



Muslim Men and Women Employees at the Secretariat Office of the Regional Representatives Council - Who Performs Better

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Abstract

Gender issues often question women's work and performance in public spaces. Some people see it negatively based on the customs, values and norms of the community. This study aimed to explain the level of performance of Muslim men and women which are influenced by emotional intelligence and work stress. This study employed quantitative methods, where primary data was obtained through surveys, and secondary data was collected through library studies and institutional documents. The survey was conducted by distributing questionnaires to 61 employees who were randomly sampled from 159 employees using the Slovin formula. The data were processed using the SPSS for Windows program, then analyzed by multiple linear regression. The results reveal that partially and simultaneously, emotional intelligence and work stress positively and significantly affect the performance of male and female employees. However, there was a slight difference in emotional intelligence and work stress between men and women that lead to different performance, Muslim women are slightly better than men in performance at public office in Islamic Province such Aceh.

Keywords: *Employee; Emotional Intelligence; Work Stress; Performance*

Introduction

The debate about women working in public spaces continues. Muslim working women, both in Muslim state and non Muslim state are dominated, oppressed and disproportionately burdened by unpaid work at home. Meanwhile professional Muslim women are complexities, diversities, and ambiguities in socio-political contexts. They are exposed to different expectations related to their gender behavior. To engage in formal employment, they develop physical strategies and discursive strategies (Grünenfelder, 2013).

However, in some Islamic countries this is not a cultural problematic issue to be contested, except it is questioned by some people who understand Islam radically (Al-Bishawi et al., 2017; Hong Tschalaer, 2015; Khurshid & Saba, 2018; Povey, 2016; Tuncer, 2018; van Geel, 2016). Aceh is as an Islamic Province of Indonesia, Aceh people generally do not question women working in public spaces (Afrianty, 2015; Irnawati et al., 2019; Lopes Cardozo et al., 2022; Renuka & Srimulyani, 2015; Stoll, 2016), except that their involvement in politics is still viewed negatively by a few people even though they have demonstrated their ability to act in development and empowerment (Darwin, 2017; Jauhola, 2020; Marhaban, 2018). Accordingly, generally in practice, their involvement in development is still often neglected (Hartono, 2021; Oktari et al., 2021; Rahmawati, 2022; Rahmayati, 2021).

Nevertheless, working in public space including government offices throughout Aceh, it seems at first glance that men and women can work without any discrimination, and the most employees in public state office are Muslim consist of men and women. Their motivations and purposes for working are certainly the same as most people working in other place. They work to meet basic needs, ranging from physiological needs to self-actualization, either hierarchically or not (Kaur, 2013; Rasskazova et al., 2016). However, generally norms and practices usually define women are inferior to men (Carbajal, 2018; Sultana, 2010) although women as employees can perform the same or even better than men both in quantity and quality. It depends on their capability, skills, and work ethic (Mangkunegara & Prabu, 2005) in carrying out the tasks according to the responsibilities and authorities based on the law, morals, and ethics (Svara, 2021). In addition, the performance of employees varies greatly from one employee to another due to employees' ability and other factors, including emotional intelligence and work stress.

According to Goleman (2009), emotional intelligence comprises the ability to control oneself, be resilient in facing problems, regulate moods, and empathize and maintain relationships with others. Emotional intelligence has a significant influence on employees' performance (Halimi et al., 2020; Lubis, 2020; Magnano et al., 2016; Putri & Sahri, 2021; Ratmawati & Nugroho, 2021; Razak & Saripuddin, 2020; Roy et al., 2013; Sontakke, 2016). Thus, it can be concluded that an employee who has high emotional intelligence has a higher performance. Otherwise, a person's performance will be low if someone has low emotional intelligence.

Furthermore, another factor that affects a person's performance is work stress. Stress is the adverse psychological and physical reactions of the individual due to his or her inability to cope with the extraordinary demands on an individual (Daniel, 2019). According to Robbins et al. (2015), work stress is a condition that arises as a result of employees' interaction with a job that forces them to deviate from their normal function. Work stress can be identified by several symptoms, including unstable emotions, anxiety, isolation, sleep disorders, inability to relax, being tense and nervous, high blood pressure, and impaired digestion.

The question is, what affects emotional intelligence and work stress? According to Yamani et al. (2014) there is no a significant relationship between sex and marital status and emotional intelligence. However age and educational level have a significant effect on emotional intelligence. In addition, age and work experience have a positive relation with emotional intelligence. The adult group has higher level of emotional intelligence than the adolescent group (Iguodala-Cole, 2021). In addition, work stress can be caused by having too many tasks, limited work time, role conflict, role ambiguity, different values, frustration, and family problems. Therefore, work stress has a significant impact on an employee's performance. This means that employees who have high levels of work stress tend to have low performance (Mangkunegara & Prabu, 2005). Some of the empirical studies that prove that the work stress variable has a significant effect on employees' performance were conducted by (Anwar et al., 2015; Gyllensten & Palmer, 2021; Sumaryo et al., 2015).

Despite of these findings, this study aims to explain emotional intelligence and work stress differences of Muslim men and women employees and its effects on their performances at the Secretariat Office of the Regional Representatives Council, Lhokseumawe City. Based on observations, the Muslim employees, men and women at the Secretariat Office, they work according to the duties in the organization. Each employee has a task group that must be carried out following the regulation. However, some of employees do not work on their primary duties and functions maximally. Some of them are still unable to complete the work assigned to them according to the specified time, and the quality of work produced by employees is still low. This is evidenced by the sluggish financial administration system, where there are delays in several disbursements of the Additional Income Allowance (TPP) for the Secretariat Office of the Regional Representatives Council of Lhokseumawe City each month. Employees are also faced with various problems that lead them to experience work stress, which causes low performance, leaving the office during working times, and do not completely work on times. As a result, their performances are low that cause the organizational productivity low.

Based on the background, this study examines the effect of emotional intelligence and works stress on the performance of male and female employees. Following the concepts and theories above, it can be assumed that employees' performance is an essential variable, and largely determines the performance of an institution. Accordingly, the emotional intelligence and work stress strongly influence the employees' performance, both men and women (Goleman, 2009; Robbins et al., 2015).

Methods

Approach and Sample

This study took place at the Regional Secretariat of Lhokseumawe City, Aceh - Indonesia. The study used quantitative methods where data were collected by the research instruments; questionnaires ordinal data collection methods. The data were analyzed with descriptive analysis (using multiple linear regression) to test the established hypothesis (Sugiyono, 2015). The study populations were employees, amounting to 159 people, where the Regional Secretary, Assistants, Expert Staff, and researchers were excluded. The samples were the employees with low levels of discipline. They were determined by using the Slovin formula. Accordingly, the respondents of this study were 61 employees consist of men and women.

They were different characteristics, both in terms of education and working period. Therefore, the characteristics of the respondents are presented in the following table.

Table 1. Number of Respondents Based on Education Level

Education	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Senior High School	9	14,8
Diploma	25	41,0
Undergraduate	24	39,3
Postgraduate	3	4,9
Total	61	100,0

Table 2. Number of Respondents Based on Working Period

Working Period	Number of Respondents	Percentage
≤ 5 Years	5	8,2
6 - 10 Years	13	21,3
11 - 15 Years	15	24,6
16 - 20 Years	11	18,0
21 - 25 Years	11	18,0
≥ 26 Years	6	9,8
Total	61	100,0

Validity Test

A validity test is a statistical test used to determine how valid a question item measures the variables studied. The basis for taking the validity test is by looking at the comparison of the calculated r-value with the r table with the following conditions:

- a) If the value of r count $>$ r table = valid
- b) If the value of r count $<$ r table = invalid.

The value of the r table with $N = 61$ at a significance of 5% in the distribution of the statistical table r value is 0.248%, as shown in the following table.

Table 3. Validity Test Output

Item	r count value	r table value	Information
X1.1	0,698	0,248	Valid
X1.2	0,769	0,248	Valid
X1.3	0,770	0,248	Valid
X1.4	0,794	0,248	Valid
X1.5	0,692	0,248	Valid
X1.6	0,616	0,248	Valid
X1.7	0,610	0,248	Valid
X1.8	0,699	0,248	Valid
X1.9	0,671	0,248	Valid
X1.10	0,714	0,248	Valid
X2.1	0,661	0,248	Valid
X2.2	0,594	0,248	Valid
X2.3	0,649	0,248	Valid
X2.4	0,583	0,248	Valid
X2.5	0,733	0,248	Valid
X2.6	0,802	0,248	Valid
X2.7	0,586	0,248	Valid
X2.8	0,713	0,248	Valid
X2.9	0,584	0,248	Valid
X2.10	0,744	0,248	Valid
Y.1	0,735	0,248	Valid
Y.2	0,610	0,248	Valid
Y.3	0,741	0,248	Valid
Y.4	0,677	0,248	Valid
Y.5	0,556	0,248	Valid
Y.6	0,723	0,248	Valid
Y.7	0,762	0,248	Valid
Y.8	0,782	0,248	Valid
Y.9	0,725	0,248	Valid
Y.10	0,682	0,248	Valid

Reliability Test

The criteria for a research variable are said to be reliable using the Alpha Cronbach technique if the reliability coefficient is > 0.6 . Reliability tests were carried out on question items that had been declared valid. A variable is said to be reliable if the answers to the questions are consistent.

Table 4. Reliability Test Output

Variable	Reliability Coefficient	Information
Emotional Intelligence (X1)	0.887	Reliable
Work Stress (X2)	0.858	Reliable
Performance (Y)	0.883	Reliable

Data Analysis

In this study, hypothesis testing used multiple linear regressions, which empirically test the functional relationship of two or more independent variables with the dependent variable or to determine whether or not there is an effect of two or more independent variables (x) on the dependent variable (y). For this purpose, the study used F Test, Determination Test, and t-Test.

The F test is to test the level of influence of all independent (free) variables together on the dependent (bound) variables. This study used a significance level (α : 0.05) and degrees of freedom (df) with the provisions of the numerator: the number of variables – 1 or $3 - 1 = 2$, and the number of samples – 2 or $61 - 2 = 59$. **The determination test** is to find out how much influence the variables of emotional intelligence and work stress have on the performance of male and female employees at the Regional Secretariat of Lhokseumawe City. Finally, **t-Test** (the individual parameter significance test) is a test to show the partial effect of the independent variables in the model on the dependent variables. This is intended to determine how far the influence of one independent variable is in explaining the dependent variable.

Results

Emotional Intelligence and Work Stress of Muslim Men and Women Employees

A. Description of Responses of Male and Female Respondents to Emotional Intelligence Variables

Table 5. Description by Gender for Emotional Intelligence Variables

Responses	Male	Female
STS (1)	1	0
TS (2)	21	21
N (3)	86	94
S (4)	118	123
SS (5)	54	92
Total	280	330
Skor	1043	1276
Mean (%)	3.73	3.87

The mean of responses of the male respondents on the emotional intelligence variable was 3.73%, while the female respondent's response was 3.87%. Based on the results of the mean values above, it can be concluded that the level of emotional intelligence of the male Lhokseumawe Regional Secretariat employees is lower than their female counterparts. Besides working, women also have a responsibility at home. Thus, they need to have the ability to balance work at home and the office.

Description of Responses of Male and Female Respondents for Work Stress Variables

Table 6. Description by Gender for Work Stress Variables

Responses	Male	Female
STS (1)	18	30
TS (2)	72	105
N (3)	113	84
S (4)	61	94
SS (5)	16	17
Total	280	330
Skor	825	953
Mean (%)	2.95	2.89

The mean of responses of the male respondents for the work stress variable was 2.95%, while the female respondent's response was 2.89%. Therefore, based on the results of the mean above, it is found that the stress level of the female Lhokseumawe Regional Secretariat employees is lower than male employees.

Description of Responses of Male and Female Respondents to Performance Variables

Table 7. Description by Gender Performance Variables

Responses	Male	Female
STS (1)	0	1
TS (2)	21	14
N (3)	74	76
S (4)	128	160
SS (5)	57	79
Total	280	330
Score	1061	1292
Mean (%)	3.79	3.92

The mean of responses of the male respondents on the performance variable is 3.79%, while the female respondent's response is 3.92%. The results of the mean value above suggest that the performance of female employees is better than male employees. This is in line with the mean of stress above, where female employees are less stressed and have higher intellectual emotions than male employees, causing male performance to be lower than female employees.

Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

1.F Test Results

Table 8. Effect of Emotional Intelligence and Work Stress on Performance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1437.520	2	718.760	68.634	.000 ^b
	Residual	607.398	58	10.472		
	Total	2044.918	60			

With these provisions, the F table value is obtained (3.153). From the calculation results, it is obtained that the calculated F value > F table (65.704 > 3.153) and the significance value is 0.00 < 0.05. This means that the variables of emotional intelligence and work stress simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on the performance of male employees and female employees at the Regional Secretariat of Lhokseumawe City. Thus, this regression model is feasible and correct, and it can be concluded that the variables of emotional intelligence and work stress affect the performance of male and female employees at the Regional Secretariat of Lhokseumawe City.

2. Determination Test Results (R²)

The results (R²) can be seen from the summary model as follows:

Table 9. Summary of R² Model of Emotional Intelligence and Work Stress on Performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.838 ^a	.703	.693	3.23610

The value of R square (R²) shows 0.693 or 69.3%. This value means that 69.70% of the performance of male employees and female employees at the Regional Secretariat of Lhokseumawe City is low and is influenced by emotional intelligence and high work stress. The remaining 30.70% is caused by other variables not examined.

3. t-Test Results

The results of the t-test in this study are presented in the following table:

Table 10. The summary of t-test results of Emotional Intelligence and Work Stress on Performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	25.762	3.878		6.644	.000
Emotional Intelligence	.581	.072	.624	8.104	.000
Work Stress	.318	.065	.375	4.872	.000

The Effect of Emotional Intelligence and Work Stress on the Muslim Men and Women Employees' Performance

A. The Effect of Emotional Intelligence on the Male and Female Employees' Performance

Table 11. The Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	25.762	3.878		6.644	.000
Emotional Intelligence	.581	.072	.624	8.104	.000

This study used a significance level (α : 0.05) and degrees of freedom with the provisions of $DK = n - 2$, or $61 - 2 = 59$. With these provisions, the t table value is 1.671. From the results of data processing, the value of t arithmetic $>$ t table ($8.104 > 1.671$) and the significance value is smaller than the value of: 0.05, which is $0.000 < 0.05$. This means that the emotional intelligence variable partially has a positive and significant effect on the performance of male and female employees at the Lhokseumawe City Regional Secretariat. The magnitude of the influence of the emotional intelligence variable on the performance of male and female employees is 0.624 or 62.40%.

B. The Effect of Work Stress on the Male and Female Employees' Performance

Table 12. The Effect of Work Stress on Performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	25.762	3.878		6.644	.000
Work Stress	.318	.065	.375	4.872	.000

This study used a significance level (α : 0.05) and degrees of freedom with the provisions of $DK = n - 2$, or $61 - 2 = 59$. With these provisions, the t table value is 1.671. From the results of data processing, the value of t arithmetic $>$ t table ($4.872 > 1.671$) and the significance value is smaller than the value of: 0.05, namely $0.000 < 0.05$. This means that the work stress variable has a positive and significant effect on the performance of male and female employees at the Lhokseumawe City Regional Secretariat. The magnitude of the influence of the work stress variable on the performance of male and female employees is 0.375 or 37.50%.

From the description of the research results above, the following multiple linear equation models is obtained: $Y = 25.762 + 0.581 X_1 + 0.318 X_2$. This means:

- 1) The constant value of 25.762 can be interpreted as if the variables of emotional intelligence and work stress are considered constant or have not changed, then the employee's performance is 25.762.
- 2) The regression coefficient X_1 (emotional intelligence) value has a positive value of 0.581. This shows that the emotional intelligence variable positively influences the performance of male and female employees.
- 3) The value of the X_2 coefficient (work stress) has a positive value of 0.318. This shows that the work stress variable influences the performance of male and female employees.

Discussion

Emotional intelligence and work stress play a vital role in various situations at the workplace and helps achieve organizational effectiveness. This study reveals that Muslim women employees slightly have better performance than men due to their higher emotional intelligence and lower work stress. It is a little different from Naseem (2018), states that employees with higher emotional intelligence experience less stress, and married male employees were more effective than females at controlling stress with emotional intelligence. Similarly, Popovych et al. (2022) reveal that men better control their emotions, and women have a higher sense of empathy.

However, the study generally confirms many previous research results (Aqqad et al., 2019; Chughtai & Lateef, 2015; Desti & Shanthi, 2015). They revealed that emotional intelligence is an

essential tool for significantly impacting both employees' performance and organizations' success, and emotional intelligence is correlated to work stress in an organization. Work stress has an impact on employees' emotional and working behavior. A employee with high emotional intelligence shows less stress and significantly contributes to higher productivity and organizational commitment (Navas & Vijayakumar, 2018).

Feldman and Mulle (2008) stated that individuals with low levels of emotional intelligence do not have self-awareness and repeat the same mistakes. Individuals with low emotional intelligence allow emotions to influence their behavior, are insensitive and uncaring individuals, demanding, not empathetic, and challenging to work with. Similar to Yo and Supartha (2019), emotional intelligence is crucial in carrying out tasks and improving performance. Emotional intelligence plays a vital role in internal job satisfaction. Employees with high emotional intelligence have good performance. Furthermore, their chances of leaving the company are lower than those with low performance.

This is in line with several previous empirical studies which also proved that the emotional intelligence variable has a significant influence on employee performance ((Kumar et al., 2013; Lubis, 2020; Magnano et al., 2016; Roy et al., 2013; Sontakke, 2016; Yahaya et al., 2012). This study also shows a positive relationship between variables, meaning that a higher level of work stress causes a lower level of a person's performance. This finding aligns with the research conducted by (Cahyana & Jati, 2017; Luthans et al., 2021), which stated that work stress has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

Disagree with the results of the studies; work stress does not positively affect employee behavior at private companies (Istanti et al., 2021); work stress is not always bad; sometimes, it is an opportunity for potential gain. It has a positive moderation effect on psychological capital toward creativity (Ghafoor & Haar, 2021). In traditional industries, work stress positively affects satisfaction and performance, but it has a significantly negative effect on performance in high-tech industries. Thus, work stress has different effects on employees, related to and dependent on industrial characteristics (Yang et al., 2021).

Conclusions

The analysis of the data above reveals that the level of emotional intelligence and work stress of male and female employees at the Regional Secretariat of Lhokseumawe City is a little different, so their performance is also different. However, their emotional intelligence can be categorized as low, while their work stress level can be categorized as high. As a result, their performance is low as well. The validity test results show that the significance value of the questions for the variables of emotional intelligence, work stress, and overall performance is declared valid, because r count is greater than r table. From the overall reliability test results, the value of the reliability coefficient of Alpha Cronbach, which is > 0.6 , means that the variables of emotional intelligence, work stress, and performance are declared reliable.

In testing the hypothesis with multiple linear regression analysis seen from the t -test and f test, it shows that the variables of emotional intelligence and work stress are positive, which means that there is an effect on the performance variable. The determination test results show that the magnitude of the influence of emotional intelligence and work stress on performance is 69.70%. This means that the low performance of male and female employees is influenced by low emotional intelligence and high work stress. This finding strengthens the theory of Robbins et al. (2015), which suggests that performance is influenced by emotional intelligence and work stress factors. It is also relevant to Yustika (2022) confirmed that emotional intelligence and work stress, either partially or simultaneously, have a positive and significant effect on employee performance. However, based on some contrasting findings, this study declares that works stress is not something that should be avoided. At a certain level of work, stress is also required to challenge employees to improve their performances.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that the leadership of government organizations consider emotional intelligence and employee stress as essential aspects, in addition to work facilities and workplace comfort. However, this study saw that there were still other factors that were independent variables (30.70%) outside the variables of this study. Therefore, to complement these findings, it is suggested that further researchers have to add other relevant variables, such as individual factors and work situation factors.

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