
Enhancing Personnel Performance Through Competence and Leadership: The Mediating Role of HR Development as a Catalyst for Economic Advancement in the North Sumatra Regional Police

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of competence and leadership on personnel performance, with HR development as a mediating variable, within the General Planning and Budget Function of the North Sumatra Regional Police and its affiliates. The research adopts a quantitative approach, involving a population of 496 personnel, from which 84 respondents were selected using the Slovin formula. Data collection was conducted through surveys, and analysis was performed using SmartPLS software. The findings reveal that competence does not have a significant direct effect on personnel performance, although it significantly contributes to HR development. Leadership, on the other hand, has a significant direct effect on personnel performance but does not significantly influence HR development. HR development itself plays a critical role in enhancing personnel performance. Moreover, the mediating analysis shows that HR development significantly mediates the relationship between competence and personnel performance. However, the mediation effect of HR development on the relationship between leadership and personnel performance is not significant. These results underscore the importance of HR development as a strategic factor in improving personnel performance. The findings also highlight the need for the North Sumatra Regional Police to prioritize enhancing competence and leadership quality as part of its HR development initiatives. This study contributes to the understanding of organizational performance within law enforcement agencies and serves as a valuable reference for decision-making and policy formulation aimed at optimizing personnel performance and supporting broader organizational objectives.

Keywords: *Competence; Leadership; HR Development; Personnel Performance*

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1. Introduction

The Priority Programs of the National Police Chief through Polri Presisi, encompassing Organizational Transformation, Operational Transformation, and Supervisory Transformation, aim to address the increasingly complex challenges of domestic security (Al Khajeh, 2018; Gong et al., 2009). With significant authority to manage domestic security and a substantial budget allocation relative to other ministries and agencies, the Indonesian National Police (Polri) faces critical expectations (Nguyen et al., 2020). Errors in managing this authority, whether in ensuring public security, enforcing laws, or providing community services, highlight

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the urgent need to strengthen Polri's human resource (HR) competence in general planning and budgeting (Dhar, 2015; Wang et al., 2014).

Evaluation of Polri's Performance Management System reveals that while personnel in the General Planning and Budgeting function demonstrate adequate performance overall, significant gaps remain. Challenges include recruitment, selection, education, training, career development, work motivation, and supervision (Buil et al., 2019; Hoch et al., 2018). A key issue highlighted by Polri leadership is the frequent reliance on copy-pasting in planning and budgeting documents, reflecting a misalignment between organizational expectations and the actual competencies of personnel in these roles (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Kang et al., 2015). Quantitative disparities further compound the problem, as only 1.57% of the 20,710 personnel in the North Sumatra Regional Police (Polda Sumut) are assigned to the planning and budgeting function, compared to the ideal staffing level of 560 personnel. This 41.89% deficit compromises performance efficiency and effectiveness (Puni et al., 2021; Ebrahimi et al., 2017).

Previous studies have explored the relationship between leadership, competence, and organizational performance (Al Khajeh, 2018; Rafferty & Griffin, 2004), but limited research examines these factors in law enforcement organizations, particularly within Polri. Moreover, the mediating role of HR development in linking leadership and competence to personnel performance has not been thoroughly addressed (Leroy et al., 2015; Kim & Beehr, 2018). This gap is critical given the demands placed on law enforcement agencies to adapt to the digital transformation brought about by the Industrial Revolution 4.0 (Chaudhry & Javed, 2012).

This study introduces a novel approach by focusing on the Internship (Intership) method, which involves mentorship and tutorials to strengthen HR competence in general planning and budgeting. By integrating sustainable competency development with digitalization, the research contributes a forward-looking model that aligns personnel skills with future organizational demands (Hoch et al., 2018; Puni et al., 2021).

The primary objectives of this study are to analyze the influence of leadership and competence on personnel performance in the General Planning and Budgeting function of Polda Sumut, examine the mediating role of HR development in enhancing this relationship, and propose practical recommendations for implementing sustainable HR competency programs in Polri (Gong et al., 2009; Buil et al., 2019). As the Industrial Revolution 4.0 ushers in rapid technological advancements, the millennial generation within Polri, projected to dominate the workforce, requires new competencies to meet dynamic challenges (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Kang et al., 2015).

Strengthening HR competencies in planning and budgeting functions is essential to align Polri's operational capabilities with its strategic objectives. This research provides a theoretical framework for effective performance models and practical strategies to optimize HR potential, thereby enhancing the overall efficacy of law enforcement agencies in Indonesia (Nguyen et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2014).

2. Theoretical Background

Competence

Competence refers to the ability to carry out a job or task effectively based on a combination of skills, knowledge, and the required work attitudes. It is not just the technical ability to perform tasks but also the behavioral and psychological attributes that influence how tasks are approached and completed in the workplace. According to Al Khajeh (2018), competence is a

crucial determinant of organizational performance, as it reflects how well employees can meet job requirements and contribute to achieving organizational goals.

This broad concept of competence encompasses several key components:

1. **Technical Skills:** The knowledge and expertise required to perform specific tasks.
2. **Behavioral Skills:** The personal attributes that support successful job performance, such as communication, leadership, and interpersonal skills.
3. **Work Attitude:** The approach and mindset employees bring to their work, which affects their motivation, problem-solving abilities, and overall effectiveness in the workplace.

Leadership

Leadership is a dynamic process where an individual influences a group of people to achieve shared goals and objectives. A leader not only possesses the ability to motivate and guide others but also has the personal qualities necessary to create trust and inspire commitment from their followers. According to Avolio and Yammarino (2013), leadership is an ongoing process that involves influencing others through different styles, whether transformational, transactional, or charismatic.

Leadership plays a critical role in organizational success. Effective leaders are often characterized by:

1. **Attitudes and Personality Traits:** These include confidence, decisiveness, integrity, and emotional intelligence, which allow leaders to earn trust and influence others.
2. **Ability to Inspire and Motivate:** Leaders can inspire collective action by setting a clear vision and purpose, while fostering collaboration among team members.
3. **Situational Awareness:** Leaders are able to adapt their approach to the needs of the situation and the individuals they lead, ensuring that they provide direction, support, and feedback where necessary (Chaudhry & Javed, 2012).

According to Buil, Martínez, and Matute (2019), transformational leadership has been shown to significantly impact employee performance by fostering higher levels of engagement, identification with the organization, and proactive personality traits. This leadership style is focused on inspiring change and driving innovation within teams.

Performance

Performance is the outcome or result of an individual's work, which is evaluated based on predetermined criteria, such as job expectations and organizational goals. Performance is typically measured over a specific period and can include both quantitative and qualitative metrics. Veithzal Rivai Zainal et al. (2015) note that performance is not just a reflection of effort but also an indication of how well the individual utilizes resources to meet organizational targets.

Employee performance can be viewed through several dimensions:

1. **Efficiency:** The ability to perform tasks using minimal resources, maximizing output while minimizing waste.
2. **Effectiveness:** The ability to meet or exceed the established goals and expectations.
3. **Quality:** The degree to which the work meets the required standards, contributing to the organization's overall success.
4. **Innovation:** The ability to adapt and propose new solutions to existing challenges, which is particularly important in industries that require constant innovation (Gong, Huang, & Farh, 2009).

In the context of organizational performance, Rivai et al. (2015) argue that performance also reflects the broader results achieved by the company, which are influenced by how efficiently resources are managed and how organizational strategies are executed.

Human Resource Development (HRD)

Human resource development (HRD) is a systematic approach to enhancing the knowledge, skills, and abilities of employees to meet the evolving needs of their roles and the organization. HRD activities are essential for improving the overall competency of employees, ensuring that they can effectively respond to changes in the business environment and remain competitive. As Gouzali (2020) suggests, HRD activities are integral to aligning employees' skills with the demands of their work and organizational goals.

HRD consists of several key components:

1. **Training and Education:** Providing employees with the technical and soft skills necessary for their roles. This includes both formal educational programs and on-the-job training.
2. **Career Development:** Helping employees develop their careers through mentorship, coaching, and opportunities for professional growth.
3. **Organizational Development:** Fostering a culture of continuous improvement and ensuring that the organization as a whole adapts to changes in the business environment (Malayu S.P., 2014).

HRD is also closely linked to job satisfaction, employee engagement, and performance. Training employees to meet the demands of their roles not only benefits the individual but also contributes to organizational growth and success (Dhar, 2015).

Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis

The following is the conceptual framework for this study, which aims to examine the relationships between competence, leadership, human resource development, and personnel performance in the General Planning and Budget Function of Polda North Sumatra and its ranks



Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
Source: Smart PLS 4.0 Data Processing

Based on the conceptual framework outlined, the following hypotheses are proposed :

- H1. Competence has a significant effect on the performance of personnel in the General Planning and Budget Function of Polda North Sumatra and its ranks.
- H2. Leadership has a significant effect on the performance of personnel in the General Planning and Budget Function of Polda North Sumatra and its ranks.
- H3. Competence has a significant effect on human resource development in the General Planning and Budget Function of Polda North Sumatra and its ranks.
- H4. Leadership has a significant effect on human resource development in the General Planning and Budget Function of Polda North Sumatra and its ranks.
- H5. Human resource development has a significant effect on the performance of personnel in the General Planning and Budget Function of Polda North Sumatra and its ranks.

- H6. Competence significantly affects personnel performance, mediated by human resource development in the General Planning and Budget Function of Polda North Sumatra and its ranks.
- H7. Leadership significantly affects personnel performance, mediated by human resource development in the General Planning and Budget Function of Polda North Sumatra and its ranks.

3. Methodology

Population and Sample

The population in this study consists of all personnel in the General Planning and Budget Function of the North Sumatra Regional Police and its ranks, totaling 496 individuals. The sample size is determined using the Slovin formula, which results in 84 personnel. This sample is representative of the population for drawing valid conclusions about the variables under study (Rusdian & Prasetyo, 2023).

Research Sampling Technique

The sampling method used in this study is simple random sampling, where samples are selected randomly without regard to specific characteristics or conditions. According to Hongal and Kinange (2020), this technique ensures that each member of the population has an equal chance of being included, thus minimizing bias and enhancing the generalizability of the results.

Data Analysis Method

The data collected will be analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the PLS 4.0 application. PLS-SEM is ideal for testing complex models and relationships, especially when dealing with smaller sample sizes and non-normally distributed data. This method will allow for the assessment of direct and indirect relationships between competence, leadership, human resource development, and personnel performance. The model fit and significance of the relationships will be tested to validate the hypotheses proposed in the study.

4. Empirical Findings/Result

Outer Model Test (Measurement Model)

Outer model testing is carried out to test the validity and reliability of the construct, to find out it can be seen in convergent validity and discriminant validity.

Convergent Validity Test

The *convergent validity* test is a data test intended to determine how large and strong the correlation between indicators and latent variables is, where the *convergent validity* test can be determined through the *outer loading* value, where the data processing results of the existing variables are as follows:

Table 1. Outer Loading Convergent Validity Test Results

	Outer loadings	Caption
Kep3 <- Leadership	0.647	Valid
Kep4 <- Leadership	0.784	Valid
Kep5 <- Leadership	0.864	Valid
Kep6 <- Leadership	0.809	Valid
Kin1 <- Performance	0.827	Valid
Kin2 <- Performance	0.788	Valid
Kin3 <- Performance	0.755	Valid

Kin4 <- Performance	0.723	Valid
Kin5 <- Performance	0.595	Valid
Kom1 <- Competency	0.858	Valid
Kom2 <- Competency	0.897	Valid
Kom3 <- Competency	0.810	Valid
Kom4 <- Competency	0.854	Valid
Kom5 <- Competency	0.659	Valid
PSDM1 <- HR Development	0.862	Valid
PSDM2 <- HR Development	0.891	Valid
PSDM3 <- HR Development	0.775	Valid

Source: Smart PLS 4.0 Data Processing

Based on the data presentation in Table 1 above, it can be seen that each variable indicator has an *outer loading* value > 0.5 . According to Chin (2018: 30) the *outer loading* value between 0.5 - 0.6 is considered sufficient to meet the requirements of *convergent validity*, the data above shows that there are no variable indicators with an *outer loading* value below 0.5 so that all indicators are declared feasible or valid for research use and can be used for further analysis.

Table 2. Construct Reliability

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)	Caption
Leadership	0.788	0.823	0.860	0.609	Reliable
Performance	0.814	0.885	0.858	0.550	Reliable
Competence	0.876	0.887	0.910	0.672	Reliable
HR Development	0.797	0.801	0.881	0.713	Reliable

Source: Smart PLS 4.0 Data Processing

Based on the data presentation in Table 2 above, that the results of testing Cronbach alpha, *composite reliability*, on leadership, performance, competence, and HR development variables are > 0.6 . The results of AVE testing on the variables of leadership, performance, competence, and HR development > 0.5 . These results indicate that each variable has met Cronbach alpha, *composite reliability*, and *AVE*, so it can be concluded that all variables have a high level of reliability.

Inner Model Test (Structural Model)

This research uses *SmartPLS 4.0* software as part of the structural analysis method. Several stages are carried out to analyze the structural model, with the intention of determining how good the research model is in hypothesis testing. The coefficient of determination states the value of measuring the predictive power of a model. The (R^2) value indicates the strength of the exogenous constructs that influence each other. If the (R^2) value is 0.67, it is considered quite large; if the (R^2) value is 0.33 it is considered moderate; if the (R^2) value is 0.19 it is considered weak and if the (R^2) value is 0.7 it is considered strong (Hair *et al.*, 2014).

Table 3. R-Square Test Results (R^2)

	R-square	Adjusted R-square
Personnel Performance	0.274	0.246
HR Development	0.209	0.190

Source: SmartPLS 4.0 Processed Results, 2024

Based on Table 3 above, the HR development variable has an adjusted $R^2 = 0.190$ and the personnel performance variable has an adjusted $R^2 = 0.246$. In the second part, model *fit* is used to measure the structural model. The SRMR (*Standardized Root Mean Residual*) value is smaller than 0.08, the NFI (*Normed-Fit Index*) value is close to 0.95, the *Chi-Square* value

is close to 0, and the d_ULS and d_G values should not be correlated with any value. However, these are bootstrap testing results of the model fit as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Model Fit

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.022	0.122
d_ULS	2.292	2.292
d_G	0.801	0.801
Chi-square	350.289	350.289
NFI	0.602	0.602

Source: SmartPLS 4.0 Processed Results, 2024

Based on Table 4 above, it shows the SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Residual) value of 0.022, meaning it is acceptable. The NFI (Normed-Fit Index) value is 0.602, meaning it is acceptable. The d_ULS and d_G values do not indicate the strength and direction of the linear relationship.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is carried out based on the results of testing the inner model (structural model) which consists of r-square, parameter coefficients and t-statistics. To assess whether the hypothesis can be accepted or rejected, including by paying attention to the significant value between constructs, statistics and p-values. This study uses SmartPLS 4.0 in testing the hypothesis. Information about these values can be found through the bootstrapping process. The guidelines used in this study are that the significance level of p-values is 5% and the coefficient value is positive. The value of testing the research hypothesis can be illustrated as shown below:

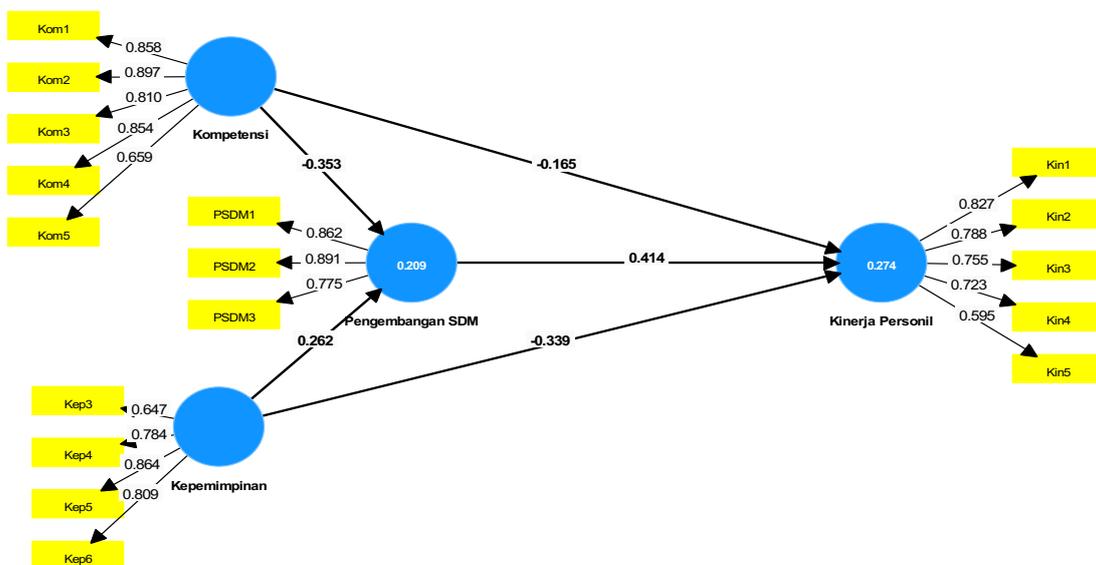


Figure 2. Outer and Inner Model Test Results

Source: SEM Test Results SmartPLS version 4.0

Table 5. Path Coefficients Test Results

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Leadership -> Personnel Performance	-0.339	-0.343	0.114	2.963	0.003
Leadership -> HR Development	0.262	0.242	0.209	1.257	0.209
Competence -> Personnel Performance	-0.165	-0.179	0.108	1.532	0.126
Competency -> HR Development	-0.353	-0.358	0.096	3.676	0.000
HR Development -> Personnel Performance	0.414	0.406	0.135	3.061	0.002

Source: Smart PLS 4.0 Data Processing Results

Based on the data presented in Table 5, the results of the hypothesis testing reveal several key findings. First, leadership has a significant effect on personnel performance, with a t-statistic of 2.963 (greater than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.003 (less than 0.05). Second, leadership does not significantly affect HR development, as indicated by a t-statistic of 1.257 (less than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.209 (greater than 0.05). Third, competence does not have a significant effect on personnel performance, with a t-statistic of 1.532 (less than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.126 (greater than 0.05). However, competence significantly affects HR development, as shown by a t-statistic of 3.776 (greater than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (less than 0.05). Lastly, HR development has a significant effect on personnel performance, with a t-statistic of 3.061 (greater than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.002 (less than 0.05). These findings indicate the varying influences of leadership, competence, and HR development on personnel performance in the General Planning and Budget Function of the North Sumatra Regional Police and its ranks.

Table 6. Indirect Effect Test Results

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Leadership -> HR Development -> Personnel Performance	0.109	0.101	0.100	1.083	0.279
Competency -> HR Development -> Personnel Performance	-0.146	-0.143	0.056	2.614	0.009

Source: Smart PLS 4.0 Data Processing

Based on the data presented in Table 6, the hypothesis testing shows the following results. First, leadership does not indirectly affect personnel performance through human resource development as a mediating variable, as indicated by a t-statistic of 1.083 (less than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.279 (greater than 0.05), which suggests an insignificant effect. Second, competence indirectly has a significant effect on personnel performance through human resource development as a mediating variable, with a t-statistic of 2.614 (greater than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.009 (less than 0.05), indicating a significant effect. These results highlight the differential mediating role of human resource development in the relationship between competence, leadership, and personnel performance in the General Planning and Budget Function of the North Sumatra Regional Police and its ranks.

5. Discussion

The effect of competence on personnel performance

The first hypothesis tested the relationship between leadership and personnel performance. The

results show that the leadership construct has an insignificant effect on personnel performance. This finding suggests that structural and leadership influences within police institutions often have a more significant impact on personnel performance than individual competence. This can be understood in various theoretical and empirical contexts. Specifically, in planning functions, a rigid bureaucratic system or limited technological support can hinder the ability of competent individuals to perform optimally. As noted by Al Khajeh (2018), intrinsic and extrinsic motivations act as strong mediators between competence and performance. Without proper motivation, competencies cannot be effectively actualized in the workplace.

The influence of competence on HR development

The second hypothesis examined the relationship between competence and human resource (HR) development. The test results indicated that competence significantly affects HR development. This supports the theory that competence is a critical foundation for HR development. In the case of Polda Sumut, personnel with strong competence in planning and budgeting are better equipped to analyze strategic budget needs, manage resources effectively, and adapt to changing policies or regulations. This aligns with research in the Indonesian public sector, which demonstrates that the technical and managerial competencies of personnel directly impact HR development success, particularly in administrative and budgeting areas (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013). Research within the police force also emphasizes competence as a key factor in HR development aimed at enhancing both technical and leadership capacities.

The influence of leadership on personnel performance

The third hypothesis tested the relationship between leadership and personnel performance. The results revealed that leadership has a significant effect on personnel performance. This is consistent with leadership theory, which posits that leaders play a central role in guiding, motivating, and empowering personnel to achieve optimal performance. In the context of Polda Sumut, effective leadership creates a work environment conducive to high performance through vision, motivation, and empowerment (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). This is supported by research from Buil, Martínez, & Matute (2019), which found that transformational leadership positively contributes to individual performance, especially in functions requiring coordination, such as budget planning.

The influence of leadership on HR development

The fourth hypothesis tested the relationship between leadership and HR development. The results showed that leadership has an insignificant effect on HR development. This finding suggests that HR development in Polda Sumut may be more influenced by institutional policies, training programs, or the direct involvement of personnel in development activities than by leadership interventions. This is consistent with research by Dhar (2015), which suggests that HR development in government sectors is primarily influenced by structured training programs. Similarly, Ebrahimi et al. (2017) noted that leadership has a minimal effect on HR development unless accompanied by adequate incentives and training facilities.

The effect of HR development on personnel performance

The fifth hypothesis tested the relationship between HR development and personnel performance. The test results indicate that HR development significantly influences personnel performance. This is consistent with HR management theories that state HR development is essential for improving both individual and organizational performance. In the case of Polda Sumut, the General Planning and Budget function requires high technical and analytical skills. HR development programs, such as training or certification, improve personnel performance by enhancing their abilities. This is supported by Gong, Huang, & Farh (2009), who found that HR development programs focusing on technical and leadership training directly enhance individual performance. Similarly, research by Rafferty & Griffin (2004) indicates that

investment in HR training leads to improved work quality, particularly in administrative and strategic roles.

The effect of competence on personnel performance through HR development as a mediating variable

The sixth hypothesis tested the relationship between competence, HR development, and personnel performance. The results show that competence significantly affects personnel performance through HR development as a mediating variable. This emphasizes the importance of competence as a foundational factor, which is enhanced through HR development to yield optimal performance. In the General Planning and Budget function at Polda Sumut, HR development plays a critical role in supporting high competencies by providing continuous training and updating skills. As technology and regulations evolve, competencies need to be continually developed to remain relevant. This is consistent with research by Wang et al. (2014), which found that personnel competencies strengthened through training programs have a more significant impact on performance than competencies without HR development.

The effect of leadership on personnel performance through HR development as a mediating variable

The seventh hypothesis tested the relationship between leadership and personnel performance through HR development as a mediating variable. The results indicate that leadership has an insignificant effect on personnel performance when mediated by HR development. This suggests that there is a need for better integration between leadership and HR development. Polda Sumut could enhance the synergy between HR development policies and leadership roles to strengthen the impact on personnel performance. This finding is supported by research from Chaudhry & Javed (2012), which found that leadership's effect on performance in the public sector is often insignificant without robust HR systems in place. Additionally, research by Kim & Beehr (2018) highlights that HR development programs based on central policies have a more significant impact on performance than direct leadership interventions.

These findings provide insight into the critical roles of competence, leadership, and HR development in enhancing personnel performance, as well as the mediating effects of HR development in improving overall outcomes in the General Planning and Budget function at Polda Sumut.

6. Conclusion

Based on the research findings, several conclusions can be drawn. First, competence has an insignificant direct influence on personnel performance, suggesting that while personnel may possess the necessary competencies, other factors—such as work systems, motivation, and organizational support—may play a more dominant role in driving performance. Second, competence significantly affects HR development, indicating that individuals with better competencies are more likely to engage with and benefit from HR development programs. Third, leadership significantly influences personnel performance, as effective leaders are able to provide direction, motivation, and oversight that positively impact performance in the general planning and budgeting functions. However, leadership has an insignificant direct influence on HR development, likely due to HR development programs being primarily driven by institutional policies rather than direct leadership interventions. Additionally, HR development has a significant effect on personnel performance, with training programs and skills development directly enhancing work productivity and effectiveness. Competence also has a significant influence on performance through the mediation of HR development, highlighting that personnel competencies can be optimally utilized to improve performance when supported by relevant HR development programs. Lastly, leadership does not significantly impact performance through HR development as a mediating variable, suggesting

that the integration of leadership with HR development programs needs to be strengthened to generate a more significant impact on personnel performance.

Future research could focus on several areas to further explore these findings. First, a more in-depth examination of the various factors influencing the relationship between competence and performance could provide a clearer understanding of the mediating factors, such as motivation and organizational culture. Second, further studies could explore the role of leadership in HR development by assessing how different leadership styles and strategies could better support HR development initiatives. Additionally, future research could investigate the impact of external factors, such as technological advancements or organizational change, on the effectiveness of HR development programs. Lastly, examining the long-term effects of HR development on personnel performance across different sectors or institutions would provide valuable insights into the sustainability of HR development initiatives in improving overall performance. These avenues could help refine HR development practices and leadership strategies for enhanced organizational success.

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