

The Influence of Competency Development and Change Readiness on Public Sector Performance Mediated by Organizational Culture

Factors Influencing
Public Sector
Performance

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ABSTRACT

Public sector organizations in Indonesia are striving to become more agile and responsive amid rapid technological change and increasing public expectations, yet institutional inertia and resistance to change often hinder successful administrative transformation. This study examines the influence of competency development, organizational change readiness, and organizational culture on organizational performance at the Class I Immigration Office of TPI Samarinda during its transition period. The research investigates the direct effects of competency development and organizational change readiness on performance, along with the mediating role of organizational culture. Data were collected through a survey from 67 purposively selected employees and analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling. Findings indicate that competency development and organizational change readiness have significant positive direct effects on organizational performance. Organizational culture positively influences performance and partially mediates the relationship between competency development and performance. However, it does not mediate the link between organizational change readiness and performance, showing that readiness can drive results independently. These results underscore the need to invest in employee skill enhancement and change readiness to improve service quality and efficiency. Managers should focus on competency programs and supportive communication while building an adaptive organizational culture for effective and sustainable public sector transformation.

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INTRODUCTION

Recent developments in public administration show a major shift from rigid bureaucratic systems to more agile and flexible governance models. Public organizations today face strong pressure to adapt quickly to technological advances, changing policies, and higher expectations from society. In many countries, including Indonesia, the government has been pushing bureaucratic reform for years to create faster, more efficient, and citizen-centered services. However, the transition is not always smooth. Many public institutions still struggle with institutional inertia, strong hierarchical structures, and resistance to change that slow down innovation and responsiveness (Widodo et al., 2020; Yusuf, 2020; Mutiarin et al., 2024). These challenges become even more visible during major administrative restructuring, such as name changes, workflow adjustments, or new digital service requirements.

The Class I Immigration Office of TPI Samarinda is currently experiencing this kind of transformation. Changes in organizational name and bureaucratic procedures demand not only technical adjustments but also serious attention to human resource development, employee readiness to accept change, and the role of organizational culture (Parella, 2022; Hidayati et al., 2025). Without proper support in these areas, reform efforts can face

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serious obstacles. Previous studies have shown that public sector organizations often fail to implement change successfully because of cultural resistance, lack of employee preparation, and weak alignment between structure and external demands (Weiner, 2020; Ashikali, 2023; Hanifah & Frinaldi, 2025). Rigid work cultures that prioritize stability and procedure over flexibility tend to reduce the organization's ability to innovate and respond quickly to new challenges (Surbakti & Pohan, 2024; Erizona & Afrinaldi, 2025). At the same time, successful transformation depends heavily on leadership that can manage cultural shifts and build employee commitment during the change process (Bagga et al., 2022; Potnuru et al., 2023).

Although many studies have discussed the importance of digital transformation and agile bureaucracy in the public sector, there are still clear gaps in understanding how specific internal factors work together to support performance during transition periods. Most research focuses either on technological aspects or on leadership styles, but pays less attention to the combined influence of competency development, organizational change readiness, and organizational culture in improving performance in public institutions that are undergoing restructuring. According to Ferine et al. (2021), even though organizational culture plays an important role, readiness for change can sometimes directly affect performance without strong cultural mediation. However, very few studies have examined this pattern in the context of Indonesian public sector offices during real administrative transitions. Similarly, while competency development is widely recognized as essential, its indirect effect through organizational culture has not been deeply explored in immigration service settings (Karimah & Mujanah, 2021).

This study aims to fill that gap by examining the relationship between competency development, organizational change readiness, and organizational culture in improving organizational performance at the Class I Immigration Office of TPI Samarinda during its current transition period. The research specifically investigates whether competency development and change readiness have a direct positive influence on performance, and whether organizational culture acts as a mediator in those relationships. By using a quantitative approach with structural equation modeling, this study tries to provide clearer evidence about which factors are most critical for successful change in a public sector context like immigration services. The findings are expected to offer practical insights for public managers who want to strengthen human resource capabilities and create a more supportive work culture during organizational transformation.

LITERATURE REVIEW & HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Factors Influencing Organizational Performance

Competency development refers to the ongoing process of enhancing employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities through training, workshops, and on-the-job learning. In public sector organizations, this is especially important because employees need to handle complex tasks like policy implementation and service delivery. Many studies show that when employees gain better competencies, their individual and team performance improves significantly. For example, training programs help staff become more efficient and confident in their roles, which leads to higher-quality services and better overall results. In public institutions, competency development also supports adaptation to new technologies and procedures, reducing errors and increasing productivity (Pho et al., 2021; Parelia, 2022; Firjatullah & Ahmadi, 2024). Public sector workers who receive regular skill upgrades tend to show stronger commitment and deliver more effective outcomes.

Organizational change readiness means the level of preparedness employees and the organization have to accept and implement changes. This includes positive attitudes toward new processes and the belief that change will bring benefits. Research indicates that higher readiness leads to smoother transitions and better performance during reform periods. Employees who feel ready for change are more motivated to contribute positively, which directly boosts organizational efficiency and service quality. In public administration, where reforms often involve digital shifts or restructuring, readiness helps

overcome resistance and maintain momentum (Hutapea et al., 2021; Cheikh-Ammar et al., 2024; Hamaku et al., 2024; Wicaksono & Rozana, 2025). When the whole organization is prepared, performance outcomes improve because people work together more effectively toward common goals (Wang et al., 2023).

Organizational culture shapes the shared values, norms, and behaviors within an institution. A supportive culture that encourages collaboration, innovation, and commitment creates a positive work environment. Studies confirm that strong organizational culture positively affects performance by increasing employee motivation, satisfaction, and cooperation (Nneji & Asikhia, 2021; Abidin, 2025). In public sector settings, cultures that value service orientation and adaptability lead to higher efficiency and better citizen satisfaction (Dunggio, 2020; Firlana & Rahman, 2024; Surbakti & Pohan, 2024; Hanifah & Frinaldi, 2025). Employees in such cultures perform better because they feel valued and aligned with organizational objectives (Produção et al., 2020; Meylandari et al., 2024; Magetana & Shofiyuddin, 2025).

H1: Competency development has a positive influence on organizational performance.

H2: Organizational change readiness has a positive influence on organizational performance.

H3: Organizational culture has a positive influence on organizational performance.

Factors Influencing Organizational Culture

Competency development not only improves individual skills but also influences the broader organizational culture. When organizations invest in training and skill-building, it signals a commitment to employee growth, which fosters a culture of learning and continuous improvement. Employees who feel supported in their development tend to adopt values like collaboration and innovation more readily. In public sector contexts, such investments help shift rigid bureaucratic cultures toward more flexible and adaptive ones. According to Virangga et al. (2025), competency development strengthens cultural elements by making employees more proactive in applying shared values and goals. This creates a supportive atmosphere where people are encouraged to grow together.

Organizational change readiness also plays a key role in shaping culture. When employees are ready and positive about change, it promotes a culture that embraces adaptability and openness. Readiness encourages behaviors like teamwork during transitions, which reinforces cultural norms of flexibility and responsiveness. In public organizations facing reforms, high readiness can gradually transform hierarchical cultures into ones that value agility and stakeholder collaboration. Research shows that prepared employees help build trust and shared commitment, which are core to positive cultural change (Kurniawati & Widodoatmodjo, 2023). Research shows that prepared employees help build trust and shared commitment, which are core to positive cultural change (Olafsen et al., 2021; Strengers et al., 2022). Over time, this readiness contributes to a more resilient and innovative organizational environment. Both factors interact with culture in meaningful ways. Competency development provides the tools for cultural alignment, while change readiness supplies the mindset needed for cultural evolution. Together, they help public institutions move away from resistance toward a culture that supports ongoing improvement and performance.

H4: Competency development has a positive influence on organizational culture.

H5: Organizational change readiness has a positive influence on organizational culture.

Organizational Culture as a Mediator

Organizational culture often acts as a bridge between other variables and performance outcomes. It mediates by translating individual-level inputs into collective behaviors that drive results. For competency development, culture serves as a mediator because enhanced skills are more effectively applied when supported by a positive cultural context. Employees with better competencies contribute more to performance when the culture

encourages knowledge sharing and application of new abilities. In public sector studies, culture has been shown to strengthen the link between skill upgrades and overall efficiency (Magetana & Shofiyuddin, 2025). Without a supportive culture, competency gains may not fully translate into better organizational results.

Similarly, change readiness influences performance through organizational culture. When employees are ready for change, a strong culture amplifies this effect by promoting acceptance and integration of new practices. Culture mediates by creating an environment where readiness leads to sustained behavioral changes and higher performance. In transition periods, like those in immigration offices, culture helps channel readiness into productive outcomes rather than resistance. According to Ferine et al. (2021) and Syarifudin and Wening (2024), readiness can have direct effects, but culture often plays a mediating role in reinforcing long-term performance improvements. This mediation is particularly relevant in public organizations where cultural alignment ensures changes stick. Organizational culture functions as an important mechanism that explains how competency development and change readiness lead to better performance. It helps convert individual preparations into organizational success.

H6: Organizational culture mediates the relationship between competency development and organizational performance.

H7: Organizational culture mediates the relationship between organizational change readiness and organizational performance.

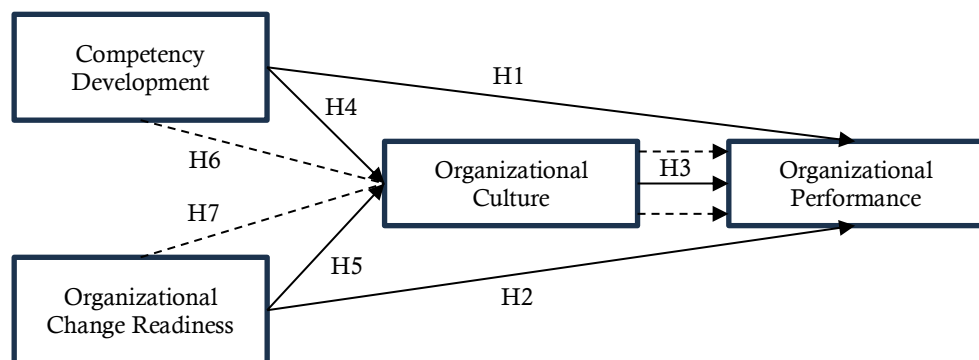


Figure 1. Research Framework

This study proposes a conceptual model where competency development and organizational change readiness directly affect organizational performance, while also influencing it indirectly through organizational culture as a mediator. The framework integrates the direct paths (H1–H3) and the influences on culture (H4–H5), with mediation effects (H6–H7). Figure 1 illustrates these relationships, showing how the variables connect in the context of public sector transformation at the Class I Immigration Office of TPI Samarinda.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine the relationships among competency development, organizational change readiness, organizational culture, and organizational performance. Data were collected through a survey questionnaire distributed to employees at the Class I Immigration Office of TPI Samarinda. The target population consisted of all permanent staff working in various divisions of the office. A purposive sampling technique was applied to select respondents who had been involved in the recent organizational transition processes and had at least one year of service experience. This ensured that participants had sufficient exposure to the changes being studied. In total, 67 valid responses were obtained and used for analysis. Purposive sampling was employed because this explanatory study required respondents with sufficient experience and direct

exposure to organizational and technological changes, and because not all employees were equally involved in or affected by the transformation process.

The questionnaire was developed based on established scales from previous research. Competency development was measured using items adapted from Setyawan and Prathama (2024), focusing on training participation, skill improvement, and knowledge application. Organizational change readiness was assessed with indicators adapted from Rahi et al. (2021), including openness to change, perceived benefits, and self-efficacy in adapting. Organizational culture was evaluated using dimensions such as collaboration, innovation support, and commitment, drawing from Adem and Virdi (2020). Organizational performance was measured through items related to service efficiency, quality, employee satisfaction, and goal achievement, inspired by general public sector performance scales adapted from Tan et al. (2023). All items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The instrument was first pilot-tested with 15 employees from a similar public office to check clarity and reliability. Minor wording adjustments were made based on feedback.

Data collection was conducted in person and via online forms during working hours over a two-week period to maximize participation. Respondents were assured of confidentiality and voluntary participation, and informed consent was obtained. After collection, the data were screened for completeness and obvious errors. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was chosen as the analytical method because of the relatively small sample size and the exploratory nature of the model with mediation effects. Analysis was performed using SmartPLS software. The measurement model was evaluated for reliability and convergent validity through composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha, and average variance extracted. The structural model was then assessed to test the proposed hypotheses, including direct effects and mediation, using bootstrapping procedures with 5,000 resamples to determine path significance and confidence intervals.

RESULTS

This section presents the findings from the data analysis conducted using PLS-SEM. The analysis begins with an evaluation of the measurement model to confirm reliability and validity, followed by an assessment of the structural model, including predictive relevance and hypothesis testing. All analyses were performed with SmartPLS software, and bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was applied to determine the significance of path coefficients.

Table 1. Convergent Validity Test

Variable	Items	Loading Factor	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability
Competency Development	X1.1	0.740	0.958	0.965
	X1.2	0.805		
	X1.3	0.759		
	X1.4	0.794		
	X1.5	0.828		
	X1.6	0.841		
	X1.7	0.821		
	X1.8	0.819		
	X1.9	0.782		
	X1.10	0.763		
Organizational Change Readiness	X2.1	0.855	0.943	0.952
	X2.2	0.859		
	X2.3	0.878		
	X2.4	0.892		
	X2.5	0.880		
	X2.6	0.874		
	X2.7	0.916		
	X2.8	0.864		
	Y.1	0.882	0.957	0.964

Variable	Items	Loading Factor	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability
Organizational Performance	Y.2	0.840	0.936	0.945
	Y.3	0.827		
	Y.4	0.835		
	Y.5	0.843		
	Y.6	0.796		
	Y.7	0.880		
	Y.8	0.855		
	Organizational Culture	1		
2		0.894		
3		0.891		
4		0.902		
5		0.835		
6		0.877		
7		0.877		
8		0.874		

The measurement model was first examined for convergent validity. Table 1 summarizes the detailed loading factors, Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability for each variable. All indicators showed satisfactory loading factors, generally above the recommended threshold of 0.70. For competency development, the items had loadings ranging from 0.740 to 0.841. Organizational change readiness items loaded between 0.855 and 0.916. Organizational performance indicators ranged from 0.796 to 0.882. In contrast, organizational culture items loaded from 0.835 to 0.902. Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs exceeded 0.90, indicating excellent internal consistency. Composite reliability scores were also high, ranging from 0.945 to 0.965 across the variables. These results confirm that the constructs demonstrate strong convergent validity and reliable measurement.

Table 2. Predictive Relevance

Variable	Q ² (=1-SSE/SSO)	Information
Organizational Culture	0.101	Has a predictive relevance value
Organizational Performance	0.242	Has a predictive relevance value

Next, the predictive relevance of the model was assessed using the Stone-Geisser Q² value obtained through blindfolding. Table 2 presents these Q² values along with their interpretation. Organizational culture achieved a Q² of 0.101. In comparison, Organizational performance obtained a Q² of 0.242. Both values are positive and greater than zero, indicating that the model has predictive relevance for the endogenous constructs. This suggests that the exogenous variables (competency development and organizational change readiness) can explain meaningful variance in the predicted outcomes beyond what would be expected by chance.

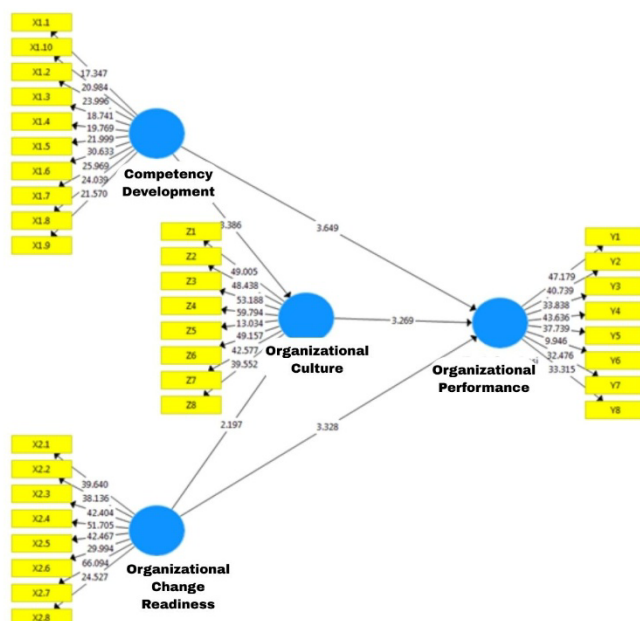


Figure 2. Bootstrapping Results

Figure 2 visually depicts the path coefficients and their significance levels from the bootstrapping procedure. The figure highlights the strength and direction of all tested relationships, including both direct and indirect paths, providing a clear overview of the model's structural outcomes.

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Decision
Competency Development -> Organizational Performance	0.283	3.649	0.000	Accepted
Organizational Change Readiness -> Organizational Performance	0.278	3.328	0.001	Accepted
Competency Development -> Organizational Culture	0.286	3.386	0.001	Accepted
Organizational Change Readiness -> Organizational Culture	0.202	2.197	0.029	Accepted
Organizational Culture -> Organizational Performance	0.310	3.269	0.001	Accepted
Competency Development -> Organizational Culture -> Organizational Performance	0.089	2.439	0.015	Accepted
Organizational Change Readiness -> Organizational Culture -> Organizational Performance	0.063	1.863	0.063	Rejected

Table 3 summarizes all hypothesis tests, including the standard deviation, t-statistics, p-values, and final decisions. The structural model results revealed several significant direct relationships among the variables. Competency development showed a positive and significant influence on organizational performance, with a path coefficient supported by a t-statistic of 3.649 and a p-value of 0.000. Similarly, organizational change readiness had a positive direct effect on organizational performance, evidenced by a t-statistic of 3.328 and a p-value of 0.001. Organizational culture also positively and significantly affected organizational performance, with a t-statistic of 3.269 and a p-value of 0.001. These findings indicate improvements in employee competencies, higher readiness for change, and a stronger supportive culture, each of which contributes directly to better organizational outcomes in this public sector setting.

In addition to direct effects, the analysis examined the influence of the independent variables on the mediator. Competency development positively influenced organizational culture, with a t-statistic of 3.386 and a p-value of 0.001. Organizational change readiness also had a positive effect on organizational culture, supported by a t-statistic of 2.197 and a p-value of 0.029. These paths suggest that both competency enhancement efforts and employee preparedness for change help foster a more positive and adaptive organizational culture at the immigration office.

The mediation hypotheses were tested to determine whether organizational culture serves as an intervening mechanism. The indirect effect of competency development on organizational performance through organizational culture was significant, with a t-statistic of 2.439 and a p-value of 0.015. This confirms that culture partially mediates the relationship, which means that competency development improves performance not only directly but also by strengthening cultural elements that support collective effectiveness. In contrast, the indirect effect of organizational change readiness on organizational performance, mediated by organizational culture, was not significant, showing a t-statistic of 1.863 and a p-value of 0.063. However, the direct path from change readiness to performance remained strong. Culture did not play a mediating role in this particular link.

The hypothesis testing results indicate that most of the proposed relationships are supported by the empirical evidence. Six of the seven hypotheses were accepted, while only the mediation involving organizational change readiness was not supported. The findings provide strong support for the proposed conceptual framework, highlighting competency development and change readiness as key drivers of organizational performance, with organizational culture playing a crucial mediating role in the pathway between competency development and performance.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide clear evidence of competency development and organizational change readiness. Organizational culture plays an important role in shaping organizational performance at the Class I Immigration Office of TPI Samarinda during its transition period. Competency development showed a strong positive direct effect on performance, which aligns with previous research indicating that ongoing skill enhancement helps employees handle tasks more effectively and adapt to new demands in public services (Firjatullah & Ahmadi, 2024). When employees receive regular training and opportunities to improve their abilities, they become more confident and productive, which directly contributes to better service delivery and overall efficiency (Katili et al., 2021; Singh & Misra, 2021). This result is particularly relevant in the public sector, where technical and procedural changes often require updated competencies to maintain high standards of work.

Organizational change readiness also had a significant direct influence on performance. Employees who felt prepared and positive about the ongoing administrative shifts demonstrated higher motivation and commitment to implement new procedures. This finding supports earlier studies showing that readiness acts as a key driver of successful adaptation, especially when individuals believe change will bring positive outcomes (Wicaksono & Rozana, 2025). In the context of immigration services, where reforms involve workflow adjustments and digital tools, employees with strong readiness were able to maintain or even improve their output despite the uncertainties of transition (Atobishi et al., 2024). The direct path remained robust even without cultural mediation, suggesting that personal preparedness can sometimes compensate for other factors in high-pressure public environments.

Organizational culture emerged as a significant predictor of performance and, more importantly, as a partial mediator in the relationship between competency development and performance. A supportive culture that values collaboration, innovation, and employee commitment amplified the benefits of skill-building efforts, allowing competencies to translate into collective success more effectively. This mediation effect is consistent with research that highlights culture as a mechanism through which individual

improvements influence organizational outcomes (Assoratgoon & Kantabutra, 2023; Magetana & Shofiyuddin, 2025). In contrast, Organizational culture did not mediate the link between change readiness and performance. Although readiness influenced culture positively. The indirect path through culture was not strong enough to reach significance ($p = 0.063$). This pattern echoes findings from Ferine et al. (2021), who noted that readiness can exert direct effects on performance independently of cultural factors, particularly in settings where employees already possess high individual motivation or where cultural change lags behind personal adaptation.

These results carry several practical implications for public sector managers, especially in immigration offices and similar administrative institutions undergoing reform. First, investing in structured competency development programs should remain a priority, as it not only boosts direct performance but also helps build a more positive and adaptive organizational culture over time. Second, efforts to increase change readiness through clear communication, involvement in planning, and demonstration of change benefits can yield quick performance gains, even if cultural transformation takes longer. Third, leaders need to pay close attention to nurturing a supportive culture that reinforces both competency gains and readiness efforts. By doing so, they can create a more resilient organization capable of handling ongoing transitions without major disruptions. The study confirms that competency development and change readiness are critical drivers of performance in public sector transformation, with organizational culture serving as an important but selective mediator. These insights offer guidance for policymakers and administrators aiming to improve service quality and efficiency during periods of administrative change.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that competency development and organizational change readiness significantly contribute to organizational performance at the Class I Immigration Office of TPI Samarinda during its transition period. Both factors exert direct positive effects on performance, highlighting their critical role in helping employees adapt to administrative changes, new procedures, and digital demands. Organizational culture also directly influences performance and serves as a partial mediator in the relationship between competency development and performance, meaning that a supportive culture strengthens the impact of skill enhancement efforts. However, culture does not mediate the link between change readiness and performance, suggesting that employee preparedness can drive results independently when motivation and individual adaptation are already strong. These findings confirm that focusing on human resource capabilities and readiness for change is essential for successful public sector transformation.

The results offer several practical implications for public sector managers, particularly in immigration and similar administrative offices. Leaders should prioritize regular competency-building programs and clear communication to boost change readiness, as these directly improve service quality and efficiency. At the same time, nurturing a collaborative and adaptive culture can amplify the benefits of skill development over the long term. Despite these contributions, the study has limitations, including a relatively small sample size of 67 respondents, which may limit generalizability to other public institutions or regions. Future research could expand the sample, incorporate longitudinal designs to track changes over time, and explore additional factors such as leadership style or external pressures that might influence these relationships in different public sector contexts.

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