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# Organizational Communication, Culture, And Competence Effects On Employee Performance: Commitment Mediation At Lhokseumawe City Secretariat

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**Abstract**

*This study examines the effects of organizational communication, organizational culture, and competence on employee performance, with organizational commitment as a mediating variable at the Lhokseumawe City Regional Secretariat. A quantitative survey was conducted involving 119 employees selected using saturated sampling. Data were collected through a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with WarpPLS 7.0. The results show that organizational communication, organizational culture, and competence have positive and significant effects on organizational commitment. Organizational culture and organizational commitment significantly improve employee performance, whereas organizational communication and competence have no significant direct effects. Organizational commitment has the strongest direct effect on employee performance ($\beta = 0.770$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, organizational commitment fully mediates the effects of organizational communication and competence on employee performance and partially mediates the effect of organizational culture. These findings highlight organizational commitment as a central mechanism for translating organizational factors into employee performance and provide practical implications for human resource management in local government institutions.*

**Keywords: Organizational Communication, Organizational Culture, Competence, Organizational Commitment, Employee Performance.**



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## INTRODUCTION

Human resources constitute a crucial factor in determining organizational effectiveness, reflecting the capacity of government institutions to deliver services to the public (Sulaimiah & Abidin, 2022). Employee performance is influenced not only by individual capabilities but also by organizational conditions, including organizational communication, organizational culture, and competence (Alshaer, 2025) (Dewi et al, 2024). These factors are particularly relevant to the Regional Secretariat of Lhokseumawe City, which plays a strategic role in supporting local government administration.

Institutional data indicate that employee performance at the Regional Secretariat of Lhokseumawe City fluctuated during 2019–2024. Performance achievement exceeded the target in 2019 and 2020, reaching 109.72% and 109.98%, respectively, but declined to 92.32% in 2021 and 92.98% in 2022. Although it increased to 100.28% in 2023, performance achievement decreased substantially to 83.44% in 2024, below the target of 95.98%. The average program achievement was also only 66.67%, while improvement in the quality of local government administration reached 87.19%. These conditions indicate that employee performance remains inconsistent and require further investigation of the organizational factors underlying such fluctuations.

Previous studies have produced inconsistent findings regarding the effects of organizational communication, organizational culture, and competence on employee performance (Hidayat & Sembiring, 2024) (Suantara et al, 2020). Organizational communication has been found to have significant positive effects in some studies, but insignificant or negative effects in others . Similar inconsistencies have been reported for organizational culture and competence (Hidayat et al, 2022). These conflicting findings constitute an inconsistency gap, indicating that the relationships among these variables have not been conclusively established.

A second gap concerns the contextual gap. Much of the existing evidence has been generated in private or non-governmental organizations, whereas local government institutions operate within distinctive bureaucratic structures, administrative procedures, and public-service responsibilities (Korda & Rachmawati, 2022). Therefore, findings from non-governmental settings cannot necessarily be generalized to local government organizations such as the Regional Secretariat of Lhokseumawe City.

A third gap concerns the mediation mechanism. Previous studies have reported conflicting evidence regarding the role of organizational commitment in mediating the relationships between organizational communication, organizational culture,


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competence, and employee performance (Kurniasari et al, 2018) (Lannes, 2021). Some studies confirm significant mediation, whereas others report insignificant mediation (Lin et al, 2024). Moreover, several studies have primarily examined direct relationships rather than integrating the three organizational predictors and organizational commitment into a single model.

Therefore, this study addresses these gaps by simultaneously examining the effects of organizational communication, organizational culture, and competence on employee performance, while positioning organizational commitment as a mediating variable within a local government context. The study contributes empirically by testing whether organizational commitment explains how organizational factors are translated into employee performance at the Regional Secretariat of Lhokseumawe City. The findings are expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of employee performance management in local government organizations.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Organizational Communication

Organizational communication refers to a series of formal and informal communication activities used to convey and exchange information among members of an organization. Effective organizational communication is characterized by clarity, openness, trust, smooth information flow, and accessibility of information, enabling employees to understand their responsibilities and organizational expectations (Lannes, 2021). This study measures organizational communication using seven indicators: information clarity, communication openness, communication trust, information flow, communication effectiveness, information availability, and understanding of policies and expectations.

### Organizational Culture

Organizational culture represents a set of shared values, norms, and behavioral patterns that guide how organizational members act and interact in carrying out their work (Robbins & Judge, 2013). A strong organizational culture can provide clear behavioral standards and encourage employees to align their activities with organizational objectives. This study adopts seven indicators of organizational culture: innovation and risk-taking, attention to detail, outcome orientation, people orientation, team orientation, aggressiveness, and stability (Robbins & Judge, 2013).


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**Competence**

Competence refers to the fundamental characteristics possessed by employees, including motives, traits, self-concept, knowledge, and skills that are causally related to effective or superior performance in a particular job or situation (Spencer & Spencer, 2008). In this study, competence is measured through seven indicators: achievement orientation, organizational awareness, initiative, flexibility, service orientation, team leadership, and self-control.

**Organizational Commitment**

Organizational commitment is a psychological state that reflects the relationship between employees and the organization and influences their decision to remain members of the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Strong organizational commitment reflects employees' attachment, loyalty, and willingness to contribute to organizational objectives. This study measures organizational commitment through seven indicators: organizational pride, sense of belonging, emotional attachment, perceived cost of leaving, need to remain, moral obligation, and feeling of having to remain.

**Employee Performance**

Employee performance refers to the work results achieved by employees in carrying out their duties and responsibilities according to their authority and responsibilities in achieving organizational objectives (Robbins & Judge, 2013). Employee performance reflects the extent to which employees are able to complete their assigned tasks effectively and efficiently. This study measures employee performance through six indicators: quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, independence, and work commitment.

## METHODS

This study employed a quantitative survey design to examine the effects of organizational communication, organizational culture, and competence on employee performance, with organizational commitment as a mediating variable. The study was conducted at the Lhokseumawe City Regional Secretariat, Aceh, Indonesia. The population comprised 119 employees, and a saturated sampling technique was applied; therefore, all 119 employees participated as respondents. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires using a five-point Likert scale, while secondary data were obtained from institutional reports and relevant scientific literature.



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Five constructs were examined. Organizational communication was measured using seven indicators adapted from Lannes (2021), organizational culture using seven indicators based on Robbins and Judge (2013), competence using seven indicators adapted from Spencer and Spencer (2008), organizational commitment using seven indicators based on Meyer and Allen (1991), and employee performance using six indicators based on Robbins and Judge (2013).

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with WarpPLS 7.0. The measurement model was assessed through convergent validity and internal consistency reliability. Indicators were considered valid when outer loadings exceeded 0.70 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) exceeded 0.50, while composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values of at least 0.70 indicated acceptable reliability. The structural model was evaluated using model fit indices and $R^2$ values. Hypotheses were tested using path coefficients and p-values, with $p < 0.05$ indicating statistical significance. Direct effects were examined to assess relationships among the constructs, while indirect effects were analyzed to determine whether organizational commitment mediated the relationships between organizational communication, organizational culture, competence, and employee performance. Mediation was interpreted as full, partial, or absent based on the significance of direct and indirect effects.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study involved 119 employees of the Lhokseumawe City Regional Secretariat. The respondents were predominantly female (61.3%), while 38.7% were male. Most respondents were aged 35–45 years (48.7%), followed by those below 35 years (42.9%) and above 45 years (8.4%). In terms of education, 63.0% held a bachelor's degree, 19.3% a master's degree, 9.2% senior high school/equivalent, and 8.4% a diploma. Furthermore, 46.2% had worked for more than ten years, indicating that a substantial proportion of respondents had considerable organizational experience and familiarity with institutional procedures and work practices.

Descriptive analysis indicated generally positive perceptions of all constructs. Organizational communication recorded the highest mean (4.03), followed by organizational commitment (3.91), employee performance (3.88), competence (3.84), and organizational culture (3.77). These results suggest that communication practices were relatively well perceived, although organizational culture, particularly teamwork and employee-oriented practices, still requires improvement.



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The measurement model demonstrated satisfactory convergent validity and internal consistency. All indicators had outer loadings above 0.70, while the AVE values for all constructs exceeded 0.50. Composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values were also above 0.70, confirming that the research instruments were valid and reliable.

**Table 1. Measurement Model Results**

| Construct | AVE | Composite Reliability | Cronbach's Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|
| Organizational Communication | 0.784 | 0.962 | 0.954 |
| Organizational Culture | 0.731 | 0.950 | 0.938 |
| Competence | 0.860 | 0.977 | 0.973 |
| Organizational Commitment | 0.831 | 0.972 | 0.966 |
| Employee Performance | 0.847 | 0.971 | 0.964 |

The structural model showed strong explanatory power. Organizational communication, organizational culture, and competence explained 86.6% of the variance in organizational commitment ($R^2$ = 0.866), while these three predictors together with organizational commitment explained 94.6% of the variance in employee performance ($R^2$ = 0.946). The model also produced APC = 0.279 (p = 0.001), ARS = 0.906 (p = 0.001), AARS = 0.903 (p = 0.001), and GoF = 0.857. Nevertheless, AVIF (7.777) and AFVIF (11.964) exceeded the recommended threshold, indicating potential collinearity that should be considered when interpreting the structural relationships.

**Table 2. Direct Effects and Hypothesis Testing**

| Hypothesis | Relationship | β | p-value | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| H1 | Organizational Communication → Organizational Commitment | 0.230 | 0.004 | Supported |
| H2 | Organizational Culture → Organizational Commitment | 0.248 | 0.002 | Supported |
| H3 | Competence → Organizational Commitment | 0.480 | 0.001 | Supported |


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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| H4 | Organizational Communication → Employee Performance | 0.060 | 0.255 | Not Supported |
| H5 | Organizational Culture → Employee Performance | 0.125 | 0.008 | Supported |
| H6 | Competence → Employee Performance | 0.037 | 0.341 | Not Supported |
| H7 | Organizational Commitment → Employee Performance | 0.770 | 0.001 | Supported |

The results reveal that organizational communication, organizational culture, and competence significantly strengthen organizational commitment, with competence producing the strongest effect (β = 0.480). However, only organizational culture had a significant direct effect on employee performance among the three predictors, whereas organizational communication and competence showed insignificant direct effects. Organizational commitment demonstrated the strongest direct effect on employee performance (β = 0.770, p = 0.001), emphasizing its central role in transforming organizational conditions and employee capabilities into productive work outcomes.

**Table 3. Mediation Effects of Organizational Commitment**

| Hypothesis | Indirect Relationship | β | p-value | Mediation Type | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H8 | *Communication → Commitment → Performance* | 0.178 | 0.002 | Full Mediation | Supported |
| H9 | *Culture → Commitment → Performance* | 0.191 | 0.001 | Partial Mediation | Supported |
| H10 | *Competence → Commitment → Performance* | 0.370 | 0.001 | Full Mediation | Supported |

The mediation results provide an important contribution to this study. Organizational commitment fully mediates the effects of organizational communication and competence on employee performance, while partially mediating the effect of


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organizational culture. These findings indicate that communication and competence do not automatically improve performance unless they strengthen employees' attachment and commitment to the organization. This result is consistent with Setrojoyo et al. (2023), who found that organizational commitment significantly mediates the relationship between organizational communication and employee performance. Similarly, the findings regarding competence are consistent with Victhori et al. (2025), who confirmed the mediating role of organizational commitment between competence and employee performance. The partial mediation of organizational culture is also in line with Suartama et al. (2024) and Korda and Rachmawati (2022), which demonstrated that organizational commitment contributes to the relationship between organizational culture and employee performance. Overall, the findings support Social Exchange Theory by indicating that supportive organizational conditions are more likely to generate productive performance when they are accompanied by stronger organizational commitment. Therefore, strengthening communication, organizational culture, and employee competence should be integrated with efforts to develop employees' sense of belonging, loyalty, and willingness to contribute to organizational objectives.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that organizational communication, organizational culture, and competence significantly influence organizational commitment at the Lhokseumawe City Regional Secretariat. Among these factors, competence has the strongest effect, indicating that employees' ability to understand work systems, adapt to changes, take initiative, and perform their responsibilities plays an important role in strengthening organizational commitment. Regarding employee performance, organizational culture and organizational commitment have significant positive effects, while organizational communication and competence do not have significant direct effects. These findings indicate that organizational communication and competence alone are insufficient to improve employee performance without stronger psychological attachment to the organization. Organizational commitment demonstrates the strongest direct effect on employee performance, confirming its central role in translating organizational conditions and employee capabilities into productive work behavior.

The mediation analysis further confirms that organizational commitment fully mediates the effects of organizational communication and competence on employee performance, while partially mediating the effect of organizational culture. Therefore, improving employee performance requires an integrated human resource management


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strategy that strengthens communication, organizational culture, and employee competence while simultaneously developing organizational commitment. Particular attention should be given to strengthening employees' sense of belonging, emotional attachment, loyalty, and willingness to contribute to organizational objectives. These findings highlight the importance of organizational commitment as a strategic mechanism for achieving sustainable employee performance in local government institutions.

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