The Effect Of Competence Through The Use Of Technology On Employee Performance At The South Binjai Sub-District Office

Nila Rela Ria Simanjuntak[1], Mesra B[2]
[1]Master of Management Student, Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi, Medan
E-mail : ellajtk18@gmail.com
[2*]Master of Management, Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi, Medan
*E-mail Correspondence: mesrab@dosen.pancabudi.ac.id

Abstract

This study aims to examine the influence of competence on employee performance with the use of technology as an intervening variable at the South Binjai Sub-district Office. This research was conducted with a causal associative quantitative approach. The sample used was all employees with a total of 117 people. The results of data analysis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Square (PLS) with the results showing that competence has a positive and significant effect on the use of technology, shown by a T-Statistic value of 55.648 and a P-Value of 0.000. However, competence has no direct influence on employee performance, with a T-Statistic value of 0.007 and a P-Value of 0.995. On the contrary, the use of technology directly has a positive and significant effect on employee performance with a T-Statistic value of 7.873 and a P-Value of 0.000. The findings also show an indirect influence between employee competence and performance through the use of technology as an intervening variable, with a T-Statistic value of 7.475 and a P-Value of 0.000. The implications of this study suggest that organizations prioritize competency development and access to the right technology to optimize employee performance. The study also prompted further studies of other intervening variables, such as organizational culture or psychological capital, that could strengthen the relationship between competence and performance.

Keywords:

Competence; Use of technology, Employee performance

1. INTRODUCTION

The Sub-district Office, as a government unit at the sub-district level, plays an important role in providing services to the community. This role is increasingly important considering the administrative and operational challenges faced in carrying out daily tasks (Azizah, 2018).

In the current era of digitalization, information technology has become a key component in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public services. Not only as a tool, technology also has the potential to transform the way the sub-district office works and operations as a whole (Wiranti & Frinaldi, 2023). The right use of technology can increase the speed and accuracy of administrative processes, reduce operational costs, and increase transparency and accountability of public services. However, even though the potential of technology is huge, its implementation requires high competence from the employees who operate the technology (Indrayani, 2020). The competence of employees in understanding and using information technology optimally is a determining factor for the success of the application of technology in public organizations, including in the sub-district office of South Binjai District.

Research – Previous research has shown that there is a significant relationship between employee competence, technology use, and public organization performance. Good competence of employees contributes directly to improving organizational performance, as competent employees have a deep understanding of their duties and responsibilities as well as the ability to use technology effectively (Salman et al., 2020) and (Prabowo & Anas, 2021). According to (Mirza et al., 2023) information technology can accelerate the administrative process and public services, thereby increasing work efficiency and effectiveness.

In the sub-district office, information technology can be used for various purposes, ranging from data and information management, archive management, to communication with the community. Thus, employee competence in information technology not only facilitates daily tasks, but also improves the quality of services provided to the community.

Although the potential of information technology in improving employee performance is huge, many sub-district offices face challenges in implementing this technology optimally. One of the main obstacles is the lack of employee understanding of the technology used. Many employees are not familiar with or feel uncomfortable with new technology, thus hindering the maximum use of technology (Méndez-Rivera et al., 2023). In addition, the lack of adequate training is also an obstacle. Training that is not sustainable or irrelevant to daily operational needs can make employees find it difficult to keep up with technological developments. Limited infrastructure, such as slow internet access or inadequate hardware, is also a factor that hinders the implementation of technology in the sub-district office. All of these factors cause a gap between the potential of technology that can improve employee performance and the realization in the field, where technology is not fully utilized to improve work efficiency and effectiveness.

According to the author's initial observations, the South Binjai District Sub-district Office is no exception to the problems mentioned earlier. Although there have been efforts to improve employee competence and utilize information technology, there are still various obstacles that hinder the achievement of optimal performance.

One of the main problems is the limited access to the latest technology training that suits operational needs. Many employees feel that the training provided is irrelevant or insufficient to understand and master the technology used. In addition, policies that do not fully support the integration of technology in all administrative processes are also an obstacle. The lack of clear policy and regulatory support in the application of information technology often leads to inconsistencies in the use of technology at various levels of government. Inadequate infrastructure conditions, such as slow internet networks and hardware that have not been upgraded, are also one of the obstacles faced. All of this makes efforts to improve performance through technology less effective and optimal (Amar et al., 2022).

According to (Sutrisno & Zuhri, 2019) defines competence as an ability based on skills and knowledge supported by work attitudes and their application in carrying out tasks and work in the workplace that refer to the set work requirements.

Meanwhile (Wibowo, 2017) states that competence is an ability to carry out or perform a job or task that is based on skills and knowledge and supported by the work attitude demanded by the job. A similar definition is conveyed by (Paais, 2019) which states that competence is a person's knowledge, abilities, and skills or personal characteristics that determine the level of individual behavior and expertise in doing their work which is expected to provide superior performance in their work.

To measure the competency indicators of this study, refer to the opinion (Sutrisno, E, 2017), namely:

1. Knowledge, which is awareness of the cognitive field. For example, an employee knows how to identify learning, and how to do good learning according to the needs of the company.

2. Understanding, which is the cognitive and affective depth possessed by the individual. For example, an employee in carrying out learning must have a good understanding of the characteristics and working conditions effectively and efficiently.

3. Ability (Skill), is something that an individual possesses to carry out the tasks or work assigned to him. For example, the ability of employees to choose work methods that are considered more effective and efficient.

4. Value, is a standard of behavior that has been believed and psychologically integrated in a person. For example, the standard of behavior of employees in carrying out their duties (honesty, openness, democracy, etc.)

5. Attitude, which is a feeling (happy - unhappy, like - dislike) or a reaction to a stimulus that comes from outside. For example, reactions to economic crises, feelings about salary increases, and so on.

6. Interest, is a person's tendency to do an action. For example, doing a work activity.

In addition to competence, other factors that are also very important in supporting performance are In this study, what is meant by the use of technology refers to the opinion (Muslihudin & Oktafianto, 2016) which states the use of

information systems which is a collection of components in an organization related to the process of creating information flows.

Employee performance is

In this study, the indicators of the use of technology refer to the opinions (Muslihudin & Oktafianto, 2016) as follows:

1. The availability of hardware devices consists of input, process, output and network components;
2. The availability of software consists of operating components, utilities and applications;
3. The availability of data includes data structure, data security and integrity;
4. Availability of procedures such as documentation, system procedures, operating and technical manuals;
5. The availability of human resources, namely parties involved in the use of information systems

This research is relevant in the context of broader public policy, where information technology and human resource competence are the main keys in improving the performance and quality of public services.

According to (Afandi, 2018) Employee performance is the result of work that can be achieved by a person or group of people in a company in accordance with their respective authorities and responsibilities in an effort to achieve organizational goals illegally, not violating the law and not contrary to morals and ethics.

Meanwhile, according to (Mangkunegara. A.A. P, 2020) employee performance is the achievement of employee work results based on quality and quantity as work achievements in a certain period of time adjusted to the duties and responsibilities of a group in the organization in carrying out the main tasks and functions that are guided by norms, operational standards, procedures, criteria and measures that have been set or that apply in the organization.

To measure employee performance, this research refers to the theory (Afandi, 2018) as follows:

1) Quantity of work;
2) Quality of work;
3) Efficiency in carrying out duties;
4) Work discipline;
5) Initiative;
6) Accuracy;
7) Leadership;
8). Honesty; and
9) Creativity.

The results of this study are expected to not only be beneficial for the sub-district office of South Binjai District, but can also be applied to other sub-district offices in Indonesia that are facing similar challenges. References from previous

research and empirical data generated from this study can be a strong basis for developing more effective strategies and policies in improving employee performance through the use of information technology. The concept of this research is as illustrated in the following conceptual framework drawing:
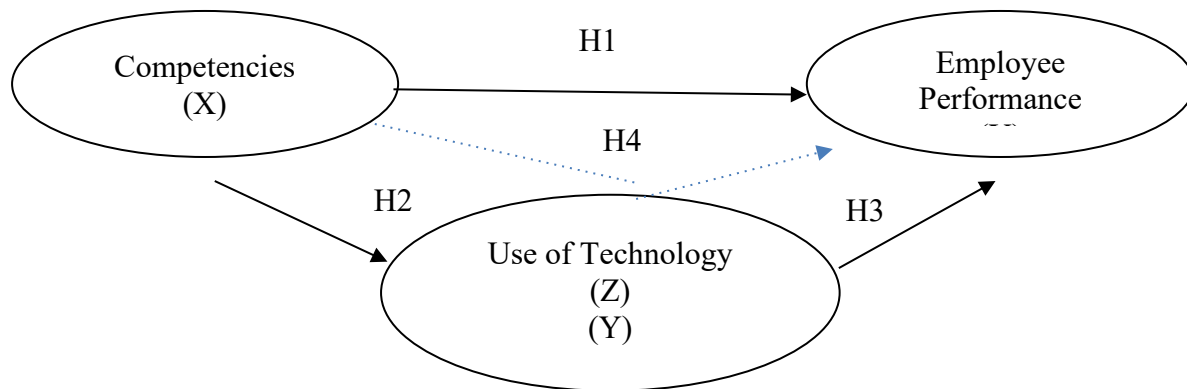
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This type of research is a casual associative quantitative research. This research was carried out at the South Binjai Sub-district Office. The time of this research was carried out from March to May 2024. According to (Sugiyono, 2018) population is a generalization area consisting of objects/subjects that have certain qualities and characteristics that are determined by the researcher to be studied and then drawn conclusions. The population in this study is the entire number of employees in the South Binjai Sub-district Office with a total of 117 employees with the following characteristics:

Table 3.1 Details of Popolation at the South Binjai Sub-district Office

No.	Status	Number (Person)
1.	ASN	64
2.	Honorary	53
	Sum	**117**

Source : South Binjai Sub-district Office

The sampling technique used in this study is a saturated sample. According to (Sugiyono, 2019) saturated sampling is a sample selection technique when all members

of the population are sampled where all populations in this study are sampled, totaling 117 employees

The data that will be used from this study is the data from the results of the questionnaire distributed to respondents consisting of all employees in all divisions. The data analysis technique used in this study is a quantitative data analysis method using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Square (PLS) using SmartPLS 3.0 software.

Meanwhile, the feasibility test that will be used in this study is the outer *model* test in order to obtain *an outer loading* value that meets the requirements *of validity and reliability.* Testing the structural model (Inner model) which includes a determination coefficient test (R2) to measure how far the model is able to explain the variation of bound variables. R^2

The Goodness fit test is used to determine the extent to which the observed data is in accordance with the theoretical distribution assumed by the model or hypothesis (Ghozali & Latan, 2015) and the hypothesis test (T-Statistic Test) which consists of *a path coeficients* test to test how the direct influence of each independent variable individually on its bound variable as well as the indirect influence of the intervening variable in influencing its independent variable on its bound variable.

This test is used to determine the direction of the relationship between variables (positive/negative). If the value is 0 to 1, then the direction of the relationship between the variables is declared positive. Meanwhile, if the value is 0 to -1, then the direction of the relationship between the variables is declared negative. A hypothesis is said to be accepted if the statistical t value is greater than the t of the table. According to (Ghozali & Latan, 2015) the criterion of t-value table is 1.96 with a significance level of 5%

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

Outer Model *Analysis*

The outer *model* test in this study uses algorithm analysis in *SmartPLS software version 3.0,* in order to obtain *outer loading* values that meet *the validity and reliability requirements.*

1) Convergent Validity Test Results

The convergent validity of the measurement model with reflexive indicators can be seen from the correlation between the score of the item/indicator and the construction score. Based on the results for outer loading, it shows that there is an

indicator that has a loading below 0.60 and is not significant. The following is presented as the results of the outer loading value in the following table.

Table 2. *Outer Loading*

Indicators	*Outer Loading*	Information
Competencies (X)		
KOMP1	0.824	Valid
KOMP2	0.846	Valid
KOMP3	0.857	Valid
KOMP4	0.863	Valid
KOMP5	0.907	Valid
KOMP6	0.790	Valid
Use of technology (Z)		
PT1	0.809	Valid
PT2	0.915	Valid
PT3	0.847	Valid
PT4	0.792	Valid
PT5	0.884	Valid
Employee Performance (Y)		
KP1	0.904	Valid
KP2	0.898	Valid
KP3	0.746	Valid
KP4	0.719	Valid
KP5	0.735	Valid
KP6	0.792	Valid
KP7	0.794	Valid
KP8	0.841	Valid
KP9	0.897	Valid

Source : Output Smart PLS, 2024

Based on Table 2, it can be seen that all indicators have a *loading factor* value of > 0.60. According to (Ghozali, Imam & Latan, 2015) states that the indicator is declared valid if it has a loading *factor* value of > 0.60. Thus, it can be stated that all indicators in this study are declared valid and can be carried out further research. The following is shown in the form of a structural model as shown in the following image
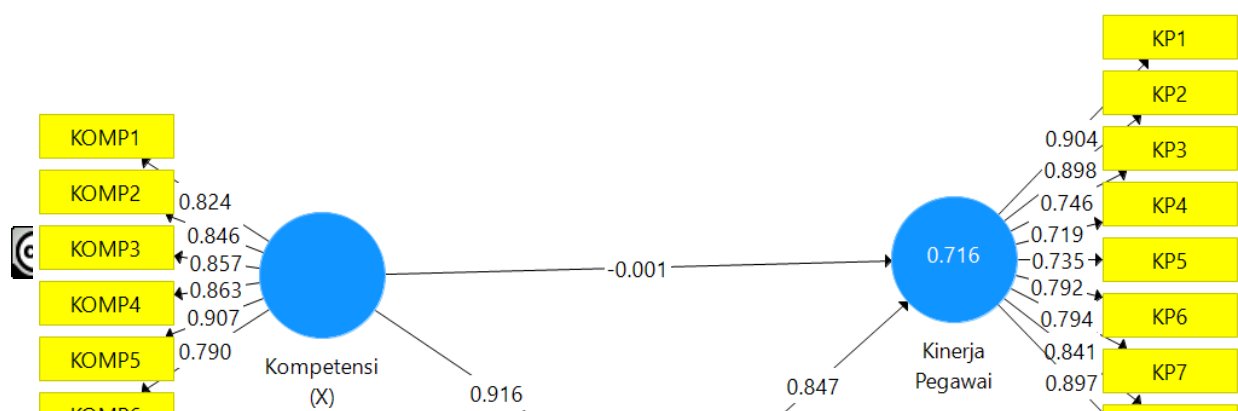
Figure 1. Outer Model Test Results

2) Discriminate Validity *Test Results*

The next test is to test the validity of discrimination, this test aims to determine whether a reflective indicator is a good measurement for its construction based on the principle that the indicator is highly correlated with its construction. The following are the results of cross loading from the discrimination validity test as shown in the following table:

Table 3. *Discriminant Validity*

Indicators	Employee Performance (Y)	Competencies (X)	Use of Technology (Z)
KOMP1	0.689	**0.824**	0.870
KOMP2	0.712	**0.846**	0.801
KOMP3	0.659	**0.857**	0.780
KOMP4	0.635	**0.863**	0.685
KOMP5	0.650	**0.907**	0.753
KOMP6	0.584	**0.790**	0.751
KP1	**0.904**	0.685	0.763
KP2	**0.898**	0.672	0.734
KP3	**0.746**	0.528	0.513
KP4	**0.719**	0.772	0.847
KP5	**0.735**	0.497	0.476
KP6	**0.792**	0.468	0.526
KP7	**0.794**	0.538	0.615

KP8	**0.841**	0.663	0.792
KP9	**0.897**	0.724	0.753
PT1	0.613	0.743	**0.809**
PT2	0.738	0.924	**0.915**
PT3	0.719	0.772	**0.847**
PT4	0.841	0.663	**0.792**
PT5	0.678	0.778	**0.884**

Source: Output Smart PLS, 2024

Based on table 4, it can be seen that the *cross loading value* in each indicator and variable is greater than other variables and indicators, the cross loading variable Competence shows that the cross loading of the variable indicator is greater than the cross loading of other latent variables, the cross loading indicator of the variable using technology shows that the value of *the cross loading* indicator is greater than other latent variables, *Cross loading of* employee performance variables also shows a greater cross loading value of the indicator than the cross loading of the latent variable. Based on this data, it can be stated discriminatively *that* the cross loading *results* are considered valid.

3) Composite reliability *test results*

The test further determines the reliable value with *the composite reliability* of the indicator block that measures the construction. A construction value that is said to be reliable if the indigo *composite reliability* is above 0.60. In addition to looking at *the composite reliability* value, the reliable value can be seen in the variable construct value with *the alpha cronbachs* of the indicator block that measures the construct. A construct is declared reliable if the *cronbachs alpha value* is above 0.7. The following is a table of loading values for the construct of the research variables resulting from running the Smart PLS program in the following table.

Table 4. *Construct Reliability and Validity*

Indicators	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Extracted Variance (AVE)
Employee Performance (Y)	0.937	0.947	0.667
Competencies (X)	0.922	0.939	0.721
Use of Technology (Z)	0.904	0.929	0.724

Source: *Smart PLS Output,* **2024**

Based on Table 4, it can be explained that the AVE value in each variable tested has a value of > 0.5, which shows that all variables in this study meet the *criteria for discriminant validity*. To determine the reliability in this study, *the composite reliability* value is used. The accepted value for the reliability level is > 0.7. Based on these criteria, it can be seen that all variables in this study have a > value of 0.70 so that it can be stated that all variables tested meet the reliability of the construct.

Structural Model Evaluation (*Inner Model*)

Evaluation of the structural model (*inner model*) is carried out to ensure that the structural model built is robust and accurate. The stages of analysis carried out in the evaluation of the structural model are seen from several indicators, namely:

1) Determination Coefficient Test Results (R^2)

The determination coefficient test (R^2) is used to see the influence of certain independent latent variables on dependent latent variables whether they have a substantive influence. Based on the data processing that has been carried out using the SmartPLS 3.0 program, the R Square value is obtained as shown in the following table.

Table 5. R Square Results

Variable	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Employee Performance (Y)	0.716	0.710
Use of Technology (Z)	0.839	0.837

Source: *Smart PLS Output,* **2024**

Based on table 5, it is known that the R square Adjusted value of the variable Technology Usage is 0.837 or 83.70%, which means that the influence of Competence on the use of technology is in a high category, meaning that the more Competence increases, the more the use of technology will increase. Meanwhile, the R Square value in the variable Technology Use is 0.839 or 83.90%, which means that the influence of Competence on Technology Use is 83.90% and the remaining 16.10% is influenced by other variables that have not been studied. Meanwhile, the R Square Adjusted value of the employee performance variable is 0.710 or 71.00%, which means that Competence affects employee performance by 71.00% or in the high category, meaning that Competence can significantly improve employee performance. Furthermore, the R square value of the Employee Performance variable is 0.716 or 71.60%, which means

that Competence affects Employee Performance by 71.60%, while the remaining 28.40% is influenced by other variables that have not been studied.

2) Goodness of Fit *Test Results*

The Goodness of Fit test is a statistical method used to evaluate how well the tested model or statistical distribution matches the observed data. The Goodness of Fit test aims to determine the extent to which the observed data corresponds to the theoretical distribution assumed by the model or hypothesis. The goodness of fit model test can be seen from looking at the NFI value on the program. If the NFI value is > SRMR and the closer it is to 1, then the better the model (good fit). Based on the data processing that has been carried out using the SmartPLS 3.0 program, the Fit Model values are obtained as follows.

Table 6. Model Fit

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.117	0.117
d_ULS	1.658	1.658
d_G	2.244	2.244
Chi-Square	539.517	539.517
NFI	0.705	0.705

Source: Output Smart PLS, 2024

Based on table 7, it can be seen that the NFI value is 0.705 > 0.117 so that it can be stated that the model in this study has sufficient *goodness of fit* and is suitable to be used to test the research hypothesis.

Hypothesis Test Results

After conducting an inner model analysis, the next thing is to evaluate the relationship between latent constructs in order to answer the hypothesis in this study. The hypothesis test in this study was carried out by looking at T-Statistics and P-Values. The hypothesis was declared accepted if the *T-Statistics value* > 1.96 and the P-Values < 0.05. The following are the results of *Path Coefficients* of direct influence between variables as shown in the following table.

Table 7. *Path Coefficients*

Variable	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values	Result

			(STDEV)			
Competency (X) -> Employee Performance	0.001	0.029	0.122	0.007	0.995	Rejected
Competency (X) -> Use of Technology	0.916	0.918	0.016	55.648	0.000	Accepted
Use of Technology -> Employee Performance	0.847	0.876	0.108	7.873	0.000	Accepted

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2023

Based on the data in Table 8, it can be stated that there is no influence of Competence on the use of technology. This can be seen from the T-statistical value of 55.648 < 1.96 with a P-Value of 0.000 < 0.05. This means that if Competence is improved, the ability of employees in the use of technology will increase significantly. This result answers the first hypothesis in this study, namely rejecting Ho and accepting Ha or Competence has a positive and significant effect on the ability of employees in the use of technology at the South Binjai Sub-district Office

Furthermore, on the influence of competence on employee performance, data on T-Statistical values of 0.007 < 1.96 with P-Value values of 0.995 > 0.05 so that it can be stated that competence has no effect on employee performance at the South Binjai Sub-district Office. This can be interpreted that even if competence is improved, employee performance will not increase. This statement answers the second hypothesis, namely accepting Ho and rejecting Ha.

Furthermore, on the influence of technology use on employee performance, data was obtained that the T-Statistic value was 7.873> 1.96 with a P-Value value of 0.000 < 0.05 which means rejecting Ho and accepting Ha or the use of technology has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. This indicates that if the use of technology increases, the performance of employees tends to increase significantly. To answer the fourth hypothesis, it can be seen in the indirect influence between variables as shown in the following table.

Table 8. Indirect Effect (Pengaruh Tidak Langsung)

Variable	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDE V)	T Statistics (|O/STDE V|)	P Values	Result

Competency (X) -> Use of Technology -> Employee Performance	0.775	0.804	0.104	7.475	0.000	**Accepted**

Source: Output Smart PLS, 2024

Based on table 8, it can be explained that the performance of employees (Z) is able to influence between Competency (X1) and the use of technology (Y). This can be seen from the results of the T-Statistical value of 7.475 > 1.96 with a P-Value of 0.000 < 0.05. This shows that there is an indirect influence between Competence and employee performance through the use of technology. These results provide insight into how the intermediate variable in the use of technology can mediate the relationship between Competence and employee performance at the South Binjai Sub-district Office.

3.2. Discussion

The findings in this study can be strengthened by referring to the findings of previous relevant studies. In the context of the influence of Competence on the use of technology, these findings state that there is a significant influence between competence on the use of technology. The results of these findings are supported by the findings from (Suryani et al., 2021) which state that competence has a significant effect on employee performance.

The findings of this study imply that improving competence has a significant impact on the effective use of technology, which can ultimately affect employee performance. By demonstrating a significant relationship between competency and technology use, these results suggest that organizations should prioritize competency development as part of their strategy to successfully integrate technology in the workplace. Additionally, this study supports previous research by Suryani et al. (2021), which stated that when employees have a high level of competence, they are more likely to utilize technological tools effectively, which contributes to improved overall performance. These findings indicate that training and development programs aimed at improving competencies, especially in areas related to technology, can be a valuable investment for organizations looking to optimize performance and adapt to digital advances in their workflows (Vellycia Dwi Cintia R et al., 2024).

In terms of the influence of competence on employee performance. The results of this finding are in line with the results of previous research by (Salvano, 2023) which stated that competence has no effect on employee performance.

The implications of these findings suggest that competence may not be the only or even the main factor that affects employee performance in a given context. In line with Salvano's (2023) research which states that competence does not have a significant effect on performance, these results suggest that organizations need to consider other factors—such as motivation, work environment, or reward systems—that may be more decisive in influencing performance. This implication opens up opportunities for

organizations to take a more holistic approach to performance improvement, not only focusing on competency development, but also by strengthening other aspects that can contribute more directly to optimal work outcomes (Putri et al., 2023).

Furthermore, on the influence of technology use on employee performance, the results of this finding are supported by the results of research conducted by (Anggraini, 2022) which explains that there is a positive and significant influence between the use of technology on employee performance supported by a high organizational innovation climate through high psychological capital.

These findings indicate that the use of technology can improve employee performance, especially when supported by a strong climate of innovation and high psychological capital in the organization. The results of Anggraini's (2022) research, which supports the positive and significant influence of technology use on employee performance, show that technology that is applied well has the potential to improve efficiency and productivity. The climate of organizational innovation and high psychological capital, such as confidence, optimism, and resilience in the face of challenges, serves as a catalyst that helps employees be more open and effective in using technology. These implications suggest that organizations should not only introduce technology, but also build an innovative work environment and support the development of employees' psychological capital. This is so that adaptation to technology can run optimally and have a positive impact on overall performance.

Furthermore, indirect influence through the use of technology is able to mediate the influence between Competence and employee performance. These findings show that the use of technology plays a role as an intervening variable that strengthens the influence of competence on employee performance. In other words, although competence may not have a direct or significant effect on performance, high competence can be more optimal in improving performance when accompanied by the use of technology (Suryani et al., 2021). Technology acts as a tool that allows employees to apply their competencies more effectively and efficiently, so that the impact of competencies on performance becomes more real. The implication of these findings is that organizations need to focus not only on improving employee competencies but also on providing technology that is appropriate and relevant to their duties (Blanka et al., 2022). This is expected to increase employee work results more optimally, especially in a work environment that continues to develop and innovate.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

4.1 Conclusion

From the results of the data analysis of the research results and discussions described above, it can be concluded that:

1. There is a positive and significant influence between competence and the use of technology. This can be seen from the T-statistical value of 55.648 < 1.96 with a P-Value of 0.000 < 0.05. This means that if Competence is improved, the ability of employees in the use of technology will increase significantly.

2. On the influence of competence on employee performance, data on T-Statistical values of 0.007 < 1.96 with P-Value values of 0.995 > 0.05 so that it can be stated that competence has no effect on employee performance at the South Binjai Sub-district Office. This can be interpreted that even if competence is improved, employee performance will not increase.

3. On the influence of technology use on employee performance, data was obtained that the T-Statistic value was 7.873> 1.96 with a P-Value of 0.000 < 0.05 which means rejecting Ho and accepting Ha or the use of technology has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

4. In the indirect influence, the results of the T-Statistical value of 7.475 > 1.96 with a P-Value of 0.000 < 0.05 were obtained. This shows that there is an indirect influence between Competence and employee performance through the use of technology. These results provide insight into how the intermediate variable in the use of technology can mediate the relationship between Competence and employee performance at the South Binjai Sub-district Office.

4.2 Suggestion

Based on the findings, the discussion and conclusion of the research can be suggested to the Office of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, and Community of Binjai City as follows:

1. Institutions need to provide support in the form of access to relevant technologies and training in their use, so that employees can optimize their competencies to improve performance.

2. Students are expected to prepare themselves with an understanding of the latest technology and how it can support performance in the workplace. Learning digital skills will add value in applying competencies.

3. In addition, the researcher is further advised to conduct further studies related to the role of other intervening variables, such as organizational culture or psychological capital, in strengthening the relationship between competence and performance.

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