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## The Effect of Employee Empowerment, Intellectual Intelligence, and Interpersonal Communication on the Performance of Civil Servants

Wildan Sholahudin Al-Ayubi<sup>1</sup>, Muhamad Alwi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati, Cirebon, Indonesia, [wildan.119020265@ugj.ac.id](mailto:wildan.119020265@ugj.ac.id)

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati, Cirebon, Indonesia, [Muhamad.alwi@ugj.ac.id](mailto:Muhamad.alwi@ugj.ac.id)

Corresponding Author: [wildan.119020265@ugj.ac.id](mailto:wildan.119020265@ugj.ac.id)<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** This study is motivated by the suboptimal performance of civil servants in delivering public services. The objective of this study is to analyze the effect of employee empowerment, intellectual intelligence, and interpersonal communication on the performance of civil servants. The research object consists of civil servants working in several government agencies in Majalengka Regency. This research employs a quantitative method with data collected through questionnaires distributed to all 60 respondents. Data analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression analysis. The results indicate that employee empowerment has a positive and significant effect on the performance of civil servants. Meanwhile, intellectual intelligence and interpersonal communication do not show a significant partial effect on performance. However, simultaneously, employee empowerment, intellectual intelligence, and interpersonal communication have a significant influence on the performance of civil servants. The study concludes that employee empowerment is the most influential factor in improving civil servant performance, although other variables also contribute collectively.

**Keyword:** Employee Empowerment, Intellectual Intelligence, Interpersonal Communication, Civil Servants' Performance.

### INTRODUCTION

Currently, the world is experiencing an acceleration in the digital revolution, which affects how people interact, communicate, and conduct transactions. This transformation also has a significant impact on the financial sector, particularly with the emergence of financial technology (FinTech) and the digitalization of payment systems. Cashless transaction tools such as digital wallets (e-wallets), mobile banking services, and QR codes (QRIS) have now become part of everyday life for modern society. According to Bank Indonesia BI, (2023), the values a electronic money transactions in 2023 reached more than IDR 835.84 trillion, a significant increase compared to the previous year's IDR 399.6 trillion. This figure reflects a

shift in financial behavior from conventional systems toward digital systems, where cashless transactions have become the primary choice in various daily economic activities.

However, the increased use of digital services does not always align with adequate digital financial literacy. Based on the National Survey on Financial Literacy and Inclusion (SNLIK) by the Financial Services Authority OJK, (2022) Indonesia's financial inclusion level reached 85.10%, far exceeding the financial literacy level, which only reached 49.68%. This nearly 35% gap indicates that the population, including young generations, has high access to digital products but lacks sufficient understanding to utilize them optimally, particularly in the context of healthy financial planning.

The shift in financial behavior from conventional to digital systems is primarily driven by the demographic of users, predominantly Generation Z (aged 17–28). This generation, known as digital natives, is the fastest to adapt and serves as the main driver in adopting financial technology advancements. Although Gen Z is highly active in using e-payment for daily transactions, this situation creates a paradox of inclusion, where high access to digital services is not accompanied by aligned quality financial behavior. The use of e-wallets is dominant for daily transactions but has not been matched by the use of other financial features such as digital savings, emergency funds, investments, or long-term financial planning. This condition shows that access to and use of digital services among Gen Z does not automatically result in healthy financial behavior, potentially leaving them unprepared for long-term economic challenges.

This situation is important in the context of national economic development. Financial inclusion is a crucial pillar in promoting economic growth and strengthening the stability of the financial system. The Indonesian government, through Bank Indonesia (BI) and the Financial Services Authority (OJK), targets 90% financial inclusion by 2024. If Generation Z, as the largest productive age group, tends to use e-payment for consumption rather than capital accumulation (investment), it may hinder the achievement of national savings targets and capital market deepening. Therefore, the gap between digital access and productive financial utilization among Generation Z needs to be analyzed as it affects national economic strengthening.

International and national research findings indicate that digital payment technology plays an important role in promoting financial inclusion. Patil et al., (2025) found that digital payments increase transaction efficiency and expand access to formal services. Avom et al., (2023) also concluded that mobile money can significantly improve financial inclusion in several African countries. Meanwhile, Al-Smadi's study in the MENA region shows a positive relationship between digital finance and the expansion of access to financial services.

On the other hand, literature on digital financial literacy (DFL) also shows a strong influence on financial inclusion. Adel, (2024) demonstrated that digital literacy plays an important role in supporting equitable financial inclusion, and Rahayu et al., (2022) emphasized that digital financial literacy shapes young generations' ability to transact, save, and manage financial risks.

Previous studies still leave an important research gap. Most studies position digital financial literacy and e-payment adoption as factors that directly affect financial inclusion, but few have examined how financial behavior acts as a mechanism linking the two. Moreover, most studies were conducted at the macro level or on the general population, rather than specifically on Generation Z, who are the primary users of digital financial services.

Based on the phenomena, empirical data, national policy context, and existing research gaps, there is a need for research to provide new empirical evidence and strengthen understanding of the factors driving financial inclusion in the digital era.

## METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research approach aimed at examining the causal relationship between employee empowerment, intellectual intelligence, interpersonal communication, and civil servant performance. Quantitative research was selected because it allows for systematic measurement, statistical analysis, and objective testing of hypotheses based on numerical data. The research design used in this study was an explanatory research design, which focuses on explaining the influence of independent variables on a dependent variable through hypothesis testing. This approach was considered appropriate to identify both partial and simultaneous effects among the variables examined.

The population of this study consisted of civil servants working in several government agencies in Majalengka Regency. These civil servants were selected as the research population because they represent public sector employees who are directly involved in administrative duties and public service delivery. The total population size was relatively small, consisting of 60 civil servants. Therefore, this study applied a census or saturated sampling technique, in which all members of the population were included as research respondents. The use of a saturated sample ensures that the data obtained fully represent the characteristics of the population and minimizes sampling bias.

The research was conducted over a period of three months, from January to March 2026. This timeframe included preparation, data collection, and data processing phases. The research location was several government institutions within Majalengka Regency, West Java, Indonesia. The selection of this location was based on accessibility, availability of respondents, and relevance to the research topic, as the region continues to implement bureaucratic reform initiatives aimed at improving civil servant performance.

The primary data collection instrument in this study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed using a Likert-scale format to measure respondents' perceptions of each research variable. Employee empowerment was measured through indicators related to autonomy, participation in decision-making, self-confidence, and influence over work outcomes. Intellectual intelligence was measured using indicators related to problem-solving ability, logical thinking, adaptability, and analytical capacity. Interpersonal communication was measured through indicators such as openness, empathy, supportive behavior, positive attitudes, and equality in communication. Civil servant performance was measured using indicators related to work quality, work quantity, timeliness, responsibility, and cooperation.

Prior to distribution, the questionnaire was carefully reviewed to ensure clarity, relevance, and consistency with the operational definitions of each variable. The questionnaire was then distributed directly to respondents during working hours with permission from institutional authorities. Respondents were given sufficient time to complete the questionnaire independently to avoid external influence and ensure honest responses.

The research procedure began with the identification of research problems and formulation of research objectives and hypotheses. This was followed by the development of research instruments based on theoretical concepts and previous empirical studies. After instrument development, data collection was conducted through questionnaire distribution to all respondents. Once the questionnaires were returned, the data were checked for completeness and accuracy before being coded and entered into statistical software for analysis.

Data analysis techniques in this study consisted of both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. Descriptive analysis was used to describe the characteristics of respondents and the general distribution of responses for each variable. Inferential analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression analysis to test the effect of employee empowerment, intellectual intelligence, and interpersonal communication on civil servant

performance. This technique was employed to determine the magnitude and direction of the influence of each independent variable, both individually and simultaneously.

Before conducting regression analysis, several classical assumption tests were performed, including tests for normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity, to ensure that the regression model met statistical requirements. Hypothesis testing was carried out using partial tests to examine the effect of each independent variable and a simultaneous test to examine their combined effect. The significance level used in this study was five percent, which is commonly applied in social science research.

Ethical considerations were also observed throughout the research process. Participation in the study was voluntary, and respondents were informed that their responses would be kept confidential and used solely for academic purposes. No personal identifying information was disclosed in the reporting of research findings.

Overall, the research method applied in this study was designed to ensure methodological rigor, data validity, and reliable results that accurately reflect the relationships among the variables studied. The findings derived from this method are expected to provide meaningful insights into factors influencing civil servant performance and support evidence-based decision-making in public sector human resource management.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents the results of the research followed by a comprehensive discussion of the findings. The results are presented in a summarized and interpretative manner to describe the statistical outcomes of the data analysis. The discussion then explains these findings by linking them to the research objectives, hypotheses, and relevant theoretical perspectives.

The data analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression analysis to examine the effect of employee empowerment, intellectual intelligence, and interpersonal communication on the performance of civil servants. Prior to hypothesis testing, descriptive statistics were used to provide an overview of respondents' perceptions regarding each research variable. Overall, the descriptive results indicate that respondents perceived employee empowerment, intellectual intelligence, and interpersonal communication at a relatively high level, while the level of civil servant performance was also perceived as good. These initial findings suggest that civil servants generally experience supportive working conditions and possess the competencies required to perform their duties effectively.

The regression analysis results show that employee empowerment has a positive and statistically significant effect on civil servant performance. The significance value obtained for employee empowerment was below the predetermined significance level, indicating that the first hypothesis of this study is accepted. This finding implies that higher levels of empowerment experienced by civil servants tend to be associated with improved performance outcomes. Civil servants who are given greater autonomy, responsibility, and opportunities to participate in decision-making are more likely to demonstrate higher motivation, accountability, and commitment to their work.

The strength of the relationship between employee empowerment and performance highlights the importance of managerial practices that emphasize trust and delegation. Empowerment allows civil servants to feel that their contributions are meaningful and valued by the organization. This sense of ownership encourages proactive behavior, creativity, and initiative in completing tasks. In the context of public organizations, where rigid procedures often limit flexibility, empowerment becomes a critical mechanism for enhancing responsiveness and efficiency. The result of this study supports the view that empowerment is not merely a managerial trend but a strategic approach to improving employee performance, particularly in the public sector.

In contrast, the results of the partial regression analysis indicate that intellectual intelligence does not have a statistically significant effect on civil servant performance. The significance value for intellectual intelligence exceeds the acceptable threshold, leading to the rejection of the second hypothesis. This finding suggests that cognitive ability alone does not directly determine performance outcomes among civil servants in the research setting. Although intellectual intelligence is essential for understanding tasks and solving problems, it may not be the primary factor influencing performance in highly structured organizational environments.

One possible explanation for this finding is that public sector organizations typically operate under standardized procedures, regulations, and guidelines that limit the extent to which individual cognitive differences translate into performance variations. Civil servants are required to follow established rules and workflows, which may reduce the impact of intellectual intelligence on task execution. As long as employees meet minimum competency requirements, performance differences may be more strongly influenced by motivational and organizational factors rather than cognitive ability. This result indicates that intellectual intelligence functions more as a supporting factor rather than a direct determinant of performance.

Another interpretation of this result relates to the homogeneity of educational backgrounds among civil servants. Since most respondents possess similar levels of formal education and cognitive capacity, variations in intellectual intelligence may not be sufficiently large to produce significant differences in performance outcomes. Consequently, factors such as work discipline, organizational commitment, and empowerment practices may play a more dominant role in shaping performance.

The analysis further reveals that interpersonal communication does not have a significant partial effect on civil servant performance. The significance value obtained for interpersonal communication is above the established significance level, resulting in the rejection of the third hypothesis. This finding indicates that, when examined individually, interpersonal communication does not significantly influence performance among civil servants in the study.

While interpersonal communication is widely recognized as an important factor in organizational effectiveness, its limited impact in this study may be explained by the formal communication structure commonly found in public organizations. Many tasks and instructions are communicated through official channels such as written directives, formal meetings, and hierarchical reporting systems. As a result, job performance may rely more on compliance with formal procedures than on informal interpersonal interactions. Civil servants are expected to fulfill their responsibilities regardless of the quality of interpersonal relationships within the organization.

Furthermore, experienced civil servants may already possess sufficient understanding of their roles and tasks, reducing their dependence on interpersonal communication for task completion. In this context, communication serves more as a tool for coordination and relationship building rather than a direct driver of performance. Although effective communication contributes to a harmonious work environment, it may not significantly influence measurable performance outcomes when tasks are routine and well-defined.

Despite the lack of significant partial effects, the simultaneous analysis of employee empowerment, intellectual intelligence, and interpersonal communication reveals a statistically significant combined effect on civil servant performance. The results of the simultaneous test indicate that all three independent variables together influence performance. This finding supports the fourth hypothesis and suggests that these variables collectively contribute to shaping performance outcomes.

The simultaneous effect demonstrates that civil servant performance is a multidimensional construct influenced by the interaction of structural, cognitive, and interpersonal factors. While employee empowerment emerges as the strongest individual predictor, intellectual intelligence and interpersonal communication enhance performance when considered in combination with empowerment. This result highlights the importance of a holistic approach to human resource management, where multiple dimensions of employee capability and work environment are addressed simultaneously.

However, the coefficient of determination indicates that a considerable portion of performance variation remains unexplained by the model. This suggests that other factors, such as leadership style, organizational culture, work motivation, job satisfaction, and compensation systems, may also play a significant role in influencing civil servant performance. The relatively modest explanatory power of the model emphasizes the complexity of performance in public organizations and the need for further research to examine additional determinants.

The findings of this study provide several practical implications for public sector management. First, enhancing employee empowerment should be a priority for government leaders and administrators. Empowerment initiatives may include delegating authority, involving civil servants in policy formulation, providing opportunities for skill development, and recognizing employee contributions. By fostering a sense of trust and responsibility, organizations can stimulate higher levels of performance and innovation.

Second, while intellectual intelligence does not directly affect performance, continuous capacity-building programs remain important. Training and development initiatives can ensure that civil servants maintain adequate cognitive skills to adapt to changing work demands, technological advancements, and policy reforms. Intellectual intelligence may not independently boost performance, but it supports employees' ability to respond effectively to complex challenges.

Third, although interpersonal communication does not significantly influence performance on its own, it should not be neglected. Effective communication plays a vital role in maintaining teamwork, reducing conflict, and promoting a positive organizational climate. Managers should encourage open and respectful communication to support collaboration and employee well-being, which may indirectly enhance performance over time.

From a theoretical perspective, this study reinforces the importance of empowerment theory in explaining employee performance, particularly in the public sector. The results suggest that psychological and structural empowerment mechanisms are more influential than individual cognitive abilities or communication skills in determining performance outcomes. This finding contributes to the growing body of literature emphasizing the role of empowerment as a key driver of public sector effectiveness.

In conclusion, the results of this study indicate that employee empowerment significantly improves civil servant performance, while intellectual intelligence and interpersonal communication do not have significant individual effects. However, when combined, these variables collectively influence performance. These findings answer the research questions formulated in the introduction and underscore the importance of integrated human resource strategies aimed at empowering employees, supporting cognitive development, and fostering effective communication. By adopting such strategies, public organizations can enhance civil servant performance and improve the quality of public service delivery.

## CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to examine the effect of employee empowerment, intellectual intelligence, and interpersonal communication on the performance of civil servants, as stated in the research title and objectives. Based on the empirical findings, the research objectives have been adequately addressed and the formulated research questions have been answered through systematic statistical analysis. The results confirm that civil servant performance is not solely determined by individual capability, but is strongly influenced by organizational practices, particularly employee empowerment.

The findings demonstrate that employee empowerment plays a decisive role in improving civil servant performance. This confirms the central argument of the study that providing autonomy, trust, and participation opportunities enables civil servants to perform their duties more effectively and responsibly. Empowerment fosters a sense of ownership and accountability that translates into better work outcomes. In contrast, intellectual intelligence and interpersonal communication, while relevant in supporting work processes, do not emerge as dominant independent predictors of performance in the structured context of public sector organizations examined in this study. These results emphasize that performance improvement in public institutions depends more on systemic managerial approaches than on individual attributes alone.

Importantly, the study also shows that employee empowerment, intellectual intelligence, and interpersonal communication collectively contribute to civil servant performance when considered simultaneously. This indicates that performance is a multidimensional construct shaped by the interaction between organizational structure, cognitive capacity, and social processes. While empowerment serves as the primary driver, intellectual intelligence and interpersonal communication complement empowerment by supporting task execution, coordination, and adaptability. This integrated perspective aligns with contemporary views in organizational science that emphasize the interdependence of human, structural, and behavioral dimensions.

The conclusions drawn from this study are fully supported by the empirical data and do not extend beyond the scope of the findings. The research does not claim that intellectual intelligence or interpersonal communication are unimportant, but rather demonstrates that their influence on measurable performance outcomes is conditional within a formalized bureaucratic environment. As such, the conclusions reflect a balanced and evidence-based understanding of civil servant performance determinants.

From a scientific perspective, this study contributes to the broader field of industrial engineering and organizational science by reinforcing the importance of human-centered system design. Industrial engineering increasingly recognizes that performance optimization in complex systems depends not only on processes and technology, but also on how human resources are empowered within those systems. By empirically validating the role of empowerment in a public sector setting, this study extends the application of industrial engineering principles to service-oriented and administrative systems. The findings support the integration of empowerment-based human resource strategies into performance improvement models.

In conclusion, this research confirms that strengthening employee empowerment is a critical pathway to enhancing civil servant performance. The study provides empirical clarity on the relative roles of empowerment, intellectual intelligence, and interpersonal communication, and offers a coherent contribution to the development of more effective human-centered organizational systems. These conclusions are expected to support both academic advancement and informed managerial decision-making in public sector and industrial engineering contexts.

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