

THE EFFECT OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT ON PERFORMANCE WITH MOTIVATION AS A MEDIATION VARIABLE

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Abstract. This research aims to investigate the impact of career development on employee performance, with motivation as a connecting variable. The population in this research was 74 respondents who were lecturers in an organization. The data analysis method used was Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach version 4.0. The findings of the research indicate that career development has a positive and significant impact on employee performance. Furthermore, career development has also been shown to have a positive impact on motivation, and motivation itself has a positive influence on performance. Further findings indicate that motivation significantly links career development to performance, meaning that the better the career development opportunities provided by the organization, the higher the motivation that arises, thus influencing improved employee performance. This research emphasizes the importance for organizations to focus on career development programs as a way to improve both employee motivation and performance.

Keywords: Career Development, Motivation, Performance

1. Introduction

In today's digital age, increasing job demands are unavoidable. This requires agencies to improve their performance. Not all employees hired possess the skills and knowledge necessary to meet these demands, so it's crucial for them to undergo prior training to effectively carry out their duties and responsibilities. This training also serves to develop employees' abilities in their respective fields.

According to Yuli (2005), development is a long-term educational process using structured methods, in which employees acquire conceptual and theoretical knowledge to achieve broader goals. Currently, employees are highly concerned about their position and career path within the organization, and whether they can progress; this is a crucial factor in improving performance. Through career development, agencies must plan the steps necessary to ensure employee development throughout their employment.

Two factors influence work performance: ability and motivation. For this process to run smoothly, agencies must provide encouragement to employees. McCormick (2015) states that employee work motivation can emerge naturally or require encouragement from leaders or managers. Career development programs can increase motivation by creating hope for career advancement and boosting self-confidence, which in turn encourages employees to perform better. Career development within an organization can boost employee motivation, help them achieve success, and make significant contributions to the organization.

Achieving agency goals also means achieving the personal goals of each employee. This demonstrates that without employee support in carrying out their duties, the institution's success will be impossible, and employee contributions significantly impact organizational progress. With high performance, the agency is expected to be able to compete with its competitors, thereby maintaining and competing in its field. Agency success is determined by

the quality of employee work, and employee performance is a measure of the quantity and quality of contributions made by individuals or teams within the organization.

Therefore, to achieve agency goals, employees are needed, who are considered valuable assets. With employee support in carrying out their work, the agency is expected to maximize the achievement of its goals. To achieve organizational goals, it is crucial to implement career development and provide consistent motivation to continuously improve performance and be able to compete in today's technological era.

2. Literature Review

Performance

Performance in English is also called job performance or actual performance, which is the level of success of an employee in completing his work. Performance is not an individual characteristic, such as talent or ability, but rather a manifestation of that talent or ability itself. Performance is the result of work and work behaviour that has been achieved in completing tasks and responsibilities given in a certain period. Performance is a function of motivation and ability. To complete a task or work, a person should have a certain degree of willingness and level of ability. Kasmir (2015: 182) states that individual performance is the basis of organizational performance which is greatly influenced by individual characteristics, individual motivation, expectations, and assessments made by management regarding the achievement of individual work results. The performance indicators according to Mangkunegara (2013) are as follows: (a). Quality. (b). Quantity. (c). Responsibility. (d). Initiative. (e) Cooperation

Career Development

Career development is crucial for an organization or company, as it is a need that must be developed within an employee to motivate them to improve their performance. Hadiwijaya (2016) states that career development is a formal company measure to ensure that individuals with the best skills and knowledge are available at a given time. Meanwhile, Kasmir (2015) states that "if employees receive good training and smooth career development, their performance will improve." Therefore, career development can be interpreted as a formal measure used by companies and individuals to improve their skills and knowledge to achieve a planned career through promotional opportunities. Career development is a condition that indicates an increase in an individual's status within an organization. According to Werther and Davis (1996), the indicators of career development are as follows: (a) Career planning; (b) Career path; (c) Training and development programs.

H1. Career development has a positive influence on performance.

H2. Career development has a positive influence on motivation.

Motivation

According to Sardiman A.M. (2011:73), motivation is the driving force that drives a person to do something to achieve a specific goal. Meanwhile, according to Uno (2007:1), motivation is an internal and external drive within a person, indicated by desires and interests, drives and needs, hopes and aspirations, appreciation and respect. Therefore, from the opinions above, it can be concluded that motivation arises from within a person to achieve a specific goal and can also be driven by encouragement from others. However, good motivation is motivation that arises from within the individual without coercion. According to Uno (2008), the indicators of

motivation are as follows: (a) Desire and desire to succeed; (b) Drive and need to learn; (c) Future hopes and aspirations.

H3. Motivation has a positive influence on performance.

H4. Motivation mediates the influence of career development on performance.

Conceptual framework

In summary, the conceptual framework in this research can be structured as follows:

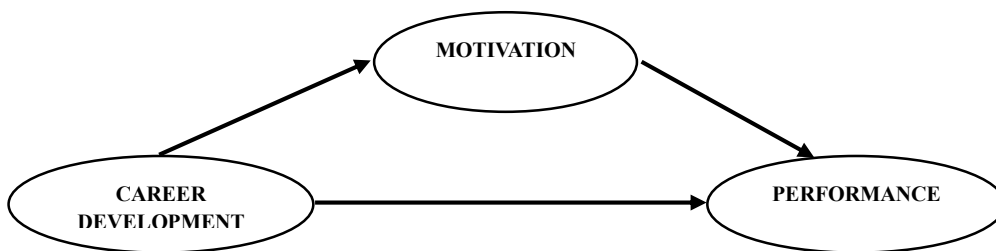


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

3. Method

This research uses a quantitative approach, specifically quantitative causality. The population of this research was all 74 lecturers working at the AMI Makassar Maritime Polytechnic (POLIMARIM). The sampling technique used in this research was non-probability sampling. Total sampling is used for sampling. This is done when the population is relatively small, so the entire population is used for the sample. This research was conducted at the AMI Makassar Maritime Polytechnic (POLIMARIM).

The data used in this research are primary data, obtained directly from the research subjects. The data collection procedure used in this research was a questionnaire. The measurement technique for questionnaire responses can be measured using a Likert scale.

This research used SmartPLS software version 4.0. PLS (Partial Least Squares) is a variance-based structural equation analysis (SEM) that can simultaneously test measurement models and structural models. The measurement model is used to test validity and reliability, while the structural model is used to test causality (hypothesis testing with a prediction model).

4. Result and Discussion

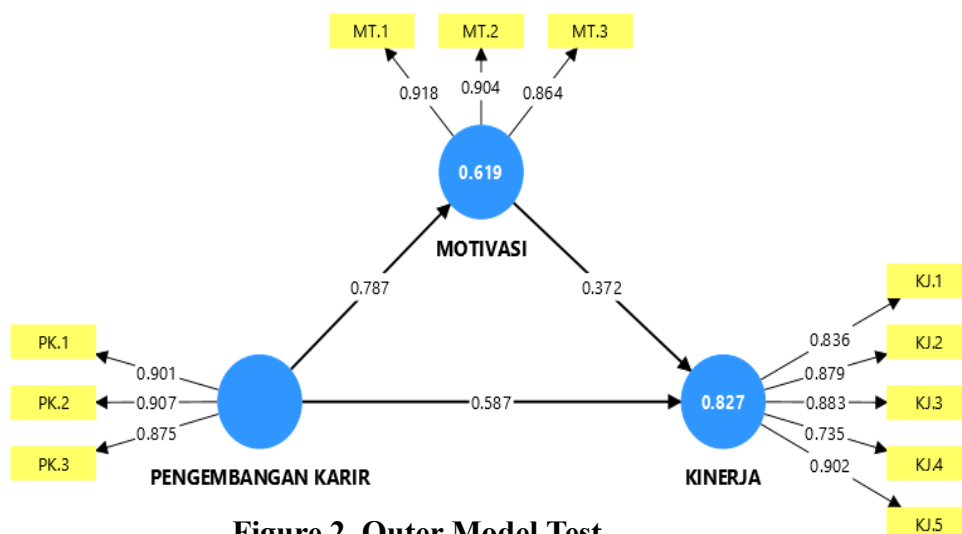


Figure 2. Outer Model Test

The following are the results of the convergent validity test in this research, namely:

Table 1. Convergent Validity Test

	PERFORMANCE	MOTIVATION	CAREER DEVELOPMENT
KJ.1	0.836		
KJ.2	0.879		
KJ.3	0.883		
KJ.4	0.735		
KJ.5	0.902		
MT.1		0.918	
MT.2		0.904	
MT.3		0.864	
PK.1			0.901
PK.2			0.907
PK.3			0.875

Source: Data Processed, 2025

Based on the results of the tests carried out, it shows that the indicators of the Performance, Motivation and Career Development variables have all met the Loading Factor ≥ 0.7 requirement, so that the data in this research can be declared valid.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity Test

	PERFORMANCE	MOTIVATION	CAREER DEVELOPMENT
KJ.1	0.836	0.724	0.780
KJ.2	0.879	0.744	0.772
KJ.3	0.883	0.767	0.757
KJ.4	0.735	0.471	0.617
KJ.5	0.902	0.786	0.791
MT.1	0.791	0.918	0.711
MT.2	0.748	0.904	0.751
MT.3	0.698	0.864	0.648
PK.1	0.857	0.744	0.901
PK.2	0.744	0.654	0.907
PK.3	0.750	0.706	0.875

Source: Data Processed, 2025

The cross-loading results show that the correlation value of the construct with its indicators is greater than the correlation value with other constructs. Thus, all constructs or latent variables have good discriminant validity, where the indicators in the construct indicator block are better than the indicators in other blocks. Discriminant validity testing is measured by comparing the AVE (Average Variance Extracted) value of each construct with the correlation between other constructs in the model. The criteria for the AVE value to be declared acceptable and valid is ≥ 0.5 .

The reliability test measurement in this research used the criteria of Cronbach's Alpha value ≥ 0.6 , which was declared reliable. If the Cronbach's Alpha value < 0.6 , it was declared unreliable. The following are the results of the reliability test:

Table 3. Reliability Test

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
PERFORMANCE	0.902	0.912	0.928	0.721
MOTIVATION	0.876	0.880	0.924	0.802
CAREER DEVELOPMENT	0.875	0.878	0.923	0.799

Source: Data Processed, 2025

Based on the table above, each variable has a Cronbach alpha value of ≥ 0.6 , indicating that the variables used in this research are reliable. Therefore, it can be concluded that the entire construct meets the reliability requirements, both according to Cronbach's alpha criteria.

R-Square (R²) can indicate the strength or weakness of a research model. The R-Square value criteria are said to be weak if the R-Square value is $\geq 0.25 \times < 0.5$, and the R-Square value criteria are said to be moderate if the R-Square value is $\geq 0.5 \times < 0.75$, and the R-Square criterion value is said to be strong if the R-Square value is ≥ 0.75 . The following are the results:

Table 4. R-Square

	R-square	R-square adjusted
PERFORMANCE	0.827	0.822
MOTIVATION	0.619	0.614

After testing with SmartPLS, it was found that Performance (KJ) had an R-Square value of 0.827 which was included in the "strong" category with a value range of ≥ 0.75 , so it was said that the ability of the Career Development (PK) and Motivation (MT) variables in explaining the Performance (KJ) variable was quite strong at 82.7%, while the remaining 17.3% was the influence of other independent variables not measured in this research. While Motivation (MT) had an R-Square value of 0.619 which was included in the "Moderate" category with a value range of $\geq 0.5 \times < 0.75$, which meant that Career Development (PK) was able to explain its relationship with Performance (KJ) by 61.9%. The hypothesis test in this research used a t-test with a significance level of > 1.96 and a P-Value of $0.000 < \alpha = 0.05$ (5%).

Table 5. Path Coefficients

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV V)	P values
MOTIVATION -> PERFORMANCE	0.372	0.371	0.077	4.802	0.000
CAREER DEVELOPMENT -> PERFORMANCE	0.587	0.589	0.071	8.250	0.000
CAREER DEVELOPMENT -> MOTIVATION	0.787	0.790	0.034	23.303	0.000

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
CAREER DEVELOPMENT -> MOTIVATION -> PERFORMANCE	0.293	0.293	0.061	4.776	0.000

The research findings indicate that career advancement positively impacts employee performance. This means that the more opportunities employees have to advance their careers through training, promotions, or clear career plans, the higher their motivation and work performance will be. This finding aligns with the views expressed by Rivai and Sagala (2013), who stated that career advancement encourages employees to improve their skills and achieve better work results. Simamora (2006) also emphasized that planned career development fosters satisfaction, loyalty, and work enthusiasm, ultimately contributing to improved performance both individually and organizationally. In conclusion, career development impacts performance from various perspectives, including theoretical and contextual perspectives, as well as its relevance and application in management. Career advancement is crucial for preparing the workforce for global competition, and enhancing competencies in line with job requirements is essential for organizational advancement, which must be supported by the active participation of all employees.

The research results show that career development has a positive influence on employee motivation. This means that the better the career development opportunities provided by the organization, the higher the motivation felt by employees in carrying out their duties. According to Rivai and Sagala (2013), career development can increase self-confidence, job satisfaction, and individual motivation to achieve better performance. Robbins and Judge (2017) also emphasized that career development opportunities provide a sense of security, clarity of the future, and encourage employees to contribute more to the organization. This finding is consistent with Simamora's (2006) opinion, which states that employee motivation will increase when they perceive a clear career path and opportunities for future growth. Thus, it can be concluded that career development and motivation simultaneously complement each other in creating a productive environment. This shows that providing career development increases employee motivation. Providing career development not only benefits employees but also brings significant benefits to the organization in terms of employee skills and productivity.

Research results indicate that motivation has a positive impact on employee performance. This means that the higher an individual's motivation, the stronger their desire to optimally achieve work targets. Robbins and Judge (2017) state that motivation is a psychological force that directs, regulates the intensity, and maintains individual behavior in a work context. With strong motivation, employees will be more driven to complete their tasks more effectively and efficiently. This aligns with Maslow's (1943) theory of needs, which states that motivation arises from needs that need to be met, ranging from basic needs to self-achievement, which in turn improves performance. Herzberg (1959) in his two-factor theory also emphasized that motivating elements such as recognition, achievement, and opportunities for development play a crucial role in increasing work enthusiasm and productivity. In line with research by Larasati and Suhermin (2021), motivation significantly influences employee performance, with motivation being a crucial element in influencing the work enthusiasm of all employees, encouraging them to perform and complete work quickly, which can improve employee performance more optimally.

Therefore, motivation is one of the important elements that influences organizational success, because motivated employees tend to show more dedication, take initiative, and are able to achieve better work results.

The research findings indicate that motivation serves as a mediator in the relationship between career development and employee performance. This means that if an organization offers clear career development opportunities, such as training, promotions, and career planning, this can strengthen employee work motivation. Furthermore, high levels of motivation encourage employees to work better, which ultimately improves their performance. This finding aligns with Robbins and Judge's (2017) findings, which state that motivation is a key factor influencing how hard, in what direction, and for how long employees work. Herzberg (1959), through his two-factor theory, also emphasized that internal factors such as recognition, achievement, and opportunities for growth are powerful sources of motivation for increasing productivity. The motivation felt by employees drives them to improve an organization's performance. Employees need to actively develop new skills to demonstrate improved performance. This means that work motivation can act as a link between career development and employee performance.

5. Conclusions

The research results show that career advancement has a positive impact on employee performance. The clearer the career path, training, and promotion opportunities provided by the organization, the better the results achieved by employees. Furthermore, career development has also been shown to increase work enthusiasm by providing a sense of confidence, satisfaction, and clarity about the future.

It can be concluded that career advancement and employee motivation mutually support each other in creating a productive work environment. Implementing career development programs not only benefits individual employees but also significantly benefits the organization through improved skills and productivity.

This research also shows that motivation has a significant impact on performance. Highly motivated employees tend to be more enthusiastic about working more effectively and efficiently and focused on achieving goals. This aligns with Maslow's theory of needs and Herzberg's two-factor theory, which emphasize the importance of motivation as a driver of productivity.

This research demonstrates that motivation serves as a mediator in the relationship between career advancement and performance. This means that career development not only directly influences performance but also indirectly through increased employee motivation. Therefore, organizations must pay attention to career development programs and motivational strategies so that employee performance and organizational effectiveness can be maximized

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