

THE MEANING OF COMPETENCE, JOB STRESS, AND WORK ENVIRONMENT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to examine how competence, job stress, and the work environment affect employee performance at CV. Teguh Harapan. The study utilized primary data collected through questionnaires distributed to all 42 employees of the company, who also served as the respondents. The results of the data analysis indicate several important findings. First, the competence variable shows a significant positive effect on employee performance, as reflected by the t-count value of 2.097, which is greater than the t-table value of 2.024. This means that higher competence among employees contributes significantly to improving their performance. Second, the job stress variable is also found to significantly affect employee performance. The statistical test shows a t-count value of -2.131, which is smaller than the t-table value of -2.024, suggesting that higher job stress tends to reduce employee performance. Third, the work environment variable does not appear to significantly influence employee performance. The t-count value obtained was 1.827, which is lower than the t-table value of 2.024, meaning that variations in the work environment did not show a statistically significant relationship with performance outcomes in this study. However, when tested simultaneously, the three independent variables—competence, job stress, and work environment—collectively demonstrate a significant impact on employee performance, as indicated by the F-count value of 15.399, which exceeds the F-table value of 2.85. This result confirms that while not all individual variables have a consistent effect, together they significantly shape overall employee performance.

Keywords: Competence, Work Stress, Work Environment, Employee Performance

INTRODUCTION

Human resources (HR) represent one of the most vital elements within an organization, serving as a driving force behind both individual and corporate

success. The role of HR is not merely operational but strategic, as the overall progress or decline of a company is largely determined by the quality and performance of its workforce. Employee performance becomes the central pillar for achieving organizational objectives because only through optimal performance can corporate targets be realized in an efficient and sustainable manner. For this reason, companies are required to give serious attention to their employees, particularly in terms of motivation, development, and empowerment, in order to stimulate continuous performance improvement.

The success of a company is closely tied to the performance of each employee. Strong individual performance collectively enhances corporate productivity and competitiveness, while poor performance can result in inefficiencies and ultimately hinder organizational growth. Since employees are directly responsible for executing company policies and operational processes, they can be considered the most valuable asset of any organization. Unlike capital, technology, or machinery which serve as tools human resources possess the capacity for creativity, adaptability, and decision-making, all of which are crucial for navigating complex business environments.

In today's competitive landscape, companies must be ready to confront various challenges, ranging from rapid technological changes to dynamic market demands. Winning in this competition requires not only strong financial and material resources but, more importantly, highly capable and productive human resources. Without the support of competent employees, even advanced machinery or substantial capital investment will not yield maximum outcomes. Therefore, the development and management of HR become a determining factor in whether a company can adapt, survive, and thrive amidst competition.

Furthermore, several factors significantly shape employee performance. Prior research has emphasized three key aspects: competence, which reflects the skills, knowledge, and abilities employees bring to their work; job stress, which can hinder or motivate performance depending on how it is managed; and the work environment, which encompasses both physical conditions and organizational culture that influence employee satisfaction and productivity (Harahap, 2021; Firmansyah, 2020; Setiawan, 2024; Al Vizha, 2020). Taken together, these elements illustrate that employee performance does not emerge in isolation but is the result of complex interactions between individual capacity, psychological well-being, and external workplace conditions.

Competence can be understood as the integration of abilities, knowledge, skills, and work attitudes that enable an individual to perform tasks effectively. It may also be defined as a personal attribute that contributes to achieving superior and consistent performance in the workplace. The presence of competence is not only fundamental for individual career advancement but also plays a pivotal role in enhancing overall organizational performance. For this reason, employees are expected to continuously adapt and refine their capabilities in order to meet the established competency standards relevant to their respective fields. The development of such competencies ensures that employees are able to respond to the evolving demands of their work and contribute meaningfully to company objectives.

Beyond competence, job stress is another important factor that significantly influences employee performance. Stress frequently emerges as employees carry out their duties, and when left unaddressed, it has the potential to reduce both the quality and productivity of their work. In the context of human resource management, addressing job stress becomes a strategic approach to maintaining and improving employee performance. Stress itself may be described as a psychological and physiological condition that places demands on an individual beyond their capacity to cope. When employees experience prolonged or excessive stress, it can negatively affect their mental and physical health, which in turn disrupts their ability to perform optimally.

Therefore, organizations must recognize that both competence and job stress are interrelated variables that shape employee performance. By ensuring that employees possess adequate competence while simultaneously managing and mitigating sources of work stress, companies can create conditions that are conducive to productivity, well-being, and long-term organizational success.

The work environment constitutes an important factor that affects employee performance. Within an organization, the work environment directly influences individuals engaged in the production process because it encompasses both the physical and non-physical conditions in which employees carry out their tasks. Adequate facilities and infrastructure that support the work being performed enable employees to complete their responsibilities more efficiently and on time. Meanwhile, non-physical aspects such as social interactions among colleagues also play a crucial role. A harmonious atmosphere characterized by mutual support, absence of jealousy, and avoidance of actions that hinder others creates a positive and productive work environment, which in turn fosters improved employee performance.

In this study, CV Teguh Harapan is employed as the unit of analysis to explore factors influencing employee performance, namely competence, job stress, and the work environment. The decision to select this company was based on preliminary observations made by the researcher, which revealed a performance gap characterized by declining employee performance. This issue is significant because it may undermine organizational productivity and requires further investigation. Accordingly, the present research aims to examine and analyze the extent to which these three factors contribute to the phenomenon observed at the company.

CV Teguh Harapan operates in the construction industry and the heavy equipment workshop sector. The company offers a wide range of services, including general contracting, machining, fabrication repair, iron and steel construction, automotive services, supply and general trading, workshops, lathes, welding, and engineering services. Over time, CV Teguh Harapan has built a solid reputation for providing high-quality services in the construction sector. Its competitive strengths derive from a highly skilled team of professionals, the application of advanced construction technologies, and strategic collaborations with suppliers and business partners.

Nevertheless, initial field observations and interviews conducted with the management revealed a downward trend in company productivity, which was strongly associated with declining employee performance. The researcher identified three dominant contributing factors: limited employee competence, increasing levels of job stress, and shortcomings within the work environment. These findings underscore the importance of examining these aspects more comprehensively in order to provide insights that can help the company overcome its performance challenges and maintain its competitive position.

In recent times, CV Teguh Harapan has recruited employees whose educational backgrounds and areas of expertise are not directly related to construction or workshop activities. This condition creates a gap between the qualifications required in the field and the skills possessed by employees, making additional training programs necessary to align their competencies with job demands. Employees with inadequate competence are more likely to produce substandard work, experience project delays, and contribute to higher operational costs. On the other hand, employees with strong competencies are able to perform tasks more efficiently, deliver higher quality outcomes, and support the achievement of organizational goals.

Another factor influencing employee performance at CV Teguh Harapan is the high-pressure nature of construction projects. Employees are often required to work under strict deadlines, in uncertain field conditions, and in environments that involve occupational risks. These pressures frequently result in elevated levels of work stress. When stress becomes excessive and is not managed properly, it can reduce employee productivity, increase absenteeism, and pose risks to occupational health and safety. Prolonged exposure to such conditions may further undermine both the physical and mental well-being of employees, ultimately lowering their performance.

The work environment also plays an essential role in determining performance levels. At CV Teguh Harapan, one of the challenges identified is the high noise level caused by the proximity of the office to the workshop, which disrupts focus and efficiency. In addition, observations suggest that the facilities and infrastructure provided by the company still require improvement to adequately support employee performance. A work environment that is less conducive such as insufficient facilities, exposure to extreme weather, or strained interpersonal relationships tends to decrease employee motivation and weaken overall productivity. Conversely, a supportive and well-structured work environment creates comfort, encourages collaboration, and strengthens employee commitment, all of which contribute to improved performance outcomes..

Several previous studies have demonstrated the influence of competence, job stress, and the work environment on performance, as described above. Muthi'ah's (2021) research on the Medan City Trade Office and Salma Al Vizha's (2020) research on the Fatmawati Branch of Bank Syariah both demonstrated that competence significantly impacts employee performance. However, these studies were conducted in different sectors, so there remains a research gap regarding the influence of competence on employee performance in other sectors with different task characteristics and competency requirements. Research by Muthi'ah (2021), Andre Firmansyah (2020), and Riski Setiawan (2024) has shown a significant effect

of work stress on employee performance. However, these studies were conducted in different contexts and at different times. Consequently, there remains a research gap regarding the impact of work stress on employee performance in sectors other than these three, which have different workloads and challenges. Research by Andre Firmansyah (2020), Riski Setiawan (2024), and Muhammad Suwardi (2023) has demonstrated the significant influence of the work environment on employee performance. However, these studies were conducted in different work environments: Andre's in an airline company, Riski's in the Manpower Office, and Muhammad's in a sub-district office. A research gap remains regarding the influence of the work environment on employee performance in other sectors with different work situations and conditions.

Although prior research has explored the influence of competence, job stress, and work environment, most studies have tended to examine these variables either separately or in limited combinations. As a result, there remains a gap in the literature regarding studies that integrate all three variables simultaneously to assess their collective impact on employee performance. Moreover, existing studies have largely been conducted in organizational contexts that differ in terms of industry, characteristics, and operational dynamics. To date, no research has specifically analyzed the simultaneous influence of competence, job stress, and work environment within companies that possess distinct contextual features. Therefore, this study is considered important as it seeks to address this gap by examining how the interaction of these three variables collectively shapes employee performance in the specific context of CV Teguh Harapan.

METHOD

The unit of analysis in this study is CV Teguh Harapan, with the research population comprising all 42 employees of the company. The sampling approach applied was a non-probability sampling technique using a random sampling method, in which every member of the population was involved as a respondent. Primary data were obtained through the distribution of questionnaires to all employees. To analyze the collected data, several statistical tools were employed, including validity and reliability tests, multiple linear regression analysis, the coefficient of determination, as well as t-tests and F-tests, in order to ensure the accuracy, consistency, and significance of the research findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Effect of Competence on Employee Performance

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis demonstrate that the regression coefficient for the competency variable is positive, indicating a unidirectional relationship. This means that competency exerts a positive influence on employee performance, whereby higher competency levels among employees of CV Teguh Harapan are associated with improved performance within the company. The results of the t-test further support this finding, as the calculated t-value for competency exceeds the t-table value, with a significance level below the predetermined probability threshold. These results confirm that competency has a partial and statistically significant effect on employee performance. Consequently,

Hypothesis 1, which posits that competency has a partial significant effect on employee performance at CV Teguh Harapan, is accepted.

Competence itself can be defined as the ability to carry out work or tasks in accordance with one's role within a particular field (Eksan, 2020). This definition is consistent with the author's field observations, which reveal that CV Teguh Harapan places strong emphasis on employee competency as a key priority in work implementation. This is because the nature and characteristics of construction-related tasks demand specialized skills and technical expertise. Employees who possess strong competencies are able to perform their duties effectively, achieve work targets, fulfill company expectations, and ultimately deliver high-quality performance outcomes.

The results of this study align with empirical research conducted by Harahap (2021), which showed that competence significantly influences employee performance at the Medan City Trade Office. Similarly, research by Vizha (2020) concluded that competence influences employee performance at PT Bank BRI Syariah Fatmawati Branch.

2. The Effect of Work Stress on Employee Performance

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis show that the regression coefficient for the work stress variable is negative, which signifies a non-unidirectional relationship. This finding indicates that an increase in work stress experienced by employees at CV Teguh Harapan has a detrimental impact on their performance. Conversely, if work stress is effectively managed or minimized, employee performance is likely to improve. Supporting this result, the t-test reveals that the calculated t-value for work stress is smaller than the t-table value, while the significance level falls below the probability threshold. These results confirm that work stress exerts a significant partial influence on employee performance. Therefore, Hypothesis 2, which states that work stress has a significant partial effect on employee performance at CV Teguh Harapan, is accepted.

Field observations conducted by the researcher further support this conclusion. Employees at CV Teguh Harapan were found to occasionally experience stress during the execution of their tasks, which in turn led to a noticeable decline in performance. Work-related stress not only reduces productivity but also poses risks to employee health and disrupts the smooth flow of organizational activities. To address this issue, company management actively monitors employees to prevent excessive stress from hindering the implementation of projects or daily operations. This aligns with the perspective presented by Robbins, as cited in Safitri and Astutik (2019), who define work stress as a condition of tension that influences a person's emotions, cognitive processes, and physical state. Stress may be perceived both positively and negatively, depending on how individuals respond to it. When viewed positively, stress can foster motivation and enhance work enthusiasm. However, when perceived negatively, it may reduce performance, lower job satisfaction, and weaken employee effectiveness..

The results of this study align with previous research that reached similar conclusions. For example, research conducted by Firmansyah (2020) concluded that work stress significantly impacts employee performance at the Sriwijaya Air

Cengkareng Banten Office. Furthermore, research by Setiawan (2024) also found a similar finding: work stress significantly impacts employee performance at the Berau Regency Manpower and Transmigration Office.

3. The Effect of the Work Environment on Employee Performance

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis show that the regression coefficient for the work environment variable is positive, indicating a unidirectional relationship. This suggests that a supportive and comfortable work environment contributes positively to employee performance, meaning that improvements in the work environment can enhance the performance of employees at CV Teguh Harapan. However, given the company's operational context as a workshop-based business, noise exposure is an unavoidable condition that may create discomfort for certain employees. The t-test results reveal that the calculated t-value for the work environment variable is smaller than the t-table value, with a significance level higher than the probability threshold. This finding indicates that the work environment does not have a statistically significant influence on employee performance. Therefore, Hypothesis 3, which posits that the work environment partially and significantly affects employee performance at CV Teguh Harapan, is rejected.

Supporting evidence from field observations shows that CV Teguh Harapan's management has given adequate attention to the employees' work environment, particularly since the company's operational site includes both office and workshop areas. Noise generated from the workshop often disrupts employees in other departments, especially when multiple projects are being handled simultaneously. Nevertheless, because such conditions are part of the company's routine activities, employees generally adapt and accept the situation. This is in line with the definition put forward by Budiasa (2021), who describes the work environment as the entirety of physical and non-physical conditions surrounding employees while performing their tasks, which directly or indirectly affect their attitudes, comfort, and overall performance.

The results of this study support those conducted by Firmansyah (2020), who concluded that the work environment significantly influences employee performance at the Sriwijaya Air Cengkareng Banten Office. Similarly, Al Vizha (2020) stated that the work environment significantly influences employee performance at PT Bank BRI Syariah Fatmawati Branch. Another study by Suwardi (2023) also concluded that the work environment significantly influences employee performance at the Sukakarya District Office, Bekasi Regency.

4. The Effect of Competence, Job Stress, and Work Environment on Employee Performance

The results of the F-test demonstrate that the calculated F-value exceeds the F-table value, with a significance level below the probability threshold. This finding confirms that the independent variables—competence, job stress, and work environment—collectively exert a significant influence on employee performance. Accordingly, Hypothesis 4, which proposes that competence, job stress, and work

environment simultaneously affect employee performance at CV Teguh Harapan, is accepted.

Furthermore, the correlation coefficient analysis indicates a relatively strong relationship between the independent variables (competence, job stress, and work environment) and the dependent variable (employee performance). This is evidenced by a correlation coefficient value of 0.741, which falls within the range of 0.61–0.80, categorized as a fairly high correlation (Sofian et al., 2022). The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.549, meaning that 54.9% of the variation in employee performance can be explained by the three independent variables. Meanwhile, the remaining 45.1% is attributed to other factors not examined in this study, such as work discipline, compensation, and other organizational variables..

These results align with research conducted by Muthi'ah Patuan Harahap (2021), who found that competence and work stress simultaneously influence employee performance at the Medan City Trade Office. Similarly, Andre Firmansyah (2020) found that the relationship between work stress and the work environment significantly impacts employee performance. Research by Riski Setiawan (2024) also concluded that work stress and the work environment simultaneously significantly influence employee performance.

CONCLUSION

Competence was found to have a positive and significant partial effect on employee performance at CV Teguh Harapan. This indicates that higher employee competence leads to better performance outcomes within the company. In contrast, work stress showed a negative and significant partial effect on employee performance, meaning that increased stress levels experienced or perceived by employees tend to reduce their performance. However, when work stress is effectively managed or minimized, employee performance can improve.

Meanwhile, the work environment was found to have no significant partial effect on employee performance. The workshop environment at CV Teguh Harapan, which is naturally characterized by noise, may cause discomfort for some employees; nevertheless, this condition does not significantly affect overall performance.

Simultaneously, competence, work stress, and the work environment were shown to significantly influence employee performance, with a contribution of 54.9%. The remaining 45.1% of performance variation is explained by other factors not examined in this study, such as work discipline, compensation, and other organizational aspects..

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