

Original Article

The Effect of Competency Development on Job Satisfaction With Psychological Well-being as a Mediating Variable

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the influence of competency development on job satisfaction with psychological well-being as a mediating variable on employees of the Ternate City Regional Secretariat. The main problem in this study stems from the low value of ASN professionalism as reflected in the ASN Professionalism Index (IP-ASN), as well as the inequality of employee qualifications and competencies, which are suspected of having an impact on job satisfaction. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method, and the data analysis technique used is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach. The research sample consisted of 136 employees taken using the simple random sampling technique. The results of the study show that: (1) competency development has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction; (2) competency development has a positive effect on psychological well-being; (3) psychological well-being has a positive effect on job satisfaction; and (4) psychological well-being significantly mediates the relationship between competency development and job satisfaction. These findings emphasize the importance of psychological aspects in bridging the influence of competency development on employee job satisfaction. This study provides theoretical contributions by integrating the psychological well-being mediation model within the framework of the relationship between competency development and job satisfaction, as well as practical contributions for local governments in designing competency development policies that are oriented towards employee psychological well-being and job satisfaction.

Keywords: Competency Development, Job Satisfaction, Psychological Well-Being, SCA.

I. INTRODUCTION

Human resources are a strategic element that determines the success of an organization, both in the private and public sectors. In government organizations, the quality and contribution of human resources are the main factors in ensuring the effectiveness of public services and the achievement of institutional goals. Ulrich and Dulebohn (2015) explained that within the framework of bureaucratic reform, HR is required to be adaptive, change-oriented, and have emotional involvement in the goals of the institution. Wright and Grant (2010) emphasized that the achievement of public organization goals is greatly influenced by the extent to which the organization is able to create a work environment that encourages employee well-being and engagement in a sustainable manner. In this context, job satisfaction becomes a crucial dimension in human resource management because it contributes to increasing internal stability, role alignment, and continuity of public services.

Job satisfaction is a multidimensional construct that includes cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses to work. Hulin and Judge (2003) explained that job satisfaction reflects an individual's psychological evaluation of working conditions, feelings about work, and accompanying behavioral tendencies. Spector (2001) added that job satisfaction is influenced by the nature of the job, the work environment, and relationships between colleagues. In the public sector, Kalleberg (1977) emphasized the importance of the congruence of individual values with the organization, as well as perceptions of fairness and rewards. Bakker and Demerouti (2017) see job satisfaction as an effective response that influences employee morale, engagement, and contribution. This view aligns with Weiss and Cropanzano (2018a), who assess job satisfaction as a long-term accumulation of emotions and attitudes toward working conditions and social interactions. Ilies et al. (2017) also highlight the importance of perceptions of fairness, opportunities for growth, and the intrinsic value of the job as key factors shaping job satisfaction.

In government organizations, job satisfaction has special characteristics because it is related to public service ethics, bureaucracy, and hierarchical work structures. Buelens and Van den Croeck (2007) stated that state apparatus expect stability, role clarity, and fairness, which, if fulfilled will form a positive perception of work. Park and Rainey (2008) added that public sector employees assess job satisfaction from conditions that reflect integrity, transparency, and appreciation for contributions. Government Regulation Number 94 of 2021 also emphasizes the importance of responsibility and professionalism, which requires the creation of a stable work environment and supports emotional comfort. Choi and Whitford (2017) call job satisfaction an important indicator of bureaucratic effectiveness because it is related to employee attachment to their roles. Leisink and Knies (2011) emphasized that job satisfaction is influenced by perceptions of procedural justice, participative leadership, and the extent



to which employees feel valued in decision-making. Thus, job satisfaction reflects the alignment between employee expectations and the values that apply in the bureaucratic work system.

The urgency to research job satisfaction is also based on the complexity of the work environment that not only demands technical competence, but also mental and psychological readiness in facing organizational dynamics. Judge et al. (2001) stated that perceptions of organizational support, sense of achievement, and role clarity significantly contribute to job satisfaction. This is reinforced by Hackman and Oldham (1976), who stated that elements such as task variety, responsibility, and job meaning greatly determine employees' affective responses to their work. In a bureaucratic government work environment, when self-development is limited and administrative pressure increases, job satisfaction tends to decrease. Thus, understanding the factors that shape positive perceptions of work is an important contribution to public organizations, both through increasing individual capacity and supporting internal conditions that support employee emotional stability to strengthen job satisfaction.

In the study of organizational behavior, job satisfaction is seen as the result of various complex interactions between individual characteristics, work context, and psychological dynamics experienced by employees. Schleicher et al. (2004) stated that job satisfaction is formed from affective reactions to work, which are influenced by perceptions of the work environment, the quality of social interactions, and organizational support. Furthermore, Kinicki and Kreitner (2013) emphasized that factors such as feelings of competence, perceptions of justice, and meaningful work experiences have a direct relationship to the formation of job satisfaction. In the public sector, Wright and Kim (2004) added that bureaucratic work that does not provide space for development or does not pay attention to the psychological dimensions of employees will result in low job satisfaction and have an impact on decreasing overall ability. Therefore, it is important to explore the factors that encourage positive perceptions of work in order to increase job satisfaction.

Increasing individual capacity through competency development is one of the crucial factors in shaping job satisfaction. Noe et al. (2020) explained that competency development is a systematic process to improve employee technical and behavioral abilities to align with job demands. When employees feel competent in carrying out their duties, positive perceptions of work increase. This view is reinforced by Aguinis and Kraiger (2009), who emphasize that organizational training and learning not only impact tasks and functions at work but also increase self-worth and a sense of belonging in the organization, which contributes directly to job satisfaction. In line with this, Chiaburu and Tekleab (2005) added that perceptions of the benefits of training are positively correlated with work attitudes, especially if employees feel that there is organizational commitment to their self-development. An individual's ability to respond effectively to work is not only related to technical aspects, but also has an impact on internal psychological conditions.

In line with this, Fredrickson (2001), through the Broaden-and-Build theory, explains that positive experiences, such as success in developing abilities, can expand psychological resources such as resilience, meaning in life, and self-satisfaction. This finding is in line with the research of Campos and Bascur (2024), which shows that increasing competence has a significant effect on psychological well-being. This study aligns with the findings of Panggabean et al. (2022), which suggest that individuals who feel developed tend to have a more stable emotional state when dealing with work. However, in contrast to Syafiqah's (2024) research, which found that competency development had no significant effect on psychological well-being, indicating that its impact could be hindered by individual perceptions and the context of its implementation.

Diener (2000) added that psychological well-being acts as an internal resource that influences how individuals assess work experiences, including satisfaction with tasks and the organizational environment. In the context of public organizations, Robertson and Cooper (2011) showed that psychological well-being supports mental resilience and positive perceptions of complex work. This view is reinforced by Jabid et al. (2025), who found that psychological mediates the influence of organizational support on employee work attitudes, including satisfaction and positive orientation towards tasks. Based on the views of experts, research on psychological well-being and job satisfaction was conducted. Yiting et al. (2024) proved that psychological well-being has a positive effect on job satisfaction in public service organizations.

By observing the dynamics of human resource management within the Ternate City Regional Secretariat, it is evident that competency development efforts have not yet had a significant impact on increasing job satisfaction. The low professionalism of the State Civil Apparatus (SCA) and the perceived inequality in work experience indicate that there are internal aspects that have not been fully explored. In this case, an individual's psychological state is believed to be a crucial link that can explain this variation. Therefore, this study focuses on examining in more depth how competency development influences job satisfaction, considering the role of psychological well-being as a mediating variable.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A) The Influence of Competency Development on Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined as a pleasant or emotionally positive condition that comes from a person's assessment of their job or work experience (Setiawan and Ghozali, 2006). Job satisfaction can also be interpreted as a positive feeling about one's

job, which is the result of evaluating its characteristics (Robbins and Timothy, 2008). Meanwhile, Hasibuan (2009) stated that Job Satisfaction is an emotional attitude that is pleasant and involves loving one's job; this attitude reflects morals, discipline and work performance.

Competency development is a planned process that aims to improve individual work capabilities through increasing knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are relevant to their duties and responsibilities. This effort is carried out by the organization as part of a human resource strategy to encourage work improvement and adapt to increasingly complex and dynamic job demands. Well-developed competencies will equip employees with the skills needed to carry out their work effectively and efficiently.

This finding is in line with the results of research conducted by Halimah et al. (2024), which shows that competency development has a positive and significant influence on employee job satisfaction. Increasing individual competency allows them to carry out tasks more confidently and efficiently, which ultimately fosters a sense of satisfaction with the work being done. Hernawo and Martono (2024) also support these findings, stating that improving the quality of human resources through competency development programs has an impact on increasing employee satisfaction with their work, environment, and the rewards they receive.

H1: There is a direct influence between competency development and job satisfaction.

B) The Influence of Competency Development on Psychological Well-Being

Competency development is a process designed to increase an individual's capacity through training, education and work experience in order to carry out job responsibilities optimally and meet organizational demands effectively. The competencies possessed by an individual not only enhance effectiveness in completing tasks but also contribute to their overall psychological well-being. In an organizational context, competency development provides employees with the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to face ever-evolving job demands. When employees feel capable of carrying out their duties effectively, feelings of self-confidence, self-control, and a sense of meaning in their work emerge. This is the basis for the formation of psychological well-being.

Compos and Bascur (2024) found that competencies developed through collective interventions were proven to have a positive and significant impact on the psychological well-being of health workers during the COVID-19 crisis. This study demonstrates that increasing competency development contributes to enhanced individual self-confidence in facing work challenges and supports the development of psychological stability in response to stressful work situations. Similar results were also obtained by research by Sumantha et al. (2023), which showed that increasing competency, accompanied by strengthening the emotional aspects of individuals, also played a role in supporting the formation of psychological well-being in government agency employees. Thus, an effective competency development process can encourage the creation of organizational conditions that are conducive to improving employee psychological well-being.

H2: There is a direct influence between Competency Development and Psychological Well-Being.

C) The Influence of Psychological Well-Being on Job Satisfaction

Psychological well-being refers to an individual's mental and emotional condition characterized by positive feelings, affective balance, and the ability to deal with stress adaptively. Individuals with high levels of psychological well-being tend to have a positive view of themselves, clear life goals, and the ability to build meaningful interpersonal relationships. Panggabean et al. (2022) found that psychological well-being has a positive and significant contribution to the level of job satisfaction individuals experience. The results show that individuals who have stable and positive psychological conditions tend to enjoy the roles and responsibilities of the work they do more, thus fostering a sense of satisfaction with the job. In line with research conducted by Fadilah et al. (2024), it is also emphasized that the higher the level of psychological well-being, the higher the level of job satisfaction felt by employees. However, research by Farhan et al. (2023) yields different findings, indicating that psychological well-being does not have a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction in middle-aged individuals.

H3: There is a direct influence between Psychological Well-Being and Job Satisfaction

D) The Influence of Competency Development on Job Satisfaction Mediated by Psychological Well-Being.

Competency development is a systematic effort made by organizations to improve the knowledge, skills, and abilities of individuals in carrying out tasks. This increase in competence is expected to contribute to increasing employee job satisfaction. The results of the study (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007) indicate that competence, as an internal work resource, can enhance psychological well-being and indirectly impact job satisfaction. Empirically, Nguyen's (2024) research proves a positive and significant relationship between increasing competence and psychological well-being. This finding supports the assumption that the higher the increase in competence, the lower the level of stress, which contributes to psychological well-being and the maintenance of employee mental health. Meanwhile, Yiting (2024) provides evidence that psychological well-being plays an important role in shaping a person's level of job satisfaction. Individuals with high levels of psychological well-being tend to

have a more positive attitude towards their work, are better able to manage work pressure, and feel appreciated in the workplace. H4: Psychological Well-Being is able to mediate between Competency Development and Job Satisfaction.

III. METHODS

This research uses a quantitative approach, where the data used is in the form of numbers or quantitative data that has been processed. The data collection method was carried out through survey techniques and using questionnaires, with the aim of evaluating the impact of the influence of competency development on job satisfaction mediated by psychological well-being. The sample in this study used the census method or saturated sample, so the sample in the study was 136 respondents. The sampling method is the probability sampling method, so it does not provide equal opportunities/chances for each element or member of the population to be selected as a sample. To test the Effect of Competency Development on Job Satisfaction Mediated by Psychological Well-Being. So the analysis method used is path modeling analysis using the Smart Partial Least Squares (PLS) statistical program as a statistical test tool.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Convergent Validity is a measurement of the validity of reflective indicators as a variable measuring instrument that can be seen from the outer loading of each variable indicator. The indicator value is said to be valid if the indicator explains its construct variables with a value > 0.7 , or what is usually called the rule of thumb (Ghozali and Latan, 2015). While the value below 0.7 should be deleted from the indicator. Validity testing occurs if the score is obtained from two different instruments that measure the same, which have a high correlation. The following results output outer loading on Table 1.

Table 1. Outer Loadings

Variables	Job Satisfaction	Competency Development	Psychological Well-being
X.1		0.761	
X.2		0.859	
X.3		0.865	
X.4		0.836	
X.5		0.861	
X.6		0.838	
Y.1	0.882		
Y.2	0.849		
Y.3	0.880		
Y.4	0.806		
Y.5	0.810		
Z.1			0.859
Z.2			0.897
Z.3			0.888
Z.4			0.877
Z.5			0.894
Z.6			0.871

Source: Output SmartPLS 4.0, (2025)

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that the loading value has met the requirements, which is more than 0.70 and it has been said that all indicators are valid. Another method to test validity is to look at the Average variance extracted (AVE) value and the square root of AVE, with the provision that each construct has a greater correlation than the correlation between other constructs. Before looking at the correlation, the AVE value is said to be valid if it is greater than 0.5 as follows:

Table 2. Reliability and Discriminant Validity

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Job Satisfaction	0.901	0.912	0.716
Competency Development	0.914	0.919	0.701
Psychological Well-being	0.942	0.943	0.776

Source: Output SmartPLS 4.0, (2025)

It can be seen that the AVE value is more than 0.5, in other words, all constructs or variables of Job Satisfaction, Competency Development and Psychological Well-being are valid. This means that the constructs are valid and can explain a variety of items. Reliability testing is used to determine whether the indicators of all research variables used are good constructs or not in forming a latent variable. The requirements that are usually used to assess construct reliability are that composite reliability must be greater than 0.7 for confirmatory research and a value of 0.6 - 0.7 is still acceptable for exploratory research (Ghozali and Latan, 2015:75). From the SmartPLS output results above, all constructs have composite reliability values above

0.6 and Cronbach's alpha above 0.6. So it can be concluded that the construct has good reliability, such as the opinion of Hair et.al (2011) that the rule of thumb is that the alpha or composite reliability value must be greater than 0.7, even though the value of 0.6 is still acceptable.

Evaluation of the PLS structural model begins by looking at the R-Square value of each dependent latent variable in the table below:

Table 3. R-Square and Adjusted R-Square

Variables	R-square	R-square adjusted
Job Satisfaction	0.839	0.836
Psychological Well-being	0.622	0.619

Source: Output SmartPLS 4.0, (2025)

As presented in Table 3, it is known that the Job Satisfaction variable has an R-square value of 0.839 and an Adjusted R-square of 0.836. This means that 83.9% of the variation in job satisfaction can be explained by the independent variables used in the model, while the remaining 16.1% is explained by other variables outside the model. This value indicates that the model has a very strong predictive power in explaining job satisfaction. Meanwhile, the Psychological Well-being variable has an R-square value of 0.622 and an Adjusted R-square of 0.619. This means that 62.2 % of the variation in psychological well-being can be explained by the constructs used in the model. This value is included in the fairly strong category, indicating that the model still has a good ability to explain the variable.

Table 4. Path Coefficients, Mean, T-Statistic, and P-Value)

Variables	Path Coefficients (O)	Sample mean (M)	T statistics	P values
Competency Development -> Job Satisfaction	0.719	0.721	10,984	0.000
Competency Development -> Psychological Well-being	0.789	0.791	18,215	0.000
Psychological Well-being -> Job Satisfaction	0.236	0.234	3.203	0.001

Source: Output SmartPLS 4.0, 2025.

The path coefficient or inner model value shows the level of significance in hypothesis testing. The following is an explanation of the path coefficient results:

1. The test results show that the influence of competency development on job satisfaction is significant with a T-statistic of 10.984 and a P-value of 0.000, so H1 is accepted. This can be explained by the fact that competency development has a significant influence on Job Satisfaction.
2. The test results show that the influence of Competency Development on Psychological Well-Being is significant with a T-statistic of 18.215 and the P-value 0.000, so H2 is accepted. This can be explained by the fact that Competency Development has a significant influence on Psychological Well-Being.
3. The test results show that the influence of Psychological Well-Being on Job Satisfaction is significant with a T-statistic of 3.203 and the P-value 0.001, so H3 is accepted. This can be explained by the fact that Psychological Well-Being has a significant influence on Job Satisfaction.

Mediation analysis is performed to determine the role and position of variables within the model. This testing relies on the significance of parameter estimates presented in Table 5; mediation involves evaluating both the indirect influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

Table 5. The role of tourist satisfaction as a mediating variable

	Path Coefficient (O)	Sample mean (M)	T statistics	P value
Competency Development -> Psychological Well-being -> Job Satisfaction	0.186	0.185	3.095	0.002

Source: Output SmartPLS 4.0, (2025)

Based on the test, the influence of Organizational Learning on Employee Performance through Knowledge Sharing as a mediating variable has a significant influence with a T-statistic of 3.095 and a P-value of 0.002, so H4 is accepted. This can be

explained by the fact that Competency Development has a significant influence on Job Satisfaction through Psychological Well-Being as a mediating variable.

The discussion of the results of the first hypothesis test shows that Competency Development has a significant effect on Job Satisfaction at the Ternate City Regional Secretariat. This means that the higher the organization's efforts in developing employee competencies through training, technical guidance, education, and mastery of work skills, the higher the level of job satisfaction felt by employees. These findings indicate that investing in improving human resource quality can shape positive employee perceptions of their jobs. Employees who feel supported to develop feel valued, more confident in carrying out their duties, and more satisfied with their work.

This has implications for increasing work enthusiasm, sense of belonging, and satisfaction with various aspects of work, such as work relationships, recognition and target achievement. This finding is in line with the results of research conducted by Halimah et al. (2024), which shows that competency development has a positive and significant influence on employee job satisfaction. Increasing individual competency allows them to carry out tasks more confidently and efficiently, which ultimately fosters a sense of satisfaction with the work being done. Hernawo and Martono (2024) also support these findings, stating that improving the quality of human resources through competency development programs has an impact on increasing employee satisfaction with their work, environment, and the rewards they receive.

The discussion of the results of the second hypothesis test shows that Competency Development has a significant effect on Psychological Well-being at the Ternate City Regional Secretariat. This means that increasing employee competence not only impacts the technical skills aspect but also affects their psychological well-being. Employees who have the opportunity to learn, grow, and improve themselves tend to have higher levels of happiness, calmness, and optimism in facing work challenges. This is because good competencies enable individuals to manage workloads more effectively, feel more empowered, and have control over task achievement. These findings reinforce the view that human resource development is an important aspect in creating a psychologically healthy work environment.

Thus, an effective competency development process can create a work environment that supports employee psychological growth. Previous research relevant to this topic was conducted by Compos and Bascur (2024), where competencies developed through collective interventions were proven to have a positive and significant impact on the psychological well-being of health workers during the COVID-19 crisis. This study shows that increasing competency development contributes to increasing individual self-confidence in facing work challenges and supports the creation of psychological stability in facing stressful work situations. Similar results were also obtained by research by Sumantha et al. (2023), which showed that increasing competence, accompanied by strengthening individual emotional aspects, also played a role in supporting the formation of psychological well-being in government agency employees.

Based on the results of the third hypothesis test, it can be seen that psychological well-being has a significant influence on job satisfaction at the Ternate City Regional Secretariat. This means that when employees experience good psychological well-being, such as feeling calm, happy, and having a sense of meaning in their work, job satisfaction will also increase. Employees who are psychologically healthy tend to have good social relationships at work, are better able to cope with work pressure, and are more positively engaged in their work environment. This implies that organizations need to pay attention to the psychological aspects of employees by creating a supportive work environment, free from excessive pressure, and providing space for work-life balance. This finding is in line with work psychology theories, which state that well-being is an important factor in the formation of sustainable job satisfaction.

This is reinforced by the research findings of Panggabean et al. (2022), who found that psychological well-being contributes positively and significantly to the level of job satisfaction felt by individuals. The results show that individuals who have a stable and positive psychological condition tend to enjoy the roles and responsibilities of the work they undertake more, thus fostering a sense of satisfaction with the work. In line with research conducted by Fadilah et al. (2024), it is also emphasized that the higher the level of psychological well-being, the higher the level of job satisfaction felt by employees.

In accordance with the results of testing the fourth hypothesis, it can be seen that Psychological Well-being plays a significant role as a mediator in the relationship between competency development and Job Satisfaction at the Ternate City Regional Secretariat. This means that improving employee competency not only directly impacts job satisfaction but also indirectly through improved employee psychological well-being. The higher the level of competency development provided, the higher the employee's psychological well-being, which ultimately has a positive impact on their job satisfaction.

Competency development is a systematic effort undertaken by organizations to improve the knowledge, skills and abilities of individuals in carrying out tasks. This increase in competency is expected to contribute to increasing employee job satisfaction. However, the relationship between competency development and job satisfaction can be influenced by various factors, one of

which is psychological well-being. Psychological well-being refers to a condition in which an individual feels emotionally well-off, has a purpose in life, and is able to manage psychological stress and life challenges adaptively. This result is in line with Nguyen's (2024) research, which proves that there is a positive and significant relationship between increasing competence and psychological well-being. This finding strengthens the assumption that the higher the increase in competence, the lower the stress level will be, thus bringing psychological well-being in maintaining employee mental health. Meanwhile, Yiting (2024) provides evidence that psychological well-being plays an important role in shaping a person's level of job satisfaction. Individuals with high levels of psychological well-being tend to have a more positive attitude towards their work, are better able to manage work stress, and feel valued at work.

V. CONCLUSION

Competency development has a significant impact on job satisfaction among Ternate City Regional Secretariat employees. This indicates that the greater the organization's efforts to develop employee skills through training, technical guidance, and other on-the-job education and training, the higher the level of job satisfaction experienced by employees. Competency development has a significant impact on employee psychological well-being. This means that competency development not only impacts job skills but also supports employee psychological well-being in the form of self-confidence, calmness, and optimism in carrying out tasks. Psychological well-being has a significant impact on job satisfaction. Employees with good psychological well-being tend to be more satisfied with their jobs because they feel they have meaning in their work, are able to build positive social relationships in the workplace, and are better prepared to deal with work pressure. Psychological well-being has been shown to act as a significant mediating variable in the relationship between competency development and job satisfaction. This means that effective competency development can increase job satisfaction both directly and indirectly through improving employee psychological well-being.

The study contributes to a more integrative perspective that positions psychological well-being as a central mechanism in translating skill-building interventions into meaningful and sustainable employee engagement. By demonstrating that structured HR interventions can yield psychological and attitudinal dividends even in public administration settings, this study advances a theory of context-sensitive human resource development. It invites further exploration into how public organizations in similar sociopolitical environments can leverage competency enhancement as a vehicle for both operational efficiency and psychological sustainability.

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