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# The Influence of Human Capital Management on E-Government Service Reliability in Indonesian Public Institutions

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**Abstract**
*This study examines the influence of institutional trustworthiness and perceived information security on the reliability of e-government services, with strategic human capital alignment as a mediating variable. A quantitative survey was conducted among 150 government administrators managing digital services under the official 'go.id' domain. Using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), the results show that institutional trustworthiness significantly affects both human capital alignment and perceived service reliability, while perceived information security influences only internal alignment. However, the mediating effect of human capital alignment is not supported. These findings suggest that public trust in digital services is more influenced by institutional legitimacy than technical security or internal initiatives. The study highlights the need to align human capital development—such as training, procedural readiness, and national programs like the Digital Talent Scholarship—with strategic performance goals to enhance service credibility. Practical and theoretical implications are discussed for public sector digital governance.*

*Keywords— Human Capital Management; e-Government; Public Trust; Digital Talent; PLS-SEM*

**Abstrak**
Penelitian ini mengkaji pengaruh kredibilitas institusi dan persepsi keamanan informasi terhadap keandalan layanan e-government, dengan penyelarasan modal manusia strategis sebagai variabel mediasi. Survei kuantitatif dilakukan terhadap 150 pengelola layanan digital pemerintah yang menggunakan domain resmi 'go.id'. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), hasil menunjukkan bahwa kredibilitas institusi berpengaruh signifikan terhadap penyelarasan modal manusia maupun keandalan layanan, sementara persepsi keamanan informasi hanya berpengaruh terhadap penyelarasan internal. Namun, pengaruh mediasi dari penyelarasan modal manusia tidak didukung. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa kepercayaan publik terhadap layanan digital lebih dipengaruhi oleh legitimasi institusi dibandingkan faktor keamanan teknis atau inisiatif internal. Studi ini menekankan pentingnya menyelaraskan pengembangan SDM—seperti pelatihan, kesiapan prosedural, dan program nasional seperti Digital Talent Scholarship—dengan tujuan kinerja strategis untuk meningkatkan kredibilitas layanan. Implikasi praktis dan teoretis dibahas dalam konteks tata kelola digital sektor publik.

Kata kunci— Manajemen Modal Manusia; e-Government; Kepercayaan Publik; Talenta Digital; PLS-SEM

## I. INTRODUCTION

### *A. Background*

The rapid digital transformation in public administration has redefined how governments deliver services to citizens. In this context, the effectiveness and reliability of e-government services have become critical benchmarks of public trust and institutional legitimacy. As citizens increasingly interact with public institutions through digital platforms, the need for responsive, secure, and consistent service delivery has become more urgent than ever.

However, achieving reliable e-government services is not solely a matter of technological infrastructure. It also depends heavily on the competencies, commitment, and adaptability of civil servants who operate and manage these digital systems. This highlights the strategic importance of Human Capital Management (HCM) in

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the public sector. As argued by Ingham (2007), strategic HCM is not merely about staffing and training, but about aligning human resources with institutional goals to create sustainable public value.

In Indonesia, initiatives such as the Digital Talent Scholarship (DTS) by the Ministry of Communication and Digital reflect the government's commitment to developing digital competencies among civil servants. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these initiatives in improving service reliability remains underexplored. The link between HCM strategies and citizens' perceptions of e-government reliability requires deeper empirical investigation, especially in light of increasing digitalization and growing public expectations.

At the same time, public trust remains a crucial factor in the success of digital governance. According to Mayer et al. (1995), trust is built on perceptions of ability, integrity, and benevolence—attributes that are not only individual but institutional. Trust in digital public services is shaped by perceived institutional credibility and information security. Thus, effective HCM must be situated within broader institutional efforts to build trust through secure, professional, and citizen-centered service delivery.

While several studies have examined the relationship between technology adoption and service quality, fewer have focused on the mediating role of Strategic Human Capital Alignment (as essential part of HCM) the degree to which the skills, motivation, and goals of civil servants are aligned with the institutional mission. This alignment may be the key to transforming institutional credibility and information security into reliable digital services that are trusted and valued by citizens.

### *B. Research Question*

Despite increasing investment in digital infrastructure and talent development programs, many public institutions in Indonesia continue to face challenges in delivering consistent, trustworthy, and citizen-centered e-government services. While many studies have highlighted the importance of technological readiness, institutional trust, and system security, there remains a lack of empirical understanding about how these factors interact with internal human capital strategies to influence public perceptions of service reliability.

In particular, there is a research gap in identifying the role of strategic human capital alignment – the internal fit between employee competencies, institutional goals, and collaborative culture – in enhancing service outcomes. It is still unclear whether institutional trustworthiness and perceived information security can directly influence the perceived reliability of e-government services, or whether their impact depends on how effectively human capital is managed and aligned within the institution.

To address this gap, the study is guided by the following research questions:

a. Does institutional trustworthiness significantly influence the perceived reliability of e-government services?
b. Does perceived information security significantly influence the perceived reliability of e-government services?
c. Does strategic human capital alignment significantly influence the perceived reliability of e-government services?

These questions aim to explore the direct effects of institutional and security-related factors on service quality, as well as the strategic role of human capital in shaping the effectiveness of public digital services.

### *C. Scope and Limitations*

The study focuses on government institutions in Indonesia that utilize e-government platforms and are operating under the official domain ('go.id'). Data is collected from civil servants and public service administrators involved in digital service delivery. While the study emphasizes internal strategic alignment, it does not extensively explore external political or legal influences on digital transformation.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### *A. Strategic Human Capital Management in the Public Sector*

The evolution of Human Capital Management in the public sector has shifted from administrative to strategic functions, emphasizing talent alignment with institutional goals. According to Ingham (2007), strategic HCM focuses on building sustainable competitive advantage through the development of competencies, organizational alignment, and a learning culture.

Ingham delineates the HCM Value Triangle (as shown in Figure 1) to illustrate the progression of human resource practices through three tiers of value creation:

1. Personnel Management – delivers value for money by ensuring administrative efficiency and compliance in basic HR operations;
2. Human Resource Management – focuses on adding value through practices like competency development and performance management, enhancing current workforce effectiveness;
3. Human Capital Management – aims at creating value by aligning employee capabilities and motivations with strategic organizational goals, transforming staff into intangible assets that drive long-term success.

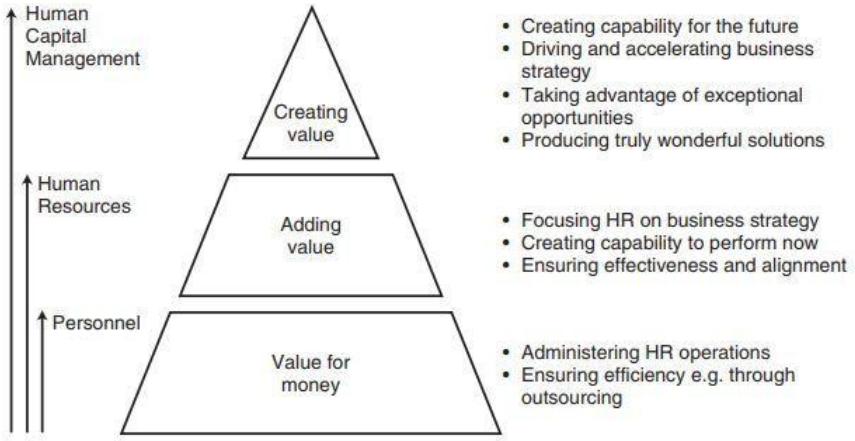


**Figure 1.** The HCM Value Triangle
Source: Ingham, J. (2007)

In the context of government institutions, Syarifuddin (2023) found that HCM significantly influences both competency development and employee performance among civil servants (ASN). Hernawati et al. (2023) further demonstrated that human capital benchmarking and structured talent management positively affect public service performance, especially when mediated by employee performance.

The integration of digital systems into talent management also plays a crucial role. Fauzian et al. (2024), through a case study of West Java Provincial Government, revealed that digital-based talent management supports meritocracy and transparency by enabling measurable, objective assessment of civil servant competencies. This aligns with Atay et al. (2025), who emphasize the importance of human-centered and digital-oriented HR strategies in the era of Society 5.0 to foster sustainability, innovation, and agility in public service delivery.

*B. Trust in E-Government Services*

Trust is a critical determinant of user acceptance and satisfaction in e-government systems. Based on the Trust Theory by Mayer et al. (1995), trust is shaped by perceptions of ability, integrity, and benevolence of the service provider. In the context of digital government, Hooda et al. (2023) conducted a meta-analysis showing that information quality, system quality, and user satisfaction significantly affect citizens' trust in e-government platforms. Moreover, this trust mediates users' future behavioral intentions to continue using digital public services.

Smith (2010) proposed that citizens form trust judgments through visible trustworthiness cues such as service responsiveness, data protection, and transparent communication. These cues are particularly impactful when aligned with citizens' values. Similarly, Nookhao & Kiattisin (2023) found that trust in government is the most significant factor influencing Thai citizens' behavioral intention to use e-government services, mediating the relationship between perceived privacy and security.

*C. Brand Identity and Public Trust in Government Institutions*

Brand Identity Theory (Aaker, 1996) posits that a strong, consistent identity enhances public recognition and trust. In digital governance, institutional domains (such as 'go.id' in Indonesia) and consistent communication play a critical role in shaping perceptions of credibility and professionalism. Sensuse et al. (2015) argued that organizational culture in public institutions—particularly hierarchical and clan cultures—affects knowledge

management and brand perception. This indicates that HCM is not only a tool for internal performance enhancement but also for building external legitimacy and public trust.

Public trust also stems from perceived value creation through digital services. Luna et al. (2024) found that citizens associate the value of digital services with direct personal benefits and broader societal impacts such as government accountability and transparency. These perceptions are inherently linked to the quality of service delivery and the professionalism of civil servants, reinforcing the importance of talent development in enhancing institutional image.

*D. Strategic Public Marketing in the Digital Era*

Strategic Public Marketing, as introduced by Kotler and Lee (2007), emphasizes a citizen-oriented approach to service delivery, where policies and programs are designed based on the needs, preferences, and values of citizens. In this context, Giroth et al. (2023) argue that investment in local human capital is essential for regional development in the digital age. Likewise, Bhagavathula et al. (2021) showed that competency-based capacity building fosters cross-sector collaboration and resilience in local government.

In alignment with this, Zaborovskaia et al. (2020) highlight that digital transformation policies must be accompanied by human capital development initiatives to ensure inclusive and equitable public services. The role of public servants, therefore, transcends administrative duties and includes functions as digital facilitators, community liaisons, and institutional ambassadors—roles that require continuous competency upgrading.

*E. DTS Program as A Strategic HCM Initiative*

Within the strategic framework of HCM, the Indonesian government launched the DTS program (Kemkomdigi, 2025) to support digital transformation across the public sector. DTS aims to develop ICT-related competencies across various population segments, with a special focus on Aparatur Sipil Negara (ASN) through the Government Transformation Academy (GTA). This initiative is part of a broader human capital alignment strategy, ensuring that civil servants are equipped with relevant skills to support reliable, secure, and citizen-oriented e-government services.

The program offers several strategic advantages that make it widely accessible and impactful: it is fully funded by the government and provided free of charge, delivered through a hybrid format (online and offline) to reach participants across regions, and designed in collaboration with leading technology companies such as Google, Microsoft, Amazon Web Services (AWS), and Alibaba. These features position DTS as an inclusive and scalable initiative.

As of May 2025, the program has engaged 29,464 participants, produced 19,617 graduates (67% completion rate), and registered over 642,718 users on its platform. Specifically for the GTA program, 5,040 participants have attended the training. A national impact survey by ministry (BPSDM Kominfo, 2023) showed that 25% of alumni gained employment, and 64.2% reported increased income, especially among those earning recognized digital certifications. For ASN, DTS directly contributes to professional development, role advancement, and stronger service delivery capabilities.

Through its strategic implementation, DTS advances both the competence of civil servants and the credibility of government-led digital initiatives. In line with Trust Theory, the program builds public confidence through quality, transparency, and measurable outcomes. At the same time, it supports Brand Identity Theory by reinforcing the government's image as a credible facilitator of national digital talent. For Indonesia’s public institutions, DTS exemplifies a high-impact HCM initiative—one that integrates training, technology, and trust to drive institutional transformation in the digital age.

*F. Literature Synthesis and Research Gap*

Previous studies consistently show that HCM positively affects organizational performance, competency development, and public service outcomes. However, few studies have empirically tested the mediating role of strategic human capital alignment between institutional trust and information security (as antecedents) and perceived e-government service reliability (as outcome). This study addresses that gap by integrating four core theoretical perspectives:

- Trust Theory: explains the antecedents of public trust in digital services;
- Strategic HCM Theory: explains how HCM alignment enhances performance;
- Brand Identity Theory: supports the role of institutional image in trust-building;
- Strategic Public Marketing: frames the citizen-oriented value proposition.

This study posits that the perceived trustworthiness and security of a government institution (X1, X2) enhance internal alignment of talent (M), which subsequently improves the reliability of digital public services (Y) as perceived by the public. Table 1 summarizes each of these variables.

**Table 1.** Theoretical and Empirical Synthesis

| Variable | Conceptual Definition | Theory | Empirical Support |
|---|---|---|---|
| X1: Institutional Trustworthiness | The perceived credibility, legitimacy, and public-oriented reputation of government institutions. | Trust Theory | Hooda et al. (2023); Smith (2010); Nookhao & Kiattisin (2023) |
| X2: Perceived Information Security | Citizens' perception of data protection, digital transparency, and risk mitigation in e-government systems. | Trust Theory; Strategic Public Marketing | Khan et al. (2024); Luna et al. (2024); Zaborovskaia et al. (2020) |
| M: Strategic Human Capital Alignment | The extent to which civil servants' skills, motivations, and goals are aligned with the institution's strategic objectives. | Strategic HCM Theory | Syarifuddin (2023); Fauzian et al. (2024); Hernawati et al. (2023); Masyhuri et al. (2024) |
| Y: Perceived E-Government Service Reliability | The public's perception of the stability, professionalism, and dependability of digital public services. | Brand Identity Theory; Trust Theory | Luna et al. (2024); Sensuse et al. (2015); Giroth et al. (2023); Nookhao (2023) |

*G. Research Hypotheses*

Based on relevant theories and prior empirical findings, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: Institutional trustworthiness has a positive and significant effect on the perceived reliability of e-government services;
- H2: Perceived information security has a positive and significant effect on the perceived reliability of e-government services;
- H3: Institutional trustworthiness has a positive and significant effect on the strategic human capital alignment;
- H4: Perceived information security has a positive and significant effect on the strategic human capital alignment;
- H5: Strategic human capital alignment has a positive and significant effect on the perceived reliability of e-government services.

Table 2 outlines the paths of each hypothesis, the related variables, and the main indicators that represent each construct in the model.

**Table 2.** Summary of Hypotheses, Variables, and Indicators

| Hypothesis | Variable | Indicators |
|---|---|---|
| H1: X1 → Y | Institutional Trustworthiness (X1) | X1.1: Perceived legitimacy<br>X1.2: Public service orientation<br>X1.3: Institutional reputation |
| H2: X2 → Y | Perceived Information Security (X2) | X2.1: Data protection<br>X2.2: Cyber risk management |
| H3 : X1 → M | - | - |
| H4 : X2 → M | - | - |
| H5: M → Y | Strategic Human Capital Alignment (M) | M1.1: Competency development<br>M1.2: Alignment with institutional goals<br>M1.3: Internal collaboration |
| - | E-Government Service Reliability (Y) | Y1.1: Service consistency<br>Y1.2: User trust in digital services |

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A purposive sampling technique was applied to select the right respondents from ministries, agencies, and local governments who manage digital services using official domain 'go.id'. Data was collected on May 22-27,

2025, during a discussion forum on the topic of cybersecurity and domain utilization with a total of 600 participants. From 155 responses received, 5 were excluded for being unrelated to ICT-based service management, leaving 150 valid responses. Of these, 75% were civil servants (PNS), 7% were government employees under contract (PPPK), and 17% had other employment statuses.

The measurement technique used in the questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale (from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) to assess respondents' perceptions and evaluations of each statement. The collected data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the SmartPLS 4.0 software. PLS-SEM is suitable for testing complex models with multiple constructs and mediating effects.

The model was evaluated in two stages: (1) measurement model assessment (reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity), and (2) structural model assessment (path coefficients, R-square, and hypothesis testing).

## IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *A. Measurement Model Evaluation*

The measurement model was evaluated using three key criteria: internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and construct reliability. These were assessed through Cronbach's Alpha (CA), Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), following the guidelines of Hair et al. (2019) and Fornell & Larcker (1981):

- CA values above 0.70 indicate acceptable internal consistency;
- CR values above 0.70 reflect sufficient construct reliability;
- AVE values above 0.50 demonstrate adequate convergent validity, meaning that the construct explains more than half of the variance of its indicators.

Based on these thresholds, all constructs in this study demonstrate adequate reliability and convergent validity, indicating that the measurement items accurately reflect the latent variables. The summary of the measurement model evaluation is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Reliability and Validity of Constructs

| Construct | CA | CR | AVE | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| X1 | 0.862 | 0.864 | 0.551 | Reliable and valid – meets all thresholds |
| X2 | 0.773 | 0.792 | 0.600 | Reliable and valid – good internal consistency and strong convergent validity |
| M | 0.823 | 0.845 | 0.528 | Reliable and valid – acceptable AVE and CR |
| Y | 0.858 | 0.860 | 0.778 | Highly reliable and valid – very strong convergent validity (AVE > 0.70) |

### *B. Structural Model Evaluation*

The structural model was evaluated based on path coefficients, t-statistics, p-values, and R-squared values. According to Hair et al., a path is considered significant if the t-statistic exceeds 1.96 for a 95% confidence level ($p < 0.05$). Result from path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values are summarized in the Table 4. The tested path model is shown in Figure 2.

**Table 4.** Summary of Structural Model Evaluation

| Path | Coefficient (β) | T-Statistic | P-Value | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| X1 → M | 0.406 | 6.147 | 0.000 | Significant |
| X2 → M | 0.537 | 8.975 | 0.000 | Significant |
| X1 → Y | 0.781 | 17.658 | 0.000 | Significant |
| X2 → Y | -0.006 | 0.578 | 0.563 | Not significant |
| M → Y | 0.070 | 0.732 | 0.464 | Not significant |

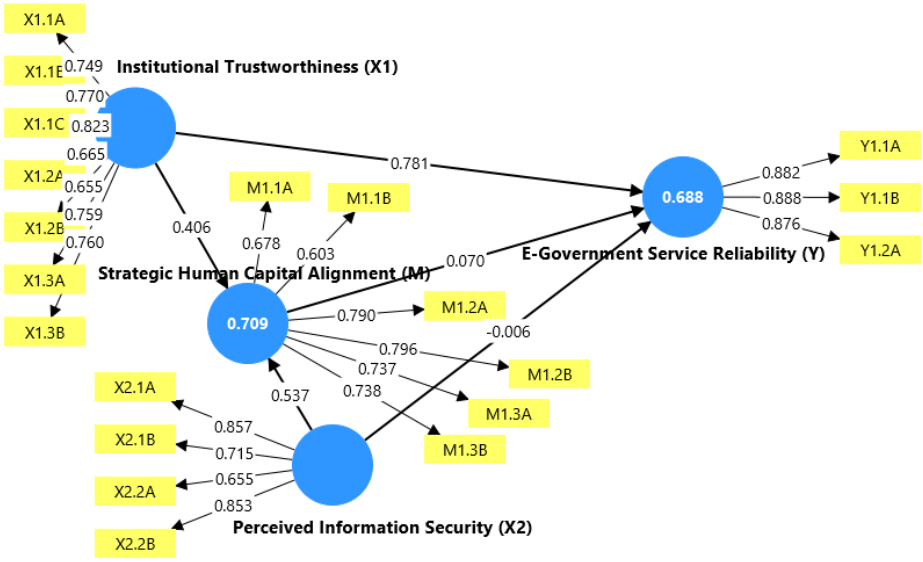


**Figure 2.** Path analysis of the model with variable X1, X2, M, and Y
Source: SmartPLS 4 (2025)

In addition to path analysis, the model's predictive power was assessed using R-squared ($R^2$) values. According to Hair et al., an $R^2$ value of 0.75 is considered substantial, 0.50 is moderate, and 0.25 is weak. $R^2$ value for the M construct is 0.709, suggesting that X1 and X2 together explain 70.9% of the variance in M. Meanwhile, the $R^2$ value for Y is 0.688, indicating that X1, X2, and M together explain 68.8% of the variance in Y. This can be interpreted as moderate to strong predictive power, supporting the relevance of the selected model in explaining how institutional and information security factors, along with strategic human capital alignment, contribute to perceived reliability in digital government services.

*C. Hypothesis Testing*

Hypothesis testing was carried out by analyzing the path coefficients (β), t-statistics, and p-values, using bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples. Paths were considered statistically significant at $p < 0.05$ and $t > 1.96$. The results are summarized in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

| Hyp. | Statement | Result | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| H1 | Institutional Trustworthiness has a positive effect on Service Reliability | Supported | Higher trust leads to better service reliability. |
| H2 | Perceived Information Security has a positive effect on Service Reliability | Not Supported | Users do not perceive direct impact. |
| H3 | Institutional Trustworthiness positively influences Human Capital Alignment | Supported | Trusted institutions support internal alignment. |
| H4 | Perceived Information Security positively influences HC Alignment | Supported | Secure systems support strategic alignment. |
| H5 | Human Capital Alignment positively affects Service Reliability | Not Supported | Alignment efforts don't translate into perceived reliability. |

These results confirm that Institutional Trustworthiness has a significant direct effect on E-Government Service Reliability (Y), supporting H1. However, Perceived Information Security does not significantly affect Y (H2), and Human Capital Alignment does not significantly mediate the relationship to Y (H5). Overall, the model highlights the dominant role of institutional trust in shaping public perceptions of reliable government digital services, while also underscoring the organizational value of human capital alignment.

### *D. Discussion*

The structural model results highlight the dominant role of Institutional Trustworthiness (X1) in influencing both Strategic Human Capital Alignment (M) and Perceived E-Government Service Reliability (Y). This finding supports Trust Theory and Brand Identity Theory, emphasizing that when public institutions are perceived as legitimate, credible, and citizen-oriented, they are more likely to align their internal strategies effectively and gain greater trust in digital public services. The significant direct path from X1 to Y ($\beta = 0.810$; $p < 0.001$) further reinforces the foundational role of institutional reputation in shaping external service credibility.

In contrast, Perceived Information Security (X2) demonstrates a strong effect on internal alignment ($\beta = 0.537$; $p < 0.001$), but it does not have a significant direct impact on perceived service reliability ($\beta = 0.032$; $p = 0.563$). This suggests that although cybersecurity practices may be in place, they are not yet fully perceived as impactful by service users. According to Strategic Public Marketing Theory (Kotler & Lee, 2007), technical improvements alone are insufficient unless they are clearly communicated and visibly integrated into the citizen experience.

This interpretation is substantiated by item-level analysis. In item X2.2A, “Our institution has not experienced hacking, negative content injection, or data breaches in the past year,” more than half of respondents—77 out of 150 (51.3%)—disagreed or strongly disagreed. This reflects widespread skepticism about the effectiveness or transparency of information security practices. Such perceptions may stem from actual incidents, lack of incident disclosure, or insufficient communication between IT teams and leadership. Consequently, even when technical protections are implemented, low perceived security can undermine public trust.

Conversely, item M1.1A, “Employees regularly receive training on data protection and cybersecurity,” received moderately favorable responses. A total of 60 respondents (40%) agreed or strongly agreed, while 51 (34%) responded neutrally. This suggests that training programs are present in many institutions, though possibly inconsistent or perceived as insufficiently comprehensive. This supports the idea that human capital development is occurring, but its influence on service outcomes may be limited unless systematically evaluated and aligned with institutional goals.

Further support for internal preparedness appears in item M1.3A, “Our institution has a clear team and procedures to mitigate cyberattacks.” Here, 52% of respondents (78 individuals) agreed or strongly agreed, reflecting a recognition of formal structures and procedures for cybersecurity mitigation. However, the positive perception of internal capacity does not seem to translate into improved perceptions of external service reliability, as the path from M to Y ($\beta = 0.070$; $p = 0.464$) is statistically insignificant. This highlights a disconnect between internal initiatives and public-facing outcomes.

In summary, while internal efforts such as cybersecurity training and mitigation procedures are increasingly implemented, their impact on public trust remains limited. According to Ingham (2007), effective HCM must be strategically aligned with institutional goals, focusing on long-term competency development and organizational value creation. However, current practices are often reactive, inconsistent, and disconnected from performance indicators. This weakens the potential of HCM to drive perceived service reliability. To close this gap, public institutions must adopt proactive, integrated, and performance-linked HCM frameworks, as Ingham suggests. Moreover, public trust requires not only internal capacity but also visible and measurable improvements in digital service quality. The findings reaffirm that institutional trustworthiness is the most influential factor, and enhancing it depends on the strategic execution and transparency of human capital initiatives.

## V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

### *A. Conclusion*

This study demonstrates that institutional trustworthiness is the most decisive factor influencing the perceived reliability of e-government services. While perceived information security significantly improves internal strategic alignment, it does not directly influence public trust unless accompanied by a credible institutional image. Moreover, the lack of a significant mediating effect of Strategic Human Capital Alignment suggests a disconnection between internal development efforts and users' perceptions of service reliability.

This gap underscores a critical issue in public sector Human Capital Management. Although institutions are adopting security protocols and offering basic digital literacy training, such efforts often remain reactive, fragmented, and procedural in nature. To enhance digital service reliability and trust, HCM must evolve into a strategically aligned function, linking workforce capabilities directly with service performance and citizen outcomes. Competency development must be institutionalized, not simply technical or compliance-based.

In this regard, initiatives like the DTS present a strategic avenue to bridge capacity gaps. However, for programs like DTS to produce real impact, institutions must ensure they are embedded into broader human capital development frameworks, including performance evaluation, succession planning, and knowledge management. Strategic HCM, when integrated with digital transformation objectives, can become a long-term driver of trustworthy, resilient, and citizen-centered digital services.

*B. Implication*

Theoretical implications of this study include extending the discourse on trust in e-government by emphasizing the role of strategic HCM as an enabler of perceived reliability, particularly when aligned with institutional goals and public value creation. It supports the argument made by Ingham (2007) that HCM must go beyond training and align with organizational strategy to create sustainable impact.

Managerial implications suggest that government agencies should redesign their HCM frameworks by embedding digital competency building, cybersecurity readiness, and procedural improvements into their core performance systems. This involves not only training but also restructuring institutional culture, leadership accountability, and cross-functional coordination.

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