyo and Sawitri, 2016) it was explained that LMX has a significant effect on employee performance. LMX here does not only look at the behavior of its superiors but emphasizes the quality of the relationship between superiors and subordinates. The strong influence and positive behavior of leaders will improve employee performance in an organization. The same thing is true for the effect of competence on performance. It was conveyed by (Siregar, 2020) that there is a positive and significant influence between competence on employee performance. The more competent an employee is in a job, the better the performance will be produced.

A person who always gets motivated and has high motivation will be able to complete the job well and get maximum results. This is as explained by (Habibie, 2024) that work motivation has a significant effect on employee performance. Motivation is also able to mediate the influence between LMX on performance and competence on performance. It is explained with research by (Soliha, et al 2018) that motivation is proven to perfectly mediate LMX on performance. Research by (Setyowati, 2023) states that motivation can mediate the influence of competence on performance.

The synthesis of this study shows that LMX and competence are important elements in producing good performance in the Government sector. The success of the implementation of these two aspects depends on one of them is the motivation of employees who continue to be nurtured. The development of a comprehensive measurement framework is also crucial in ensuring the effectiveness of the existing measures.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a data collection method through questionnaires. The questionnaire used used a Likert scale of 1-7. The population in this study is the total number of State Civil Apparatus (ASN) in the Regional Secretariat of Temanggung Regency amounting to 101 employees. Sampling technique using *Non-probability sampling*, where sampling techniques are used to take the required number of samples (Sugiyono, 2013). Using the saturated sample technique, which is a sample technique in which all members of the population are used as samples, namely a total of 101 employees. In this study, a type of primary data was used where data was obtained from respondents directly and secondary data in the form of employee performance data (SKP) documents. Test the instrument by measuring the validity and reliability of the research. Validity was measured using the analysis of the factors of the KMO and *Loading Factor*. SMEs with a value > 0.5 where it can be interpreted that the sufficiency of the sample is fulfilled and the analysis of factors can be continued (Ghozali, 2018). Meanwhile *Loading factor*, if the numbers in the matrix component ≥ 0.4 then the indicator in the questionnaire question is said to be valid. Reliability is the extent to which the results of a measurement used remain reliable and free from measurement errors (Darma, 2021). By using the

Cronbach's alpha with a $\geq$ level of 0.7. If the value *Cronbach's alpha* $\geq$ significant level, the instrument is said to be reliable.

Multiple regression analysis It is simply used to predict how the value of the dependent variable will change when the value of the independent variable is increased or decreased (Sugiyono, 2013). Consists of R Test and F Test. R Test In essence, it measures how far the model's ability to explain the variation of dependent variables. While The F test is used to find out whether independent variables together or simultaneously affect dependent variables. To show how far an independent variable influences in explaining dependent variables are carried out a T test or hypothesis test (Ghozali, 2021). Independent variables have a significant influence on dependent variables if the value of Sig < 0.05 . In contrast to independent variables, it does not have a specific effect on the dependent variable if the Sig value is < 0.05 . The mediation test is used to find out whether the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable is mediated by another variable (Oscar, 2024). The mediation test used in the study used *Sobel Test Calculator*.

Research Hypothesis

This study aims to analyze the influence of LMX and competence on performance with motivation as a mediating variable. Based on the literature review and previous research, the hypotheses proposed in this study are as follows:

- H1: The influence of Leader Member Exchange (LMX) has a positive effect on motivation;
- H2: Competence has a positive effect on motivation;
- H3: The influence of Leader Member Exchange (LMX) has a positive effect on performance;
- H4: Competence has a positive effect on performance;
- H5: Motivation has a positive effect on performance;
- H6: Motivation mediates the relationship between Leader Member Exchange (LMX) and performance;
- H7: Motivation mediates the relationship between competence and performance.

Research Model

This research model describes the relationship between independent variables (LMX and competence) and dependent variables (performance) and mediating variables (motivation). This model can be illustrated as follows:

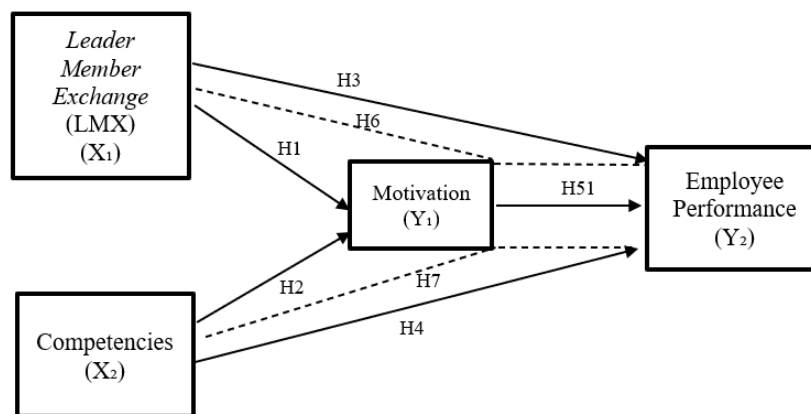


Figure 1

This research model shows that independent variables have a direct relationship with dependent variables and are influenced by mediation variables. The test will be carried out through multiple regression analysis. The study uses a quantitative approach with a data collection technique through a questionnaire with a Likert scale of 1-7. The data analysis technique used was a linear regression test to test the influence of each variable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following are the results of the research obtained using SPSS, namely:

Table 1
Multiple Linear Regression

	Equations	Equation Regression Model						
		Test Model			Hypothesis Test			
		Adj R Square	F	Sig	B	T	Sig	Information
	$Y_1 = a_1 X_1 + a_2 X_2 + e$							
1	$X_1 \rightarrow Y_1$ The effect of LMX on motivation	0,606	77,879	0,000	0,429	5,560	0,000	Accepted hypotheses
2	$X_2 \rightarrow Y_2$ The Effect of Competency on Motivation				0,452	5,864	0,000	Accepted hypotheses
	$Y_2 = \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 Y_3 + e$							
1	$X_1 \rightarrow Y_2$ The effect of LMX on performance	0,777	117,318	0,000	-0,064	-0,961	0,339	Hypothesis rejected
2	$X_2 \rightarrow Y_2$ The effect of competence on performance				0,669	9,927	0,000	Accepted hypotheses
3	$Y_1 \rightarrow Y_2$ The effect of motivation on performance				0,325	4,279	0,000	Accepted hypotheses

Source : Primary data to be processed in 2025

Based on Table 1, the regression equation is detailed as follows:

Regression Model Equation 1:

$$Y_1 = 0.429x_1 + 0.452x_2 + e$$

Regression Model Equation 2:

$$Y_2 = -0.064x_1 + 0.669x_2 + 0.325y_1 + e$$

Test Model

R Test

R Test of LMX Variables and Competency to Motivation

Based on Table 1 above, it is known that the *Adjusted R Square* value is 0.606 (60.6%) which means that 60.6% of motivation can be explained by LMX and competence.

While the rest ($100\% - 60.6\% = 39.4\%$) were explained by other causes outside the model used in this study.

R Test LMX Variables, Competence, Motivation for Performance

Based on table 1 above, it is known that the *Adjusted R Square* value is 0.777 (77.7%) which means that 77.7% of performance can be explained by LMX, competence, and motivation. While the rest ($100\% - 77.7\% = 22.3\%$) were explained by other causes outside the model used in this study.

Test F

F Test of LMX Variables and Competency to Performance

Based on table 1 above, the F value is calculated as 77.879 with a significance of 0.000 less than 0.005. This shows that LMX and competence have a joint effect on performance. This means that the model fits.

F Test of LMX Variables, Competence and Motivation for Performance

Based on table 1 above, the F value is calculated as 117.318 with a significance of 0.000 less than 0.005. This shows that LMX, competence, and motivation have a combined effect on performance. This means that the model fits.

T Test

The effect of LMX on motivation was 0.429 and Sig $0.000 < 0.005$. This shows that LMX has a positive effect on motivation which means that the higher the LMX, the more employee motivation will increase. The effect of competence on motivation was 0.452 and Sig $0.000 < 0.005$. This shows that competence has a positive effect on motivation, which means that the better the competence, the more employee motivation will increase. The effect of LMX on performance was 0.064 (negative beta) and Sig $0.339 > 0.005$. This shows that LMX has no effect on performance. The effect of competence on performance was 0.669 and Sig $0.000 < 0.005$. This shows that competence has a positive effect on performance, which means that the better the competence, the more employee performance will be improved. The effect of motivation on performance was 0.325 and Sig $0.000 < 0.005$. This shows that motivation has a positive effect on the performance of the employee, which means that the higher the motivation, the more employee performance will be improved.

The effect of LMX on motivation

This study shows that there is a significant influence between LMX variables on motivation. This influence is positive which means that the better the LMX, the higher the motivation. This is supported by respondents' responses to the LMX indicator with the highest mean value of 6.33, namely $X_{1.4}$ which states that the respondents are jointly responsible for the success of the team. In line with these indicators, the relationship between LMX and motivation, which is characterized by trust, open communication, and leadership support, encourages team members to feel valued and be an important part of the work group. This feeling fosters work motivation, as respondents not only work for personal gain, but are also encouraged to contribute to the overall success of the team. Thus, high-quality LMX strengthens the intrinsic motivation of employees to be responsible, cooperative, and strive optimally in achieving organizational goals.

The results of this study are also supported by research by Purnamarini and Kurniawan (2023) which states that LMX has a significant effect on motivation. A similar study by Ilham and Herawati (2017) found that LMX has a positive effect on motivation.

The effect of competence on motivation

This study shows that there is a significant influence between competency variables on motivation. This influence is positive, meaning that the higher the competence possessed by the individual, the higher the level of motivation in work. Supported by the respondent's response to the competency indicator with the highest mean value of 6.43 on the X 2.6 indicator which states that the respondent is responsible for every work charged. In line with these indicators, the relationship between competence and motivation explains that the competencies possessed by respondents make them feel capable and confident in completing the tasks given. This sense of ability then drives the emergence of work motivation, as competent individuals tend to have an internal drive to get the job done well and achieve optimal results. Thus, competence plays an important role in increasing motivation, which is reflected in the respondent's attitude of responsibility towards every job they are tasked with.

The results of a similar study are supported by Dwiyanti (2019) who stated that competence affects work motivation. The same thing was also conveyed by Parashakti (2020) stating that competence has a significant and positive effect on motivation.

The effect of LMX on performance

This study shows that there is a negative influence between LMX variables on performance. LMX has no effect on performance. It is supported by the respondents' responses to the LMX indicator with the lowest mean value of 5.19 at X 1.6 which states that respondents are willing to make efforts to exceed the demands of formal work. This explains that the relatively low mean value indicates that the quality of the relationship between the leader and subordinate is not fully able to encourage employees to give extra effort outside of their formal duties. This condition causes the existing LMX relationship to not contribute significantly to performance improvement, so employee performance is more influenced by other factors outside of LMX.

The results of this study are supported by a similar study conducted by Ririnama and Risambessy (2024) which stated that LMX does not have a significant effect on employee performance.

The effect of competence on performance

This study shows that there is a significant influence between competency variables on performance. Supported by the respondent's response to the competency indicator with the highest mean value of 6.43 on the X 2.6 indicator which states that the respondent is responsible for every work charged. The high mean value shows that the respondents have a good level of competence, reflected in the attitude of responsibility in carrying out their duties. Adequate competence makes respondents able to complete work effectively and appropriately, so that it has a direct impact on improving performance. Thus, the higher the competence possessed, the more optimal the performance produced.

This is supported by a similar study by Siregar (2020) that competence has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Likewise, research conducted by Habibie (2024) shows that competencies have a significant influence on employee performance.

Motivation mediates the influence of LMX on performance

This study shows that motivation perfectly mediates the relationship between LMX and performance. Motivation as a mediator plays a significant role in the relationship between *LMX* and Performance with strong and significant indirect effects. Supported by the respondent's response to the motivation indicator with the highest mean value of 6.44 at Y_{1.1} which stated that the respondent always had a strong desire to complete the task well. LMX's relationship is characterized by leadership attention, good communication, and trust and support that make employees feel valued and cared for. This feeling then fosters motivation from within which is reflected in the employee's strong desire to complete tasks well. This motivation further drives performance improvement.

This is supported by research conducted by Soliha and Kasiyadi (2018) which states that motivation variables perfectly mediate Leader Member Exchange (LMX) and performance.

Motivation mediates the influence of competence on performance

This study shows that motivation perfectly mediates the relationship between competence and performance. Motivation as a mediator plays a significant role in the relationship between Competence and Performance. Competency does not directly improve employee performance, but first affects their motivation level. Supported by respondents' responses to the motivation indicator with the highest mean value of 6.44 on Y_{1.1} which states that the respondent always has a strong desire to complete the task well. The competencies possessed by employees do not directly improve performance, but first play a role in fostering work motivation. Good competence, both in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, makes employees feel capable and confident in carrying out their duties. This condition encourages the emergence of motivation, which is reflected in the strong desire of employees to complete tasks well.

Supporting research was conducted by Setyowati (2022) who stated that competence has a positive and significant effect on employee performance mediated by motivation.

CONCLUSION

From the results of the research, the researcher got several things that could be conveyed as information related to the Influence of *LMX* and Competency on Employee Performance with Motivation as a Mediating Variable and it can be concluded that LMX has a positive effect on motivation, meaning that the better LMX, the more employee motivation will increase. Competence has a positive effect on motivation, meaning that the better the eating competence, the more employee motivation will be increased. LMX has no effect on performance, meaning that the better LMX is not able to improve employee performance and vice versa. Competence has a positive effect on performance, meaning that the better the competence, the more employee performance will be improved. Motivation has a positive effect on performance, meaning that the higher the motivation to eat, the more employee performance will be improved. Motivation mediates the influence of LMX on performance, meaning that LMX does not have a direct effect on performance, but affects performance through motivation. The better the LMX, the higher the employee motivation, and this increased motivation then drives performance improvement. Motivation mediates the influence of competence on performance, meaning that competence does not directly

increase performance, but first increases motivation, and high motivation which then encourages performance improvement.

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