

Transfer of Training as a Mediator of the Effects of Competency-Based Training and Work Motivation on Village Apparatus Performance

Shindiana Auliya Pratiwi¹, Abdul Kodir Djaelani², Siti Asiyah³

¹²³ Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia

Email: 22402081064@unisma.ac.id, sitiasiyah@unisma.ac.id, abdulkodir_fe@unisma.ac.id

Abstract

Keywords:

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This study aims to analyze the role of Transfer of Training in mediating the influence of Competency-Based Training and Work Motivation on the Performance of Village Apparatus in Malang Regency. The research method used a quantitative approach with a survey of 120 respondents, and data analysis was carried out through Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS) using SmartPLS. The results of the study show that Competency-Based Training and Work Motivation have a positive and significant effect on Village Apparatus Performance. In addition, Competency-Based Training and Work Motivation have been proven to have a positive and significant effect on Transfer of Training, which in turn has a positive and significant effect on Village Apparatus Performance. Another important finding is that Transfer of Training is able to mediate the influence of both Competency-Based Training and Work Motivation on Village Apparatus Performance. Theoretically, this study strengthens human resource development studies by positioning Transfer of Training as a mediating mechanism that explains how training and work motivation can be translated into improved employee performance. Practically, the findings provide implications for village governments to improve the effectiveness of competency-based training, strengthen work motivation, and create a supportive work environment that encourages the application of knowledge and skills acquired from training in carrying out duties and public services.

INTRODUCTION

The expansion of village authority in Indonesia has increased the administrative, financial, and public-service responsibilities borne by village institutions. As the operational actors closest to citizens, village apparatus are expected to translate regulations, development programs, and public resources into accountable and timely services. These demands make employee capability and work performance central to the quality of village governance. Yet recurring weaknesses in administrative compliance, financial management, reporting, and internal control indicate that capacity development remains an important management issue in village government.

Training is one of the main instruments used to improve the competence of public-sector personnel. From the perspective of Human Capital Theory, expenditure on training is an investment that increases knowledge, skills, and productive capacity (Becker, 1964). Competency-based training is especially relevant because it links learning content, methods, facilitation, and evaluation to the actual competencies required by a job (Noe, 2020; Armstrong, 2020). For village apparatus, training that is directly aligned with administrative duties, public service, regulatory implementation, and governance processes should improve the ability to perform work effectively.

However, training participation does not automatically produce improved performance. Training Transfer Theory emphasizes that training becomes effective only when knowledge, skills,

and attitudes acquired during a program are retained and applied in the work environment (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). Meta-analytic evidence also shows that transfer is a central post-training mechanism and is influenced by trainee characteristics, training design, and the work environment (Gegenfurtner, 2020). Therefore, evaluating training only at the level of participation or learning output can overstate its organizational value if actual application at work is not examined.

Work motivation provides an additional individual mechanism. Motivation determines the intensity, direction, and persistence of effort directed toward work goals (Robbins & Judge, 2022). A motivated village official is more likely to seek better work results, persist when difficulties arise, develop capability, and actively use newly acquired knowledge. Empirical evidence in public-sector contexts supports the role of intrinsic motivation in strengthening knowledge transfer and the implementation of training outcomes (Mohamad & Rahman, 2023).

Previous studies have commonly examined training-performance relationships or psychological mediators such as self-efficacy, while fewer studies integrate competency-based training, work motivation, transfer of training, and performance in a single model for village government. The present study addresses this gap by positioning transfer of training as an operational mediation mechanism: competency development and motivation are expected to improve performance not only directly, but also because they increase the actual application of learning in daily work. This model is tested empirically among village apparatus in Malang Regency.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative explanatory research design to test causal relationships among competency-based training (X1), work motivation (X2), transfer of training (Z), and village apparatus performance (Y). The research context was village apparatus in Malang Regency who had participated in competency development training. A total of 120 usable responses were analyzed. Respondents were active in village institutions at the time of data collection and had prior training experience relevant to the research model.

The thesis methodology specifies probability sampling with a simple random sampling approach from an identified participant frame. Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Competency-based training was measured through material relevance, clarity of training objectives, applicability of training methods, facilitator quality, and performance-oriented evaluation. Work motivation was measured through seriousness in work, orientation toward better results, persistence, willingness to develop capability, and work enthusiasm. Transfer of training was measured through application of knowledge, application of skills, post-training behavioral change, and consistency of using training outcomes. Performance was measured through work quality, work quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, and teamwork.

Data were analyzed using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS 4. The measurement model was evaluated using indicator loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and discriminant validity. The structural model was evaluated through R^2 , Q^2 predict, effect size (f^2), direct effects, and specific indirect effects. Hypotheses were considered supported when t-statistics exceeded 1.96 and p-values were below 0.05 (Hair et al., 2021). Mediation was assessed through bootstrapped specific indirect effects.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Measurement Model

Table 1. Convergent Validity

Variable	Outer Loading Range	AVE	Result
Competency-Based Training (X1)	0.745–0.906	0.643	Valid
Work Motivation (X2)	0.712–0.818	0.584	Valid
Transfer of Training (Z)	0.766–0.938	0.705	Valid
Village Apparatus Performance (Y)	0.715–0.833	0.575	Valid

Source: Primary data processed with SmartPLS 4, 2026.

All indicator loadings exceed 0.70 and all AVE values exceed 0.50. Accordingly, the four constructs satisfy convergent validity and the indicators can be retained in the model. Discriminant validity was also supported by the Fornell–Larcker criterion, where the square root of AVE for each construct was higher than its correlations with the other constructs.

Table 2. Construct Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Result
Competency-Based Training (X1)	0.814	0.871	Reliable
Work Motivation (X2)	0.822	0.875	Reliable
Transfer of Training (Z)	0.860	0.899	Reliable
Village Apparatus Performance (Y)	0.859	0.905	Reliable

Source: Primary data processed with SmartPLS 4, 2026.

Cronbach's alpha values range from 0.814 to 0.860 and composite reliability values range from 0.871 to 0.905. All values exceed the 0.70 threshold, indicating satisfactory internal consistency for every construct.

Structural Model

Table 3. Structural Model Explanatory and Predictive Power

Endogenous Variable	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Q ² predict	Interpretation
Transfer of Training (Z)	0.272	0.260	0.238	Predictive relevance
Village Apparatus Performance (Y)	0.424	0.409	0.289	Predictive relevance

Source: Primary data processed with SmartPLS 4, 2026.

Competency-based training and work motivation explain 27.2% of the variance in transfer of training. Competency-based training, work motivation, and transfer of training jointly explain 42.4% of the variance in village apparatus performance. Both Q²predict values are positive, indicating that the model has predictive relevance for the endogenous constructs.

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path Coefficient	t-statistics	p-value	Decision
H1	X1 → Y	0.257	3.463	0.001	Supported
H2	X2 → Y	0.255	3.325	0.001	Supported

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path Coefficient	t-statistics	p-value	Decision
H3	$X1 \rightarrow Z$	0.399	5.520	<0.001	Supported
H4	$X2 \rightarrow Z$	0.301	4.383	<0.001	Supported
H5	$Z \rightarrow Y$	0.369	4.832	<0.001	Supported
H6	$X1 \rightarrow Z \rightarrow Y$	0.147	3.484	<0.001	Supported
H7	$X2 \rightarrow Z \rightarrow Y$	0.111	3.246	0.001	Supported

Source: Primary data processed with SmartPLS 4, 2026.

All five direct paths and both specific indirect effects are positive and statistically significant. The effect-size analysis further shows that competency-based training has a small effect on performance ($f^2=0.093$) but a medium effect on transfer of training ($f^2=0.216$). Work motivation has small effects on performance ($f^2=0.100$) and transfer of training ($f^2=0.123$), while transfer of training has a medium effect on performance ($f^2=0.172$). The largest effect size is therefore found in the competency-based training–transfer relationship.

DISCUSSION

Competency-Based Training and Village Apparatus Performance

The positive coefficient for competency-based training ($\beta=0.257$; $p=0.001$) indicates that training aligned with job competencies contributes directly to better performance. This result is consistent with Human Capital Theory: training increases productive capacity when the content and learning process build knowledge and skills that are relevant to work (Becker, 1964). In the village-government setting, the result implies that material relevance, clear competency targets, applicable training methods, facilitation, and performance-oriented evaluation are not merely learning-process attributes; they are associated with better work quality, timeliness, effectiveness, and collaboration. The relatively small f^2 value (0.093), however, also shows that performance is influenced by other organizational and individual factors beyond training.

Work Motivation and Village Apparatus Performance

Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on performance ($\beta=0.255$; $p=0.001$). This finding supports the view that motivation shapes the intensity and persistence of work behavior (Robbins & Judge, 2022). Village apparatus who are more serious about producing good results, more persistent in overcoming difficulties, and more willing to improve their capability are more likely to show stronger performance. The small effect size ($f^2=0.100$) suggests that motivation matters, but it operates within a broader performance system that may also include leadership, resources, organizational support, work design, and governance conditions.

Competency-Based Training and Transfer of Training

The strongest structural effect in the model is the influence of competency-based training on transfer of training ($\beta=0.399$; $p<0.001$; $f^2=0.216$). This is theoretically important because it demonstrates that a well-designed training program increases the likelihood that learning is actually used at work. The result is aligned with Training Transfer Theory, which identifies training design as one of the core determinants of transfer (Baldwin & Ford, 1988), and with meta-analytic evidence that the transfer process depends on how effectively training prepares participants for real work application (Gegenfurtner, 2020). For training providers, the implication is that program quality should be judged not only by completion rates but also by post-training application.

Work Motivation and Transfer of Training

Work motivation positively affects transfer of training ($\beta=0.301$; $p<0.001$). This means that learning application is partly an intentional behavior: participants need sufficient drive to use new knowledge and skills after returning to their workplace. The finding is compatible with evidence from the public sector that intrinsic motivation contributes to knowledge transfer following training (Mohamad & Rahman, 2023). Therefore, post-training systems should not rely only on technical training design; they should also create conditions that sustain motivation to apply learning, such as clear expectations, managerial support, opportunities to practice, recognition, and follow-up.

Transfer of Training and Village Apparatus Performance

Transfer of training has the largest direct coefficient on performance among the three predictors ($\beta=0.369$; $p<0.001$) and a medium effect size ($f^2=0.172$). This finding confirms the central proposition that training has organizational value when learning is converted into workplace behavior. It is consistent with empirical evidence showing that training transfer improves employee performance in operational public-service settings (Saiful et al., 2024). In practical terms, village apparatus who consistently apply training knowledge and skills, change work behavior after training, and sustain the new practices are more likely to improve their performance.

Mediating Role of Transfer of Training

The specific indirect effect of competency-based training on performance through transfer of training is positive and significant ($\beta=0.147$; $p<0.001$), and the indirect effect of work motivation on performance through transfer is also positive and significant ($\beta=0.111$; $p=0.001$). Because the corresponding direct effects are also significant and point in the same direction, the empirical pattern is consistent with complementary partial mediation. Substantively, this means that training and motivation can improve performance directly, but part of their impact is realized through actual implementation of learning. This reinforces the study's central contribution: transfer of training is not a peripheral outcome but an operational mechanism that links capability development and motivational energy to observable performance.

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

The model integrates Human Capital Theory, motivational perspectives, and Training Transfer Theory in a public-sector village context. The findings indicate that investment in competencies is necessary but insufficient if learning is not translated into work practice. For local governments and training organizers, training evaluation should therefore extend beyond attendance, participant satisfaction, and immediate learning scores. A stronger system would connect pre-training competency needs, practical learning design, post-training assignments, supervisor follow-up, evidence of application, and performance monitoring. The findings also suggest that sustaining participant motivation is part of transfer management, rather than a separate human-resource issue.

CONCLUSION

The study demonstrates that competency-based training and work motivation both have positive and significant direct effects on village apparatus performance and on transfer of training. Transfer of training, in turn, has a positive and significant effect on performance and significantly mediates the effects of both competency-based training and work motivation. These results show that the effectiveness of training cannot be evaluated only by whether participants acquire knowledge or complete a program; its performance value depends substantially on whether

learning is applied consistently in the workplace. The model explains 42.4% of the variance in village apparatus performance and shows predictive relevance for both endogenous constructs. The practical priority is therefore to strengthen training design while institutionalizing post-training transfer mechanisms, including follow-up assignments, supervisor support, application monitoring, and evaluation of work outcomes. Future studies may extend the model by examining organizational support, leadership, digital capability, work environment, or other contextual factors that could explain the remaining variance in transfer and performance.

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