The Effect of Work Stress and Digital Competence on Employee Performance with Organizational Citizenship Behavior as an Intervening Variable in Regional Secretariat of the District South Aceh

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of work stress and digital competence on employee performance with Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) as an intervening variable in the Regional Secretariat of South Aceh Regency. This study uses a quantitative approach. The research population is all employees of the Regional Secretariat of South Aceh Regency totaling 200 people, with a sample of 134 respondents determined using the Slovin formula with an error rate of 5% and random sampling techniques. Data were collected through questionnaires with a Likert scale of 1-5 and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with the help of SmartPLS 4. The results of the outer model test showed that all indicators were valid with an outer loading value above 0.70, an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value above 0.50, a Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) value below 0.90, and Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values above 0.70. The results of the hypothesis test showed that work stress had a negative and significant effect on employee performance of -0.199 (t=3.297; p=0.001) and on OCB of -0.357 (t=6.176; p=0.000). Digital competence had a positive and significant effect on employee performance of 0.215 (t=3.018; p=0.003) and on OCB of 0.470 (t=7.462; p=0.000). OCB had a positive and significant effect on employee performance by 0.508 (t=7.515; p=0.000). The results of the mediation test showed that OCB partially mediated the influence of work stress on employee performance by -0.181 (t=4.737; p=0.000) and partially mediated the influence of digital competence on employee performance by 0.238 (t=4.946; p=0.000). The R-Square value showed that work stress and digital competence explained OCB by 41.6%, while work stress, digital competence, and OCB explained employee performance by 57.1%. The Q-Square value of 0.386 for OCB and 0.387 for employee performance showed that the model had predictive relevance. This study concludes that work stress management, digital competency improvement, and strengthening OCB are important to improve employee performance in a sustainable and measurable manner.

Keywords: Work Stress, Digital Competence, Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), Employee Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Human resources are a strategic element that determines the success of an organization in achieving its goals. The success of the organization is not only determined by the availability of budget, facilities, infrastructure, and technology, but also influenced by the ability of employees to carry out their duties and responsibilities. In public sector organizations, employees are not only required to complete administrative work, but also provide services and support the implementation of government policies effectively and efficiently. Therefore, employee performance is an important aspect that needs attention in the management of government organizations.

The South Aceh Regency Regional Secretariat is an element of the staff of the South Aceh Regency Government which has an important function in assisting regional heads in formulating policies and administrative coordination on the implementation of regional apparatus duties. These job characteristics require employees to carry out their work professionally, have thoroughness, be able to cooperate, and be able to complete various

administrative tasks according to applicable targets and regulations. In carrying out daily tasks, employees are also faced with various job demands, completing work within a certain time limit, coordination between sections, and the demands of adjusting to the development of the government work system. This phenomenon is becoming increasingly relevant as the government work environment changes that are increasingly digitalized. The use of digital technology causes employees to be required to be able to use various devices, applications, information systems, and digital communication media. Therefore, digital competence is one of the important factors in supporting employee performance in government organizations. Ingsih, Astuti, and Riyanto (2024) show that digital competence plays a role in supporting service quality and employee performance. Zhao and Trisakhon (2025) also show the relevance of digital competence in the context of organizations that are undergoing digital transformation. However, Yamin and Nur Fadilah (2024) found that digital competence does not have a significant direct effect on employee performance, while job satisfaction plays a mediator. These differences in results show that the influence of digital competence on performance is not fully consistent and needs to be further studied through behavioral mechanisms.

In addition to the demands of digitalization, employees also face work demands that have the potential to cause work stress. Work stress can arise when work demands are perceived to exceed the resources or abilities that employees have. Pressure in completing work, task load, time constraints, demands for precision, and the need to adjust to organizational changes can be a source of pressure for employees. If these conditions persist and are not balanced by adequate work resources, work stress can affect employees' psychological and behavioral conditions and ultimately have the potential to affect performance. Li, Zhang, and Zhang (2024) through meta-analysis show that the relationship between work stressors and job performance is not simple because the types of work stressors can produce different consequences.

In the context of organizational behavior, work stress can also affect employee behavior outside of formal duties. Syah et al. (2024) examined the influence of role ambiguity and work stress on employee performance with Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) as a mediating variable and showed that OCB can be a mechanism that explains the relationship between work factors and performance. OCB describes positive and voluntary behaviors that employees perform outside of their formal obligations, but can contribute to organizational effectiveness. This study is directed to examine whether work stress and digital competencies have an influence on employee performance, as well as whether OCB can be a mechanism that bridges these relationships in employees of the South Aceh Regency Regional Secretariat.

Although prior studies have examined work stress, digital competence, OCB, and employee performance, the findings do not yet provide a sufficiently integrated explanation of how work stress and digital competence may relate to employee performance through employees' voluntary organizational behavior. In particular, the present study brings these two antecedents together in one mediation model and examines that model in a local-government administrative setting, namely the Regional Secretariat of South Aceh Regency. Its intended contribution is therefore contextual and integrative: it evaluates whether OCB helps explain the pathways linking work stress and digital competence with employee performance. This contribution should be interpreted as a context-specific empirical extension rather than a claim that the individual relationships have never been studied before.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Work Stress

Work stress is a stressful condition that arises when work demands are perceived to exceed the ability or resources that employees have to deal with them (ILO, 2022).

Indicators High workload, time pressure, conflicts in work, job demands that exceed abilities, work environment, lack of support, and job changes (Pindek et al., 2024)

Digital Competence

Digital competence is the ability to use digital technology confidently, critically, and responsibly to learn, work, and participate in society, which includes information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content creation, security, and problem-solving (European Commission — DigComp 2.2, 2022).

Indicators of digital competency are; Skills in using digital technology, the use of applications that support work, technology increases work efficiency, the ability to learn technology quickly, technology increases transparency, training to improve digital competence, and challenges in the use of digital technology (Audrin et al., 2024).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

OCB is individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, but as a whole can improve the effectiveness of organizational functions (Organ, 2015).

The indicators of OCB are; Helping colleagues without being asked, willing to work beyond formal duties, maintaining good working relationships, avoiding conflicts in the workplace, obeying organizational rules, actively participating in organizational activities, and showing loyalty to the organization (Worku & Debela, 2024).

Employee Performance

Employee performance is employee behavior or actions that are relevant to organizational goals, which are not only assessed from the results obtained, but also from the behavior that employees do when carrying out work (Campbell & Wiernik, 2015).

Indicators of employee performance: Work quality, quantity of work, punctuality, ability to work together, responsibility for work, initiative at work, and work discipline (Koopmans et al., 2014).

Synthesis and research hypotheses. The literature reviewed above suggests two complementary pathways to employee performance. First, work stress may consume employees' psychological and cognitive resources, potentially weakening both task performance and discretionary helping behavior. Second, digital competence may provide employees with the knowledge and confidence needed to complete tasks efficiently and assist colleagues in using digital systems. OCB may consequently function as a behavioral pathway through which these work-related conditions are associated with performance. Nevertheless, the strength of these relationships may depend on organizational context, work design, and access to support; they should therefore be tested empirically rather than assumed. Accordingly, the study examines seven hypotheses: H1, work stress is negatively related to employee performance; H2, work stress is negatively related to OCB; H3, digital competence is positively related to employee performance; H4, digital competence is positively related to OCB; H5, OCB is positively related to employee performance; H6, OCB mediates the relationship between work stress and employee performance; and H7, OCB mediates the relationship between digital competence and employee performance.

Research Methods

This study employed a quantitative explanatory approach to examine the relationships among the research variables (Sugiyono, 2017). The study was conducted at the Regional Secretariat of South Aceh Regency. The population comprised 200 employees across 10 departments. A sample of 134 respondents was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error, with proportional allocation across departments and random selection of respondents (Sugiyono, 2017). Data were collected using a structured questionnaire covering work stress, digital competence, Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), and employee performance, measured on a five-point Likert scale. Because the data were collected from the same respondents using the same questionnaire at one point in time, the design is cross-sectional and may be susceptible to self-report and common-method biases. The manuscript should report any common-method-bias diagnostic that was actually performed; if none was conducted, this must be acknowledged as a limitation rather than presented as a test that has been passed. Data were analyzed using SEM-PLS in SmartPLS 4.

The measurement model was evaluated using indicator loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), internal consistency reliability, and discriminant validity. The manuscript reports the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait–Monotrait ratio (HTMT); the corresponding complete results should be presented or reported in a supplementary table so that discriminant validity can be assessed transparently. Structural model evaluation included the coefficient of determination (R-square), effect size (f-square), predictive relevance (Q-square,

where the procedure used is clearly specified), and path coefficients. Hypotheses were tested using bootstrapping. The manuscript uses a two-tailed 5% significance threshold ($t > 1.96$ and $p < 0.05$); p-values reported by SmartPLS as 0.000 should be written as $p < 0.001$, not $p = 0.000$. Indirect effects were assessed to determine whether OCB mediated the relationships between the predictors and employee performance. The mediation type should be classified only after the direct and indirect effects have been verified from the same final model output.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The characteristics of the respondents describe the general profile of employees at the Regional Secretariat of South Aceh Regency which is a research sample of 134 people. These characteristics include gender, age, education level, working period, and position. The description of the characteristics of the respondents aims to provide an overview of the background of the respondents who participated in the research, as presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Categories	**Frequency**	**Presses**
Gender		
Male	61	45.5
Women	73	54.5
Total	134	100.0
Age		
20-30 years	22	16.4
31-40 years	50	37.3
41-50 years	40	29.9
> 50 years	22	16.4
Total	134	100.0
Education Level		
High School	17	12.7
Diploma	22	16.4
Bachelor	73	54.5
Master	22	16.4
Total	134	100.0
Tenure		
Less than 5 years	20	14.9

5-10 years	36	26.9
11-20 years	50	37.3
More than 20 years	28	20.9
Total	134	100.0
Departments		
Staff	95	70.9
Head of subdivision	28	20.9
Section head	11	8.2
Total	134	100.0

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the majority of respondents are female as many as 73 people (54.5%), 50 people aged 31-40 years (37.3%), 73 people with S1 education (54.5%), have 11-20 years of service period as many as 50 people (37.3%), and 95 people (70.9%) occupy positions as staff. Thus, it can be concluded that the respondents in this study are dominated by female employees of productive age, with a background of S1 education, sufficient work experience, and positions as staff. These conditions show that respondents have an adequate understanding of work conditions, work stress, digital competence, OCB behavior, and employee performance at the South Aceh Regency Regional Secretariat.

Reliability testing aims to assess the level of internal consistency of indicators in measuring a construct. In this study, the reliability of the construct was evaluated using the Composite Reliability value. According to Hair et al. (2022), a construct is declared to have good reliability if the Composite Reliability value ≥ 0.70, which indicates that the indicators in the construct have adequate internal consistency. The results of the Composite Reliability test for each variable are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Composite Reliability

Reliability and validity construct Variables	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Work stress (X_1)	0.903	0.923	0.632
Digital competencies (X_2)	0.894	0.917	0.612
Performance of employee (Y)	0.884	0.909	0.589
OCB (Z)	0.901	0.922	0.629

Based on Table 4.14, it can be seen that the Composite Reliability (rho_c) value in all research variables has met the required reliability criteria. The Composite Reliability value for the Work Stress (X1) variable is 0.923, the Digital Competency (X2) variable is 0.917, the Employee Performance (Y) variable is 0.909, and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Z) variable is 0.922. All of these values are above the minimum limit of 0.70, so it can be stated that all constructs in the study have a good level of reliability.

The highest Composite Reliability value is found in the Work Stress variable (X1), which is 0.923, while the lowest value is found in the Employee Performance variable (Y), which is 0.909. However, the lowest value is still far above the required limit. This shows that the indicators used to measure each construct have adequate internal consistency in representing the research variables. Thus, based on the results of the Composite Reliability test, all research variables, namely Work Stress, Digital Competence, Employee Performance, and

Organizational Citizenship Behavior, are declared reliable. This means that the research instrument has a good level of reliability and can be used to proceed to the next stage of analysis.

Measurement model testing (outer model) is carried out to determine the ability of the indicator to reflect the latent construct or variable being measured. This test aims to ensure that the research indicators have met the requirements for validity and reliability before testing the relationship between variables in the inner model. The research model consists of the variables Work Stress (X1), Digital Competence (X2), Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Z) as the intervening variable, and Employee Performance (Y) as the dependent variable. The following is a picture of the results of the measurement model test (outer model) which illustrates the relationship between the research construct and the indicators of each variable.

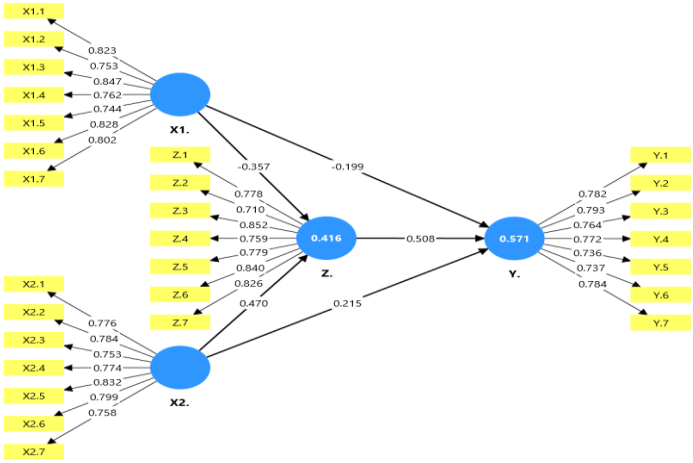


Figure 1. Outer Model Test Results

Based on Figure 1, it can be seen that the measurement model (outer model) describes the relationship between Work Stress (X1), Digital Competence (X2), Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Z), and Employee Performance (Y) and their indicators. The outer loading value of each indicator shows that all indicators have an outer loading value above 0.70, so that all indicators are declared to meet the criteria of convergent validity and are suitable for using to measure constructs in research.

In the Work Stress variable (X1), the outer loading value of indicators X1.1 to X1.7 is in the range of 0.744–0.847. In the Digital Competency (X2) variable, the outer loading value of indicators X2.1 to X2.7 is in the range of 0.753–0.832. In the Employee Performance variable (Y), the outer loading value of indicators Y.1 to Y.7 is in the range of 0.736–0.793. Furthermore, in the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Z) variable, the outer loading value of indicators Z.1 to Z.7 is in the range of 0.710–0.852. Thus, it can be concluded that all indicators in the variables Work Stress, Digital Competence, Employee Performance, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior have met the criteria of convergent validity and can be maintained in the research model for the next stage of analysis.

The R-Square test aims to determine the ability of exogenous variables to explain endogenous variables in the research model. The R-Square value indicates how much variation in endogenous variables can be explained by exogenous variables, while the rest is explained by other variables that were not studied in this study. According to Hair et al. (2022), the R-Square value of 0.75 is categorized as strong, 0.50 is categorized as moderate, and 0.25 is categorized as weak. The results of the R-Square test in this study are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. R-Square

Item	**R-Square**	**R-Square Adjusted**
Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Z)	0,416	0,407
Employee Performance (Y)	0,571	0,561

Based on Table 3, the R-Square value for the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) variable (Z) is 0.416, indicating that Work Stress (X1) and Digital Competence (X2) jointly explain 41.6% of the variance in OCB. The remaining 58.4% is explained by other factors not included in this research model

Based on Table 3, the R-Square value for the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) variable (Z) is 0.416, indicating that Work Stress (X1) and Digital Competence (X2) jointly explain 41.6% of the variance in OCB. The remaining 58.4% is explained by other factors not included in this research model.

Furthermore, the R-Square value for Employee Performance (Y) is 0.571, indicating that Work Stress (X1), Digital Competence (X2), and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) (Z) jointly explain 57.1% of the variance in Employee Performance. The remaining 42.9% is explained by other factors outside the scope of this study.

Based on the R-Square values, both endogenous variables demonstrate a moderate level of explanatory power. This indicates that the research model has a reasonably adequate ability to explain variations in OCB and Employee Performance. Therefore, the structural model provides a sufficient basis for proceeding with the subsequent hypothesis testing.

Direct effect testing was carried out to test the hypothesis regarding the direct influence between independent variables on dependent variables in the research model. This test was carried out using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS 4. The hypothesis is stated to be supported if the T-statistical value is greater than 1.96 and the P-values are less than 0.05 at a significance level of 5% (Hair et al., 2022). The results of the direct influence testing in this study are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Total Effect

Hypothesis	**Construct Variables**	**Original Sample (0)**	**Sample Mean (M)**	**Standard Deviation (STDEV)**	**T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)**	**P-Values**
H1	Work Stress (X1) → Employee Performance (Y)	-0.199	-0.202	0.060	3.297	0.001
H2	Work Stress (X1) → OCB (Z)	-0.357	-0.362	0.058	6.176	0.000
H3	Digital Competency (X2) → Employee Performance (Y)	0.215	0.214	0.071	3.018	0.003
H4	Digital Competency (X2) → OCB (Z)	0.470	0.473	0.063	7.462	0.000
H5	OCB (Z) → Employee Performance (Y)	0.508	0.509	0.068	7.515	0.000

Based on Table 4, it can be seen that all direct influence hypotheses in this study are declared significant, because the T-values in each pathway are greater than 1.96 and the P-values are less than 0.05.

H1: Work Stress (X1) has a negative and significant effect on Employee Performance (Y) with a path coefficient of -0.199, a T-statistics value of 3.297 and a P-value of 0.001. This means that the higher the work stress experienced by employees, the lower the employee's performance.

H2: Work Stress (X1) has a negative and significant effect on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Z) with a path coefficient of -0.357, a T-statistical value of 6.176 and a P-value of 0.000. This means that the higher the work stress, the lower the employee's OCB behavior.

H3: Digital Competence (X2) has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance (Y) with a path coefficient of 0.215, a T-statistical value of 3.018 and a P-value of 0.003. This means that the higher the digital competence of employees, the more employee performance will increase.

H4: Digital Competence (X2) has a positive and significant effect on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Z) with a path coefficient of 0.470, a T-statistics value of 7.462 and a P-value of 0.000. This means that the higher the digital competence of employees, the more OCB behavior of employees will increase.

H5: Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Z) has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance (Y) with a path coefficient of 0.508, a T-statistical value of 7.515 and a P-value of 0.000. This means that the higher the OCB behavior of employees, the more employee performance will increase.

Thus, it can be concluded that Hypotheses 1 to 5 in this study are fully supported.

Indirect effect testing was carried out to test the role of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Z) as an intervening variable in the relationship between Work Stress (X1) and Digital Competence (X2) on Employee Performance (Y). This test was carried out using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS 4. The mediation hypothesis is stated to be supported if the T-statistical value is greater than 1.96 and the P-values are less than 0.05 at a significance level of 5% (Hair et al., 2022). If the direct and indirect influences are equally significant, then partial mediation occurs. The results of the indirect influence testing in this study are presented in the following Table 5.

Table 5. Total Indirect Effect

Construct Variables	**Original Sample (0)**	**Sample Mean (M)**	**Standard Deviation (STDEV)**	**T Statistics (| O/STDEV|)**	**P-Values**
Work Stress (X1) -> OCB (Z) -> Employee Performance (Y)	-0.181	-0.184	0.038	4.737	0.000
Digital Competency (X2) -> OCB (Z) -> Employee Performance (Y)	0.238	0.241	0.048	4.946	0.000

Based on Table 5, it can be seen that all indirect influence hypotheses in this study are declared significant, because the T-statistical value in each pathway is greater than 1.96 and the P-values are less than 0.05.

H6: Work Stress (X1) has a negative and significant effect on Employee Performance (Y) through Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Z), with a path coefficient of -0.181, a T-statistical value of 4.737 and a P-value of 0.000. This means that Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Z) mediates the relationship between Work Stress (X1) and Employee Performance (Y). Because the direct influence of Work Stress on Employee Performance is also significant, the type of mediation that occurs is partial mediation. This means that work stress not only directly decreases employee performance, but also decreases employee performance through a decrease in OCB behavior.

H7: Digital Competence (X2) has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance (Y) through Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Z), with a path coefficient of 0.238, a T-statistics value of 4.946 and a P-value of 0.000. This means that Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Z) mediates the relationship between Digital Competence (X2) and Employee Performance (Y). Because the direct influence of Digital Competence on Employee Performance is also significant, the type of mediation that occurs is partial mediation. This means that digital competence not only improves employee performance directly, but also improves employee performance through improving OCB behavior.

Thus, it can be concluded that Hypothesis 6 and Hypothesis 7 in this study are fully supported, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Z) is proven to play a role as an intervening variable in this research model

DISCUSSION

The Effect of Work Stress on Employee Performance

The results indicate that work stress is negatively and significantly associated with employee performance (β = −0.199, t = 3.297, p = 0.001). This finding is consistent with the general proposition in organizational behavior that excessive job demands can consume employees' attention and energy, making it more difficult to maintain work quality and timeliness (Robbins & Judge, 2019). It is also consistent with the studies by Susanto (2022) and Pratiwi et al. (2023), which report a negative relationship between work stress and performance in public-sector settings. The result should nevertheless be interpreted in light of the study context: the administrative and coordination responsibilities of a regional secretariat may involve deadlines, accuracy requirements, and interdepartmental dependencies. These conditions may make employees more vulnerable to performance disruption when demands exceed available resources. The authors' interpretation is that workload allocation, clarity of roles, and access to supervisory support may be relevant management levers; however, these mechanisms were not separately tested in this study.

Effect of Work Stress on OCB

Work stress was negatively and significantly associated with OCB (β = −0.357, t = 6.176, p < 0.001). This finding is compatible with a social-exchange perspective: employees experiencing sustained pressure may have less capacity or willingness to engage in discretionary activities beyond their formal responsibilities (Blau, 1964; Organ, 1988). It is also consistent with the findings attributed to Rahmawati and Nugroho (2021) and Lestari (2023). The result suggests that OCB may be sensitive to employees' day-to-day work conditions, rather than being determined only by individual willingness. In the Regional Secretariat, high demands may lead employees to prioritize core tasks and reduce time for helping colleagues or participating in voluntary activities. This is a plausible interpretation, not a directly tested causal mechanism; future research could examine workload, role clarity, and perceived organizational support as explanatory factors.

The Influence of Digital Competence on Employee Performance

Digital competence was positively and significantly associated with employee performance (β = 0.215, t = 3.018, p = 0.003). This result is consistent with Human Capital Theory, which views knowledge and skills as resources that can enhance individual productivity (Becker, 1964), and with the findings reported by Widodo et al. (2023) and Andriani (2024). In a public-sector administrative setting, employees who can use office applications and information systems may be better able to process information, coordinate tasks, and complete routine work efficiently. The coefficient indicates a positive association in this sample; it should not be interpreted as proof that digital competence alone causes performance to improve. Differences in system quality, training access, job design, and managerial support may also shape whether digital skills are translated into better performance.

The Influence of Digital Competence on OCB

Digital competence was positively and significantly associated with OCB (β = 0.470, t = 7.462, p = 0.000). This finding can be interpreted through the Theory of Planned Behavior, particularly the role of perceived behavioral control in supporting an individual's intention to act (Ajzen, 1991). It is also consistent with the studies by Hidayat and Sari (2022) and Febrianti et al. (2024), as cited in the manuscript. Employees who are confident in using digital systems may be more willing to help colleagues solve technology-related problems, share knowledge, and contribute to shared work processes. This interpretation offers a possible explanation for the observed association, but the study did not directly test digital self-efficacy or knowledge-sharing as mediators. Future research could measure these mechanisms explicitly.

The Influence of OCB on Employee Performance

OCB was positively and significantly associated with employee performance (β = 0.508, t = 7.515, p = 0.000). This result is consistent with the conceptualization of OCB as discretionary behavior that can support organizational effectiveness (Organ, 1988) and with the prior studies by Podsakoff et al. (2018) and Putri et al.

(2023), as cited in the manuscript. Helping colleagues, maintaining cooperative relationships, and participating constructively in organizational activities may facilitate coordination and reduce delays in completing shared tasks. In the context of the Regional Secretariat, these behaviors may be especially relevant because administrative outputs often depend on coordination across units. Nevertheless, because performance and OCB were measured through the same questionnaire source, the possibility of common-method inflation should be considered when interpreting the strength of this relationship.

The Effect of Work Stress on Employee Performance through OCB

The results of the study show that Work Stress has a negative and significant effect on Employee Performance through OCB, with a path coefficient of -0.181, T-statistics 4.737 and P-values of 0.000, and the type of mediation is partial mediation. This result can be explained through Hobfoll's Resource Conservation Theory (1989) which states that individuals who experience stress will lose psychological resources thereby reducing voluntary behavior and ultimately lowering performance. This finding is in line with the research of Dewi and Hartono (2022) who found that OCB mediates the influence of work stress on employee performance. The researcher assumes that the work stress experienced by employees not only directly decreases performance, but also decreases OCB, so that employees become less concerned about colleagues and organizations which has an impact on decreased performance indirectly.

The Influence of Digital Competencies on Employee Performance through OCB

The results of the study show that Digital Competence has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance through OCB, with a path coefficient of 0.238, T-statistics 4.946 and P-values of 0.000, and the type of mediation is partial mediation. These results support the Social Exchange Theory of Blau (1964) which explains that employees who feel supported by digital skills will reciprocate with positive and voluntary behavior that ultimately improves performance. This research is in line with the findings of Nasution et al. (2023) and Maulana (2024) which prove that OCB mediates the influence of digital competencies on employee performance. The researcher assumes that good digital competencies make employees more adaptable and more actively help the organization, so that the increase in OCB becomes a bridge that strengthens the improvement of employee performance at the Regional Secretariat of South Aceh Regency.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research and discussions that have been carried out regarding the influence of Work Stress and Digital Competence on Employee Performance with Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) as an intervening variable in the Regional Secretariat of South Aceh Regency, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Work Stress has a negative and significant effect on Employee Performance. This means that the higher the work stress experienced by employees, the more employee performance will decrease. This shows that work stress that is not managed properly will have an impact on decreasing the quality and quantity of employee work at the South Aceh Regency Regional Secretariat.

2. Work Stress has a negative and significant effect on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). This means that the higher the work stress experienced by employees, the lower the OCB behavior of employees. Employees who experience stress tend to focus only on their main tasks and are reluctant to engage in voluntary behaviors such as helping colleagues and engaging in activities outside of formal duties.

3. Digital Competence has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance. This means that the higher the digital competence that employees have, the more employee performance will increase. Employees who master digital technology can complete work faster, accurately, and efficiently.

4. Digital Competence has a positive and significant effect on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). This means that the higher the digital competence that employees have, the more OCB behavior employees

will increase. Employees who master digital technology are more confident and more willing to help colleagues and share digital knowledge.

5. Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance. This means that the higher the OCB behavior of employees, the more employee performance will increase. High OCB behavior creates a cooperative work environment so that work can be completed on time.

6. Work Stress has a negative and significant effect on Employee Performance through Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) with partial mediation. This means that OCB has been proven to mediate the relationship between Work Stress and Employee Performance. Work stress not only decreases performance directly, but also decreases performance through a decrease in OCB behavior.

7. Digital Competence has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance through Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) with partial mediation. This means that OCB has been proven to mediate the relationship between Digital Competence and Employee Performance. Digital competence not only improves performance directly, but also improves performance through OCB behavior improvement.

Limitations. This study has several limitations. First, its cross-sectional design captures the variables at one point in time and therefore does not establish temporal order or causal effects. Second, the study was conducted in a single local-government institution, which limits the extent to which the findings can be generalized to other agencies or regions. Third, the use of self-reported questionnaire data from the same respondents may introduce response and common-method biases. Fourth, the model includes a limited set of predictors and does not account for other potentially relevant factors, such as leadership, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, workload, or organizational support. These limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. Future studies could use longitudinal designs, multiple data sources, objective performance indicators, and samples from several government agencies

Suggestion

Based on the above conclusions, the researcher gave some suggestions as follows:

1. In an effort to reduce Work Stress, leaders are expected to distribute workloads evenly, provide clear work schedules, and provide counseling or refreshing programs for employees. In addition, leaders also need to give awards to employees who excel so that employees feel appreciated and do not experience excessive work pressure.

2. In an effort to improve Digital Competence, the Regional Secretariat is expected to be able to provide training and technical guidance on an ongoing basis regarding the use of office applications, management information systems, and other digital technologies. Thus, employees can adapt to the demands of digital-based work.

3. In an effort to improve OCB, leaders are expected to build a work culture that helps each other, provides examples, and creates a conducive work environment. Employees who have high OCB behavior are expected to be given appreciation so that these behaviors can be maintained and imitated by other employees.

4. Employees are expected to be able to manage work stress well through time management, effective communication, and maintaining a balance between work and personal life. In addition, employees are also expected to continue to improve digital competencies independently and improve OCB behavior by helping colleagues and actively participating in organizational activities.

5. For the next researcher, it is hoped that this research model can be developed by adding other variables that can affect Employee Performance and OCB, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, work motivation, and leadership. In addition, the next researcher can also expand the research object, not only at the Regional Secretariat, but also at other OPDs in South Aceh Regency so that the research results can be generalized more widely.

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