

Career Development Strategy and Work Motivation in Improving Employee Performance through Organizational Commitment

Career Development
Strategy and Work
Motivation

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the influence of career development strategies and work motivation on employee performance, with organizational commitment serving as a mediating variable. A quantitative approach was employed, involving a population of 500 employees from a state-owned public transportation company. Data were collected from 100 selected respondents using a questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability. The analysis was conducted using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method. The results showed that career development strategies had a significant positive effect on employee performance, with a coefficient of 0.45, and on organizational commitment, with a coefficient of 0.50. Work motivation also positively influenced performance (coefficient 0.38) and organizational commitment (coefficient 0.42). Furthermore, organizational commitment was found to significantly mediate the influence of career development strategies on performance (coefficient 0.30) and the effect of work motivation on performance (coefficient 0.25). These findings indicate that enhancing career development strategies and work motivation can lead to improved employee performance, particularly through the strengthening of organizational commitment. This study also reinforces previous research highlighting the importance of career development programs and employee motivation in improving performance and fostering employee loyalty to the organization.

Keywords: Career Development, Work Motivation, Employee Performance, Organizational Commitment.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji pengaruh strategi pengembangan karir dan motivasi kerja terhadap kinerja pegawai, dengan komitmen organisasional sebagai variabel mediasi. Pendekatan kuantitatif digunakan dalam penelitian ini, dengan populasi sebanyak 500 pegawai dari perusahaan transportasi umum milik negara. Data dikumpulkan dari 100 responden melalui kuesioner yang telah diuji validitas dan reliabilitasnya. Analisis dilakukan menggunakan metode Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa strategi pengembangan karir memberikan pengaruh positif signifikan terhadap kinerja pegawai dengan koefisien 0,45, serta terhadap komitmen organisasional sebesar 0,50. Motivasi kerja juga terbukti berpengaruh positif terhadap kinerja (koefisien 0,38) dan komitmen organisasional (koefisien 0,42). Selain itu, komitmen organisasional terbukti memediasi secara signifikan pengaruh strategi pengembangan karir terhadap kinerja dengan koefisien 0,30, dan pengaruh motivasi kerja terhadap kinerja dengan koefisien 0,25. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa peningkatan strategi pengembangan karir dan motivasi kerja dapat mendorong kinerja pegawai yang lebih baik, terutama melalui penguatan komitmen terhadap organisasi. Penelitian ini juga memperkuat hasil studi sebelumnya yang menyoroti pentingnya pengembangan karir dan motivasi kerja dalam meningkatkan kinerja serta loyalitas pegawai terhadap organisasi.

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INTRODUCTION

The public transportation sector is a key pillar of a nation's economy. In Indonesia, state-owned public transportation companies are essential in providing efficient, safe, and affordable mobility for the public. However, achieving optimal performance in this sector requires more than just adequate infrastructure—it also depends on qualified and motivated human resources. Career development strategies and work motivation are therefore crucial in enhancing employee performance, particularly through the reinforcement of organizational commitment. Employee performance in this sector is shaped by both internal and external factors. Among the internal influences, career development and work motivation are particularly significant. Career development offers employees opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge, enabling them to respond effectively to changing and increasingly complex work demands. Robbins & Judge (2019) emphasize that well-structured career development contributes to improved performance by fostering a sense of accomplishment and job satisfaction. Work motivation also plays a central role in determining employee productivity. Motivated employees are generally more innovative, productive, and loyal to the organization. Deci & Ryan (2012) found that strong intrinsic motivation drives individuals to exert greater effort and attain higher performance. This intrinsic drive emerges when employees perceive their work as meaningful and personally rewarding, further strengthening their commitment to the organization.

However, career development and work motivation alone will not yield optimal results without strong organizational commitment. Organizational commitment reflects an employee's loyalty and emotional attachment to the company. Employees with high organizational commitment are more likely to be self-motivated to contribute and remain with the company, thereby enhancing overall performance (Meyer & Allen, 1997). In state-owned public transportation companies, this commitment is crucial in maintaining operational stability amid external pressures such as regulatory shifts, industry competition, and public scrutiny. These companies also face unique challenges in fostering career growth and motivation. The repetitive nature of tasks, physically demanding work, and limited promotion opportunities can lead to reduced employee enthusiasm. Therefore, companies must implement adaptive, flexible career development strategies and cultivate a work environment that prioritizes employee engagement and well-being. This study seeks to identify effective career development and motivation strategies to enhance employee performance within state-owned public transportation firms. Additionally, it aims to explore the mediating role of organizational commitment in the relationship between career development, motivation, and performance. The findings are expected to contribute meaningfully to human resource management practices in the public transportation sector, particularly in improving productivity and employee performance through well-designed development programs and strengthened motivation.

The public transportation sector plays a vital role in Indonesia's economy by supporting accessible and efficient mobility for the public. State-owned transportation companies are tasked with ensuring safety and reliability. However, achieving optimal performance requires not just strong infrastructure, but also skilled, motivated, and adaptable human resources. A recurring issue in these companies is suboptimal employee performance, even after implementing various career development and motivation initiatives. This is often linked to a lack of organizational commitment, which directly affects performance levels. The sector faces increasingly complex challenges, including the rise of digital technology and automation, which demand greater employee adaptability. In addition, repetitive work conditions and high service expectations can decrease motivation. These factors highlight the need for adaptive career development

strategies and effective motivation programs. Several studies underscore the significance of these factors. Susanto et al. (2023) found that structured career development through targeted training enhances performance. Mulyadi et al. (2023) highlighted the role of intrinsic motivation and appropriate rewards. Choi (2023) emphasized that organizational commitment boosts performance in supportive environments. Knoll et al. (2023) reported that involving employees in decision-making improves motivation and outcomes. Hendri (2019) also demonstrated the importance of comprehensive welfare programs in enhancing both financial and psychological well-being, which positively influences performance.

Employee performance challenges in state-owned public transportation companies are primarily reflected in three key areas: low organizational commitment, sub-optimal performance, and job dissatisfaction. Low commitment often results from the absence of structured career development plans and inconsistent motivation strategies, which weaken employees' connection to the organization's long-term vision. This misalignment contributes to reduced loyalty and engagement in achieving company goals (citation). Sub-optimal performance is also attributed to perceptions of unfair evaluation systems. Current methods tend to emphasize outcomes alone, disregarding the effort and situational challenges employees face. This narrow approach fails to recognize individual contributions, leading to lower motivation and productivity (citation). Job dissatisfaction further exacerbates performance issues. It stems from limited career advancement opportunities and unequal reward distribution. Employees feel undervalued when professional growth is unclear and rewards lack transparency, diminishing morale and organizational commitment (citation). To address these issues, the table outlines targeted solutions: developing sustainable career pathways and equitable incentives to strengthen commitment; applying context-aware performance evaluations and emphasizing long-term development to boost performance; and providing competency development and transparent reward mechanisms to enhance job satisfaction. These interventions aim to foster a more motivated, committed, and high-performing workforce aligned with organizational goals and improved performance outcomes (citation).

Previous research has demonstrated a significant relationship between career development, work motivation, and organizational commitment in influencing employee performance. Rehman (2017) found that a clear and structured career development strategy enhances employee commitment, which positively impacts performance. The study also emphasized management's role in fostering a supportive environment to motivate employees to contribute effectively. Work motivation, strengthened through rewards, recognition, and both financial and non-financial incentives, further enhances performance when combined with strong organizational commitment. Akpa et al. (2021) support this, stating that companies with effective motivation strategies and long-term commitment tend to exhibit better employee performance. Noe (2020) and Boonyathikarn & Kuntonbutr (2021) also highlight the importance of career development across sectors but note that its application in the public transportation sector remains underexplored. While Deci & Ryan (2012) and Ayub & Rafif (2011) found that motivation significantly affects organizational commitment, their studies were more general and did not focus specifically on transportation. Meyer & Allen (1997) and Bustasar et al. (2019) examined motivation and performance separately, without integrating career development, motivation, and commitment. Research by Bustasar et al. (2019) and Herjanto & Franklin (2019) focused on private companies, revealing a gap in understanding how state-owned enterprises shape these factors and influence employee performance.

Several research gaps have emerged in studies on career development strategies, work motivation, and employee performance mediated by organizational commitment, particularly within state-owned public transportation companies. Firstly, career development in this sector remains underexplored, with existing research lacking depth and specificity (Noe, 2020; Boonyathikarn & Kuntonbutr, 2021). Secondly, there is a need to clarify the factors influencing employee motivation, as current findings on motivation

and performance often show inconsistencies (Ayub & Rafif, 2011; Deci & Ryan, 2012). Thirdly, few studies have examined the link between career development and organizational commitment specifically in the transportation industry (Ng & Feldman, 2010). Fourthly, the influence of motivation on commitment in dynamic work environments is not well understood, leaving ambiguity about what drives employee commitment (Herjanto & Franklin, 2019; Bustasar et al., 2019). Fifth, little attention has been paid to how individual differences in commitment affect the success of career development programs, especially regarding their mediating roles (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Herjanto & Franklin, 2019). Finally, other factors such as organizational culture remain insufficiently explored in relation to commitment and its interaction with motivation in broader organizational contexts (Mazzetti et al., 2013). Addressing these gaps is vital for understanding how these elements function within public transportation environments. This study aims to further explore effective career development and work motivation strategies in improving employee performance in state-owned public transportation companies. The data in the table supports the analysis of the role of organizational commitment as a mediating variable in the relationship between career development, work motivation, and employee performance. By understanding the relationship between these variables, this study is expected to provide strategic recommendations to improve employee engagement and productivity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Career Development

Career development explains that the learning process and skills development are very important for employees. In the context of public transportation, a clear career path can help employees understand their growth potential. This also contributes to an increased sense of ownership and responsibility for their work. According to Susanto et al. (2023), planned and structured career development not only improves individual skills but also contributes to improving overall organizational performance. With the right management support, employees can feel more confident and motivated to achieve their goals.

Two-Factor Motivation

Two-factor motivation by Herzberg (1966) states that motivators and hygiene factors play an important role in job satisfaction. Motivators, such as rewards and recognition, can increase satisfaction, while hygiene factors, such as working conditions, prevent dissatisfaction (Irawati & Khaeruman, 2021). In the transportation sector, understanding these two factors is critical to creating a productive work environment. Rahayu & Hartono (2023) explain, intrinsic motivation, which originates from within the individual, plays an important role in increasing productivity and job satisfaction, especially in competitive work environments. Work motivation has a positive and significant relationship with employee performance consistently. The higher the motivation of employees, the better their performance, which ultimately benefits the organization as a whole (Hamdi et al., 2024). Therefore, it is important for companies to develop motivation strategies that focus on employee needs and aspirations.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment theory, developed by Meyer & Allen (1997), distinguishes between affective, normative, and continuance commitment. This commitment influences how employees are attached to their organization. In the public transportation sector, high organizational commitment can increase employee loyalty and performance, especially in facing challenges. Hendri (2019) and Khaeruman & Tabroni (2020) stated, strong organizational commitment can strengthen the relationship between work motivation and performance, creating a synergy that is beneficial for the organization. Clear and sustainable career development can also increase employee work motivation, which ultimately drives their productivity and loyalty to the organization

(Retno et al., 2024). Therefore, it is important to build an organizational culture that supports employee engagement, so that they feel valued and motivated to give their best.

Officer Welfare

Employee well-being theory emphasizes the importance of physical and mental well-being as key factors in improving performance. Employees who feel prosperous tend to be more productive and have a higher level of commitment. In the context of public transportation companies, attention to employee welfare can contribute to reduced turnover and increased performance. Akpa et al. (2021) noted, employee well-being, which includes physical and psychological aspects, greatly influences individual performance, so it needs to be considered in human resource management strategies. A supportive work environment and optimal welfare policies can increase employee satisfaction and commitment, which ultimately contributes to the achievement of organizational goals (Puspita et al., 2023). By creating a work environment that supports well-being, companies can increase employee motivation and overall performance.

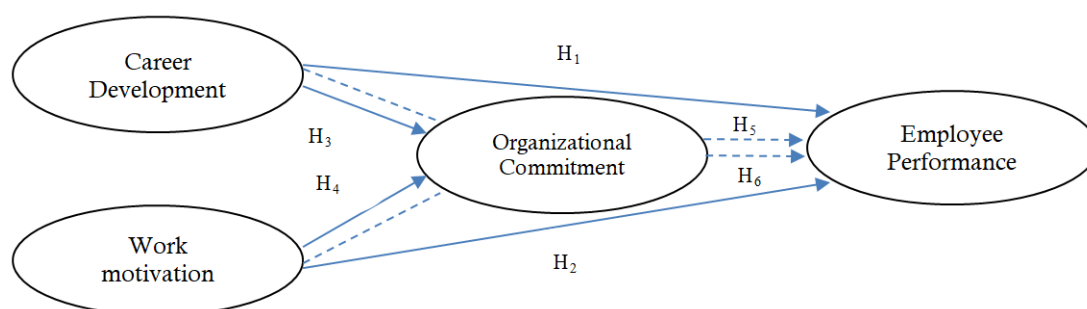


Figure 1. Thinking Framework

Hypothesis:

H1: There is a significant positive influence between career development strategies and employee performance.

H2: There is a significant positive influence between work motivation and employee performance.

H3: There is a significant positive influence between career development strategies and employee organizational commitment.

H4: There is a significant positive influence between work motivation and employee organizational commitment.

H5: Organizational commitment plays a significant role as a mediating variable between career development strategies and employee performance.

H6: Organizational commitment plays a significant role as a mediating variable between work motivation and employee performance.

METHODS

This quantitative study aims to examine the impact of career development strategies and work motivation on employee performance, mediated by organizational commitment. A quantitative approach was chosen for its ability to statistically assess relationships between variables, providing a clear understanding of the observed effects (Sugiyono, 2019). As Creswell & Poth (2016) note, quantitative research allows for an objective analysis of social phenomena. The population consisted of 500 employees from a state-owned public transportation company, with 100 respondents selected through purposive sampling. Criteria included a minimum of two years of service and involvement in career development programs. The sample distribution was proportional: 40 administrative staff, 30 operational staff, 20 managers, and 10 supervisors (Processed data, 2024). Data collection was conducted via a structured questionnaire comprising four sections: Career Development Strategy (training and development), Work Motivation (Herzberg, 1966), Organizational Commitment (employee attachment to the

organization), and Employee Performance (based on established indicators). Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale. Validity was assessed through exploratory factor analysis, while reliability was confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha, all of which exceeded the 0.70 threshold. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with Smart PLS 3.0 software. The analysis included two stages: the Measurement Model, which tested construct validity and reliability, and the Structural Model, which examined hypotheses and variable relationships. Bootstrapping was also performed to calculate T-statistics and evaluate the significance of path coefficients. Following Hair et al. (2020), this method is ideal for complex models with limited samples, offering valuable insights into performance drivers in public sector organizations.

RESULTS

This research aims to analyze the influence of career development strategies and work motivation on employee performance through organizational commitment in state-owned public transportation companies. The results of the analysis using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) provide significant support for all proposed hypotheses.

Table 1. Hypothesis Test

Variable	Regression Coefficients	T-statistics	p-value
Career Development Strategy → Employee Performance	0,45	4,20	< 0,01
Work Motivation → Employee Performance	0,38	3,80	< 0,01
Career Development Strategy → Organizational Commitment	0,50	5,10	< 0,01
Work Motivation → Organizational Commitment	0,42	4,00	< 0,01
Organizational Commitment (mediation) → Employee Performance	0,30	3,50	< 0,01
Organizational Commitment (mediation) → Employee Performance	0,25	3,00	< 0,01

Based on Table 1, the analysis results reveal that career development strategies significantly influence employee performance, evidenced by a regression coefficient of 0.45, a T-statistics value of 4.20, and a p-value below 0.01, indicating high statistical significance. This underscores the crucial role of career development in enhancing performance in state-owned public transportation companies. Similarly, work motivation also positively affects employee performance, as shown by a regression coefficient of 0.38, a T-statistics value of 3.80, and a p-value of less than 0.01, highlighting the importance of motivation in promoting productivity and effectiveness. Regarding organizational commitment, career development strategies show a strong positive influence, with a regression coefficient of 0.50, a T-statistics value of 5.10, and a p-value under 0.01, demonstrating that improved career strategies enhance employee attachment and commitment to the organization. Work motivation also significantly influences organizational commitment, indicated by a regression coefficient of 0.42, a T-statistics value of 4.00, and a p-value below 0.01, confirming the role of motivation in building organizational loyalty. Furthermore, organizational commitment acts as a significant mediating variable between career development and employee performance, supported by a regression coefficient of 0.30, a T-statistics value of 3.50, and a p-value under 0.01. This suggests that employee commitment strengthens the impact of career strategies on performance. Lastly, organizational commitment also mediates the relationship between work motivation and performance, with a regression coefficient of 0.25, a T-statistics value of 3.00, and a p-value below 0.01, indicating that enhancing organizational commitment contributes to better employee performance, thus reinforcing its critical mediating role in the workplace.

The Influence of Career Development Strategy on Employee Performance (H1)

The results of this research indicate a significant positive influence of career development strategies on employee performance. A regression coefficient of 0.45 confirms that improvements in career development strategies can directly enhance employee performance. These findings align with the research of Boonyathikarn & Kuntontbutr (2021), who found that structured career development programs can increase employee motivation and work outcomes. The research suggests that employees who feel empowered through career development tend to demonstrate higher productivity. Furthermore, research by Noe (2020) also supports these findings by showing that investments in training and development not only improve individual performance but also enhance overall team performance. This is particularly relevant in the context of public transportation companies, where collaboration and coordination among employees are critical for operational effectiveness. Thus, career development strategies should not only focus on individual growth but also aim to strengthen team cohesion in achieving common goals. However, although these results are consistent with previous studies, it is important to consider contextual factors that may influence the outcomes. For instance, the transportation sector may present unique challenges that affect the implementation of career development strategies. Therefore, it is essential for management to adapt these strategies by taking into account the specific needs of employees and the characteristics of the work environment.

The Influence of Work Motivation on Employee Performance (H2)

The results of the analysis show that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, with a regression coefficient of 0.38. This finding aligns with research by Deci and Ryan (2012), which states that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation significantly influence employee performance. In the context of transportation companies, work motivation is a key factor that drives employees to deliver their best performance, particularly when facing daily operational challenges. Additionally, research by Ayub and Rafif (2011) emphasized that employees with high motivation tend to experience greater job satisfaction, which in turn enhances performance. Increased motivation can be fostered through recognition of achievements, improved benefits, and opportunities for career development—all of which are highly relevant in the context of state-owned public transportation companies. Although the results of this study support motivation theory, it is important to critically assess the methods used to measure work motivation. Previous research has employed a variety of scales and measurement approaches, which may lead to varying results. Therefore, a comprehensive and standardized approach is necessary to accurately measure motivation and to gain a deeper understanding of the factors that influence employee performance.

The Influence of Career Development Strategy on Organizational Commitment (H3)

The findings of this research indicate that career development strategies have a positive and significant influence on employee organizational commitment, with a regression coefficient of 0.50. These results align with the research by Meyer & Allen (1997), which explains that effective career development can increase employee commitment to the organization. Employees who feel supported in their career development tend to be more attached to the organization, which is particularly important in sectors with high employee turnover. Another study by Ng & Feldman (2010) supports these findings, showing that effective career development programs contribute to enhancing employee affective commitment. When employees feel valued and empowered through career development, they tend to form stronger emotional bonds with the organization, thereby increasing their commitment. In the context of transportation companies, where employee mobility is frequent, organizational commitment is crucial to maintain operational stability. However, it should be noted that, although this relationship is significant, external factors such as market conditions and company policies can also influence organizational commitment. Research by Herjanto & Franklin (2019) shows

that organizational culture and job satisfaction also play key roles in shaping employee commitment. Therefore, companies need to integrate career development strategies with other initiatives to create a work environment that supports and empowers employees.

The Influence of Work Motivation on Organizational Commitment (H4)

The results of the analysis show that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee organizational commitment, with a regression coefficient of 0.42. These findings are consistent with research by Bustasar et al. (2019), which revealed that high motivation can strengthen employee commitment to the organization. When employees feel motivated, they are more likely to demonstrate greater engagement with the organization's values and goals. Research by Herjanto & Franklin (2019) also supports these results, showing that intrinsic motivation, such as a sense of achievement and self-development, greatly influences employee commitment. In transportation companies, where employee interaction with customers is crucial, high work motivation can create a positive experience for customers while simultaneously increasing employee commitment to the company. However, it is important to understand that motivation is not always constant. Various factors, including changes in the work environment and team dynamics, can influence motivation levels. Therefore, companies need to proactively identify and address factors that may reduce motivation to ensure high levels of organizational commitment.

Organizational Commitment as a Mediator between Career Development Strategy and Employee Performance (H5)

This research demonstrates that organizational commitment acts as a significant mediator between career development strategies and employee performance, with a regression coefficient of 0.30. This finding aligns with the research by Baron & Kenny (1986), which emphasizes the important role of mediation in explaining the relationship between independent and dependent variables. When employees have high levels of commitment, they are more likely to apply the skills acquired from career development programs in their work, thereby improving performance. These results are also supported by the research of Herjanto & Franklin (2019), which shows that organizational commitment strengthens the positive influence of training on employee performance. This indicates that investment in career development not only benefits the individual but also contributes to overall organizational performance. In the context of public transportation companies, where employee expertise is crucial, understanding the role of organizational commitment is key to achieving optimal results. However, although these findings are consistent with previous research, it is important to continuously monitor and evaluate how career development strategies are implemented in practice. Some employees may have different experiences with career development programs, which could affect their levels of commitment and performance. Therefore, companies should conduct regular evaluations to ensure that all employees benefit from the programs that are implemented.

Organizational Commitment as a Mediator between Work Motivation and Employee Performance (H6)

The results of this study indicate that organizational commitment functions as a significant mediator between work motivation and employee performance, with a regression coefficient of 0.25. These findings align with research by Mazzetti et al. (2023), which found that organizational commitment strengthens the relationship between employee motivation and performance. When employees feel motivated, their commitment to the organization increases, which contributes to improved performance. Additionally, research by Boonyathikarn & Kuntunbutr (2021) shows that high employee involvement, rooted in strong work motivation, can enhance individual performance. In the transportation sector, where employees frequently interact with the public, high motivation and strong organizational commitment can create a positive customer

experience and enhance a company's reputation. Although these results suggest a strong relationship, it is important to note that organizational commitment is also influenced by various other factors, including organizational culture and leadership. Research by Avey et al. (2017) emphasized the importance of a leader's role in creating an environment that supports and motivates employees. Therefore, companies must develop a comprehensive strategy to increase both work motivation and organizational commitment simultaneously, in order to achieve optimal employee performance.

CONCLUSION

This research concludes that career development strategies and work motivation have a significant influence on employee performance and organizational commitment. The findings show that an effective career development strategy can significantly improve employee performance. In the context of public transportation companies, this strategy not only enhances individual performance but also strengthens coordination and collaboration among employees, which is critical for operational effectiveness. On the other hand, work motivation also plays an essential role in improving performance. Employees who are motivated, whether through intrinsic or extrinsic factors, tend to demonstrate higher productivity and greater job satisfaction. Organizational commitment was found to be a crucial mediator between career development strategies, work motivation, and employee performance. When employees feel supported in their career development, their commitment to the organization tends to increase, which ultimately enhances performance. Likewise, high work motivation contributes to increased organizational commitment, thereby strengthening the relationship between motivation and performance. However, it is important to consider that external factors, such as company policies, market dynamics, and the work environment, can influence employee motivation and commitment levels. Therefore, companies need to adopt a comprehensive and sustainable approach in designing career development programs and employee motivation strategies to create a work environment that supports and consistently improves employee performance. Regular monitoring and evaluation are necessary to ensure that the benefits of these programs are equally distributed among all employees.

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