Building Productive and High-Performance ASN: The Role of Competencies, Career Development, and Work-Life Balance

Fera Fransiska Siregar, M. Toyib Daulay, Yohny Anwar

Abstract

Digital transformation and increasing demands for public services require the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) to have higher productivity and performance. These conditions make competence, career development, and work-life balance important factors in supporting the creation of professional, adaptive, and results-oriented ASN. This study aims to analyze the influence of competence, career development, and work-life balance on the performance of ASN employees at SMA Negeri 12 Medan. This study uses a quantitative approach with the type of associative research. The research population is all ASN of SMA Negeri 12 Medan which totals 51 people, so the sampling technique uses saturated sampling (census), where the entire population is used as a research sample. Data was collected through the questionnaire deployment and analyzed using SmartPLS 4. The results of the study showed that competence had a positive and significant effect on employee performance with a T-Statistics score of 3.198 and a P-Value of 0.001. Career development also has a positive and significant effect on employee performance with a T-Statistics score of 3.264 and a P-Values of 0.001. Furthermore, work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee performance with a T-Statistics value of 2.573 and a P-Value of 0.010. The R-Square value of 0.552 indicates that competence, career development, and work-life balance are able to explain the variation in employee performance by 55.2%, while the remaining 44.8% is influenced by other factors outside the study.

***Keywords**: Competence, Career Development, Work-Life Balance, Employee Performance.*

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Introduction

The State Civil Apparatus (ASN) is the backbone of the administration of government and public services in Indonesia, including in the education sector. Based on official data from the State Civil Service Agency, the number of national civil servants as of September 1, 2025 was recorded at 5,359,209 people, consisting of 68% Civil Servants (PNS) and 32% Government Employees with Employment Agreements (PPPK), with 77% of them serving in regional agencies (State Civil Service Agency, 2025). The large number of ASN requires a management system that is able to ensure professionalism, competence, and consistent performance, as measured through the ASN Professionalism Index which includes aspects of educational qualifications, competencies, performance, and discipline (State Civil Service Agency, 2024). In educational units such as SMA Negeri 12 Medan, civil servants, both as educators and education personnel, are the main determinants of the quality of learning services, so that their productivity and high performance have a direct impact on the quality of graduates and the reputation of the institution.

One of the main factors that determine the performance of ASN is competence. Competency is understood as a combination of knowledge, skills, and work attitudes that are prerequisites for the successful implementation of tasks (Wong, 2020). Competency is the ability that a person has to do a job correctly and has advantages based on things related to knowledge, skills and attitudes (Edison et al., 2018). Previous research has shown that competence has a positive effect on the performance and work productivity of employees (Lianasari & Ahmadi, 2022) and (Aisyah et al., 2021), and specifically for civil servants, professional competence is an absolute requirement in meeting the demands of bureaucratic reform (Komara, 2019). This is in line with the mandate of personnel regulations that the development of technical, managerial, and socio-cultural competencies must be the basis for ASN development (Rezeki, 2017).

The second factor is career development. Clear and fair career development increases job satisfaction as well as employee performance (Kurnia et al., 2020) and has been proven to contribute to employee performance in various government agencies and public service institutions (Juniar et al., 2025). Employees who get career development opportunities in a fair and transparent manner will have higher motivation to improve the quality of work and organizational achievements (Rezeki, 2017; Salafudin et al., 2025). Without a clear career path, employees will lose motivation to perform more optimally.

The third factor, work-life balance (WLB), is an increasingly hot issue amid the increasing administrative workload and digitalization of government services. Conservation of resources theory explains that individuals who are able to maintain a balance of personal resources, time, energy, and social support will be better able to survive and perform well in the workplace (Hobfoll, 1989). WLB is defined as a balance between effort, skills, and time devoted to work and personal life (Marques & Berry, 2021). (Johanim et al., 2018) emphasized that *work-life balance* is an important factor that plays a role in improving teachers' work performance, because the balance between personal and work life allows individuals to work more effectively and productively. According to (Boakye et al., 2023), organizations need to pay attention to the balance between the demands of work and employees' personal lives because imbalances in both aspects can decrease job satisfaction which ultimately has the potential to hinder work performance and productivity. In a study conducted by (Udin, 2023), it was stated that work-life balance has a positive effect on employee performance. Poor WLB is also associated with the risk of burnout and psychological stress in public service apparatus (Borst & Knies, 2021).

These three factors do not stand alone, but are interrelated in shaping employee performance as a whole, as emphasized in a study that combines competencies, work facilities, WLB, and work discipline on employee performance through job satisfaction mediation (Sjahruddin et al., 2022). Unfortunately, the phenomenon of dual roles of ASN SMA Negeri 12 Medan as teachers, administrators, and coaches of student activities often creates an imbalance

between professional demands and personal lives, which has the potential to hinder the optimization of competencies and career paths that have been designed by national personnel policies. The gap between bureaucratic expectations of productive and high-performing ASN and the reality of workload in the field is the background for the importance of research on the role of competencies, career development, and work-life balance on the productivity and performance of ASN at SMA Negeri 12 Medan.

Literature Review

2.1 Employee Performance

According to (Lianasari & Ahmadi, 2022), employee performance is a consequence of the quality and quantity of an employee's work in carrying out his duties in accordance with the obligations imposed on him. According to (Mangkunegara, 2017), "performance is the result of work in terms of quality and quantity achieved by an employee in carrying out his duties in accordance with the responsibilities given to him." According to (Edison et al., 2018) performance is the end result of a process that refers to and is measured over a certain period of time based on pre-determined conditions or agreements.

2.2 Competencies

Competence plays an important role for employees, because it is related to the basic ability of employees to carry out an activity (Aisyah et al., 2021). Competence is described as a person's observable attributes, such as knowledge, skills, and work behavior or attitude, which can lead to success and performance (Lianasari & Ahmadi, 2022). According to (Wibowo, 2018) which 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.

2.3 Career Development

Career development is an emphasis on providing assistance and opportunities for employees that allow them to set realistic career goals, and realize those goals, that the company has an obligation to help its employees realize their abilities, and partly because employees believe that by integrating individual "careers" with company "careers," both will benefit (Kurnia et al., 2020). According to (Afandi, 2018) Career development is a sequence of activities related to work and a person's behaviors, values, and aspirations during his life span. Career development includes systematic programs such as training, mentoring, and promotion designed to strengthen individual capacity and readiness to face job challenges (Hosen et al., 2023; Salafudin et al., 2025). According to (Daulay, 2014) in (Ridwan et al., 2025), career development is a process planned by an organization to improve employees' abilities, knowledge, and work experience to prepare them to occupy higher positions or assume greater responsibilities in the future according to the needs of the organization and individual potential.

2.4 Work Life Balance

Work-life balance is seen as an important factor in the theory of work well-being and productivity, which emphasizes that individuals who are able to manage time, energy, and responsibilities in a balanced manner between work and personal life tend to have lower levels of stress, higher motivation, and stronger concentration and work commitment (Sibuea et al., 2025). Work-life balance is how a person balances his responsibilities in activities that are not related to his job in order to achieve a favorable situation, that is, balance when doing activities that are in accordance with his responsibilities in that job (Juniar et al., 2025). Work-Life Balance is a person's ability to manage roles and responsibilities in the workplace, family, and personal life in a balanced manner, so that all obligations can be fulfilled without sacrificing physical or mental health (Febriyanti, 2025).

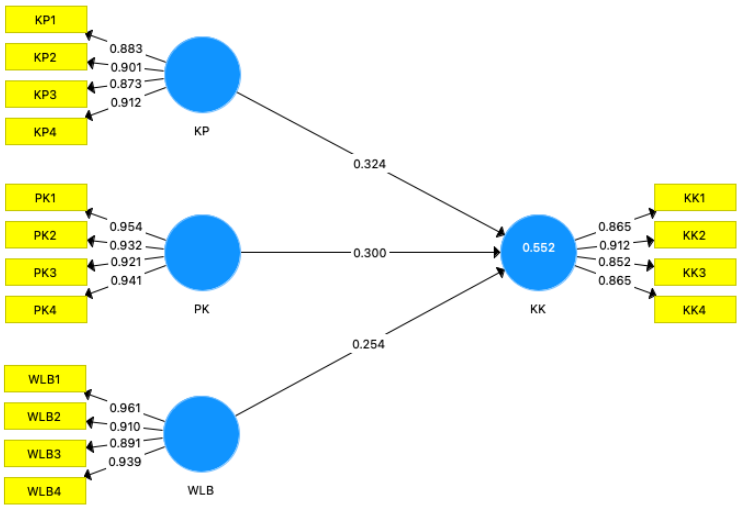
Research Methodology

This study uses a type of quantitative research with an associative-causal approach to test the influence of Competence, Career Development, and Work-Life Balance on ASN Productivity and Performance; The research population is all ASN and PPPK at SMA Negeri 12 Medan which totals 51 people, and because the population is relatively small (under 100 people), all population members are used as samples through saturated sampling techniques (census), so that the number of samples is equal to the number of population, which is 51 people; while the data analysis technique uses Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with the help of SmartPLS software, through the evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) of the convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability of the construct as well as the structural model (inner model) of the R^2, Q^2, and hypothesis tests with bootstrapping procedures based on t-statistics and p-values.

Results

3.1 Evaluation of Measurement Models (Outer Model)

Evaluation of the Measurement Model (Outer Model) is carried out to ensure that each indicator is able to measure research variables validly and reliably. These tests include Convergent Validity (Outer Loading and AVE), Discriminant Validity (Cross Loading or Fornell-Larcker Criterion), and Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability).



Gambar 1. Outer Model

a. Uji Convergent Validity

The Convergent Validity test is a test within the Outer Model that is used to ensure that each indicator truly reflects the latent variable being measured, with the main criteria being the outer loading value > 0.70 and AVE > 0.50.

Table 1. Outer Loading

	KK	KP	PK	WLB
KK1	0,865			
KK2	0,912			
KK3	0,852			

	KK	KP	PK	WLB
KK4	0,865			
KP1		0,883		
KP2		0,901		
KP3		0,873		
KP4		0,912		
PK1			0,954	
PK2			0,932	
PK3			0,921	
PK4			0,941	
WLB1				0,961
WLB2				0,910
WLB3				0,891
WLB4				0,939

Based on the results of the convergent validity test in Table 1, all research indicators have an outer loading value above 0.70, which ranges from 0.852 to 0.961. Thus, all indicators in the variables of Competence, Career Development, Work-Life Balance, and Employee Performance were declared valid and suitable for use in the research.

b. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) test is a test in the outer model used to measure how much of an indicator's variance can be explained by a latent variable, with an AVE value criterion of > 0.50 indicating that the construct has good validity.

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
KK	0,764
KP	0,796
PK	0,878
WLB	0,857

Based on Table 2, all research variables had an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value above 0.50, namely Competency of 0.764, Employee Performance of 0.796, Career Development of 0.878, and Work-Life Balance of 0.857. The results show that the entire construct has met the criteria of convergent validity and is able to explain the variance of the indicators well.

c. Discriminant Validity

The Discriminant Validity test is a test in an outer model that is used to ensure that each latent variable has a clear difference from the other latent variables, with the test criteria using Cross Loading or the Fornell-Larcker Criterion where the value of the construct must be higher than its correlation with other constructs.

Table 3. Cross Loading - Discriminant Validity

	KK	**KP**	**PK**	**WLB**
KK1	0,865	0,558	0,530	0,543

	KK	KP	PK	WLB
KK2	0,912	0,534	0,567	0,569
KK3	0,852	0,555	0,548	0,496
KK4	0,865	0,517	0,616	0,555
KP1	0,495	0,883	0,505	0,457
KP2	0,583	0,901	0,459	0,364
KP3	0,528	0,873	0,441	0,457
KP4	0,593	0,912	0,556	0,545
PK1	0,602	0,503	0,954	0,611
PK2	0,560	0,373	0,932	0,649
PK3	0,640	0,545	0,921	0,576
PK4	0,617	0,625	0,941	0,668
WLB1	0,570	0,434	0,667	0,961
WLB2	0,577	0,532	0,575	0,910
WLB3	0,476	0,376	0,590	0,891
WLB4	0,648	0,527	0,637	0,939

Based on Table 3, each indicator has the highest cross loading value on the variable it measures compared to other variables. These results show that all constructs have met the criteria of discriminant validity, so that each research variable is able to be clearly distinguished from each other.

Table 3. Fornell-Larcker Criterion- Discriminant Validity

	KK	KP	PK	WLB
KK	0,874			
KP	0,619	0,892		
PK	0,647	0,550	0,937	
WLB	0,619	0,511	0,667	0,926

Based on Table 3, the square root value of AVE (√AVE) in each variable, namely Competency (0.874), Employee Performance (0.892), Career Development (0.937), and Work-Life Balance (0.926), is greater than the correlation value with other variables. These results show that all variables have met the Fornell-Larcker Criterion, so that the discriminant validity in this study is well stated.

d. Reliability Test

The Reliability Test is a test in the outer model used to ensure the consistency of the indicator's answer in measuring latent variables, with the criteria of Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values > 0.70 indicating that the research instrument is reliable.

Table 4. Cronbach’s Alpha dan Composite Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
KK	0,897	0,928
KP	0,915	0,940
PK	0,954	0,966
WLB	0,944	0,960

Based on Table 4, all research variables have Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values above 0.70, which range from 0.897–0.954 and 0.928–0.966. These results show that the variables of Competency, Employee Performance, Career Development, and Work-Life Balance have a very good level of reliability so that the research instruments are declared consistent and trustworthy.

3.2 Evaluation of Structural Models (Inner Model)

Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model) is an analysis in SmartPLS that is used to test the relationships between latent variables as well as the model's ability to explain dependent variables, which are evaluated through R-Square,

a. R-Square (R^2)

The R-Square (R^2) test is a test in the Inner Model that is used to measure how much the ability of independent variables (Competence, Career Development, and Work-Life Balance) to explain dependent variables (Employee Performance), with the higher the R^2 value indicating that the better the model is in explaining the research variable.

Table 5. R-Square (R^2)

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
KK	0,552	0,535

Based on Table 5, the R-Square value of 0.552 and the R-Square Adjusted of 0.535 show that the variables of Competency, Career Development, and Work-Life Balance are able to explain the variables of Employee Performance by 55.2%, while the remaining 44.8% are influenced by other factors outside the research model. This value shows that the research model has a moderate explanatory ability.

b. Hypothesis Tests

Hypothesis Test is a test in the Inner Model that is used to find out whether there is a significant influence between independent variables on dependent variables based on the values of Path Coefficient, T-Statistics, and P-Values as a result of the bootstrapping process on SmartPLS.

Table 6. Uji Hipotesis

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
KP -> KK	0,324	0,329	0,101	3,198	0,001
PK -> KK	0,300	0,299	0,092	3,264	0,001
WLB -> KK	0,254	0,251	0,099	2,573	0,010

Based on Table 6, the variables of Competency, Career Development, and Work-Life Balance have a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance, which is shown by the T-Statistics value of 3.198 each; 3,264; and 2,573 and P-Values of 0.001; 0,001; and 0.010 which is smaller than 0.05. These results show that all research hypotheses are accepted, so that competency improvement, career development, and work-life balance can improve the performance of ASN employees of SMA Negeri 12 Medan.

The results showed that Competence, Career Development, and Work-Life Balance together were able to explain 55.2% of changes in the Performance of ASN and PPPK Employees at

SMA Negeri 12 Medan ($R^2 = 0.552$), which was in the medium category (Ghozali & Latan, 2015), while the remaining 44.8% were influenced by other factors such as motivation or job satisfaction (Lianasari & Ahmadi, 2022). This finding is in line with the direction of the latest personnel policy, where since 2026 teacher performance is not only assessed from the administrative side, but has begun to be mapped through the e-Performance system in the GTK Room which combines performance practices, work behavior, and competency development in one assessment unit (BKN, 2026). This means that the three variables tested in this study are indeed the main concern of the current government in managing the performance of ASN in schools.

Competence has been proven to have the most influence on employee performance, meaning that the better the knowledge, skills, and abilities that employees have, the higher the performance produced. Currently, the government requires all civil servants, both civil servants and PPPK, to take part in ASN Profiling which measures managerial, sociocultural, and digital literacy competencies, then maps them into the Nine-Box Grid to determine the direction of their future careers (BKN, 2026). In other words, competence is no longer just an added value, but the main requirement that determines whether an ASN is worthy of being retained or developed in his career. At SMA Negeri 12 Medan, teachers and education staff who master teaching, administration, and digital technology skills will be better prepared to face the ever-changing demands of work.

Career development also has a real impact on performance, which shows that employees work better when they see there is a clear path to growth. This is very relevant today because the career status of PPPK is actually in the public spotlight. In early 2026, a number of PPPK even filed a lawsuit with the Constitutional Court because they felt that their service period did not provide career certainty compared to civil servants (MKRI, 2026). Meanwhile, BKN Regulation Number 1 of 2026 begins to provide space for awards and training priorities for outstanding PPPK (BKN, 2026). This condition strengthens the research findings that the certainty and clarity of career paths greatly determine the morale of work, including for ASN and PPPK at SMA Negeri 12 Medan which have a mixed status between civil servants and PPPK.

Work-Life Balance still has a positive effect on performance, but it has the least effect among the three variables. This means that work-life balance is important, but it is not yet a major factor compared to competence and career. This finding is understandable because the current workload of teachers tends to increase due to the demands of new digital administration, such as filling out e-Performance, preparing teaching targets, and reporting competencies regularly (BKN, 2026), so that employees' personal time is often displaced by increasing work obligations. Although the effect is not as large as the other two variables, this result still confirms that employees who are able to maintain their life balance will be more stable and consistent at work.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research on the influence of competence, career development, and work-life balance on the performance of ASN employees of SMA Negeri 12 Medan, it can be concluded as follows:

1. Competency has a positive and significant effect on the performance of ASN employees of SMA Negeri 12 Medan. This shows that the better the competencies that employees have, the higher the performance produced in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

2. Career development has a positive and significant effect on the performance of ASN employees of SMA Negeri 12 Medan. This shows that a good career development opportunity is able to encourage employees to improve their abilities and produce better performance.
3. Work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on the performance of ASN employees of SMA Negeri 12 Medan. This shows that work-life balance can support better working conditions so that employee performance improves.
4. Competency, career development, and work-life balance were able to explain employee performance by 55.2%, while the remaining 44.8% were influenced by other factors outside the study. Thus, these three variables are factors that play a role in improving the performance of ASN employees of SMA Negeri 12 Medan.

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