

Determinants of Career Development on Employee Performance

*Determinants of
Career Development*

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ABSTRACT

Career development contributes significantly to organizational success by driving improved employee performance. Thus, this study aims to examine the impact of career development on employee performance. This study used a quantitative approach, involving 32 employees from the transmission and distribution engineering department. Data were collected through questionnaires. To evaluate the relationship between career development and employee performance, simple linear regression and partial hypothesis testing (t-test) were conducted using SPSS software. The research findings revealed that the instruments for career development and employee performance met the standards of validity and reliability. The regression analysis showed a positive coefficient, indicating that an increase in career development directly improves employee performance. Further partial hypothesis testing confirmed a statistically significant positive effect of career development on performance. Consequently, organizations should prioritize career development initiatives, supported by dedicated leadership and well-structured policies. By encouraging employee growth and well-being, companies can cultivate a motivated workforce, leading to a more productive and satisfying workplace.

Keywords: *Career Development, Employee Performance, Employee Capabilities, Organizational Support.*

ABSTRAK

Pengembangan karir berkontribusi secara signifikan terhadap kesuksesan organisasi dengan mendorong peningkatan kinerja karyawan. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji dampak pengembangan karir terhadap kinerja karyawan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif, melibatkan 32 karyawan dari departemen teknik transmisi dan distribusi. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner. Untuk

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mengevaluasi hubungan antara pengembangan karir dan kinerja karyawan, dilakukan regresi linier sederhana dan pengujian hipotesis parsial (*uji-t*) dengan menggunakan perangkat lunak SPSS. Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa instrumen untuk pengembangan karir dan kinerja karyawan memenuhi standar validitas dan keandalan. Analisis regresi menunjukkan koefisien positif, menunjukkan bahwa peningkatan pengembangan karir secara langsung meningkatkan kinerja karyawan. Pengujian hipotesis parsial lebih lanjut mengkonfirmasi efek positif yang signifikan secara statistik dari pengembangan karir pada kinerja. Akibatnya, organisasi harus memprioritaskan inisiatif pengembangan karir, didukung oleh kepemimpinan yang berdedikasi dan kebijakan yang terstruktur dengan baik. Dengan mendorong pertumbuhan dan kesejahteraan karyawan, perusahaan dapat menumbuhkan tenaga kerja yang termotivasi, yang mengarah ke tempat kerja yang lebih produktif dan memuaskan.

Kata kunci: Pengembangan Karir, Kinerja Karyawan, Kemampuan Karyawan, Dukungan Organisasi.

INTRODUCTION

In a highly competitive landscape, organizations must prioritize employee development to ensure consistent high performance. By fostering a supportive environment, companies enable workers to maintain a positive mindset, excel in their roles, and contribute innovative ideas that drive team progress and align with long-term organizational goals (Sofyan et al., 2022). Such efforts enhance workforce engagement, creativity, and commitment to achieving sustainable business success. With good performance, it is expected that the organization can achieve its goals effectively and efficiently. The ability to produce performance can be supported by the ability of employees to get money support, one of the factors driving optimal employee performance is career development (Novitayanti et al., 2020). Career development in general as a contribution to employees' career opportunities in achieving better positions, career development is important for many reasons, as it benefits individuals and organizations in a variety of ways and allows individuals to grow, learn, and develop skills and knowledge. It helps them set and achieve goals, leading to personal satisfaction and a sense of achievement, career development offers opportunities to improve existing skills and acquire new skills, helps employees be more adaptable and valuable to their organization, and advancement support can lead to higher levels of income, employment, increased job stability and a greater sense of professional achievement (Nasution et al., 2018).

Employees who know that their organization values their development tend to be more engaged and productive. This also applies to the Regional Public Company (*Perusahaan Umum Daerah/PERUMDA*) Tirtauli Pematang Siantar, which functions as a Drinking Water Company providing clean water, especially in the city of Pematang Siantar, referring to Government Regulation Number 122 of 2015 on Drinking Water Supply Systems and Regulation of the Minister of Health Number 32 of 2017 on Environmental Health Quality Standards and Water Health Requirements (Natalia & Netra, 2020; Saleh & Atan, 2021). PERUMDA Tirtauli has several departments, including the transmission and distribution engineering department. However, issues remain in employee career development. Many employees are still unclear about their career paths, and most are high school graduates, making it difficult to fill undergraduate-level positions. Moreover, self-development remains low as employees often do not express opinions or provide feedback in meetings, leading to misperceptions and suboptimal potential development (Wau, 2021).

Career development is crucial in shaping organizational policies that enhance employee performance. Cedaryana et al. (2018) found that career development positively

impacts performance. Providing employees with advancement opportunities boosts engagement and job satisfaction, as it equips them with skills and confidence (Hameed & Waheed, 2011; Akdere & Egan, 2020). Katharina and Kartika (2020) assert that effective career development supports continuous improvement, while Umar (2015) links it to increased satisfaction. Performance reflects employees' ability to convert efforts into valuable achievements. Employees with high morale from strong career programs show greater productivity and commitment, even under pressure (Simatupang et al., 2023). This creates a cycle where strong work ethics improve outcomes. Suyanto et al. (2018) and Panagiotakopoulos (2020) confirm that the level of career development correlates with performance—comprehensive programs yield higher output, whereas limited development leads to lower performance. Therefore, strategic investment in career development is vital for organizational and individual success.

Hameed and Waheed (2011), Cedaryana et al. (2018), and Katharina and Kartika (2020), career development has been shown to have a positive impact on employee performance, but most studies focus on general organizations without considering the characteristics of regional companies such as PERUMDA Tirtauli. In addition, previous studies have not explored specific challenges in career development, such as low formal education and minimal self-development initiatives in the engineering department. This study examines the correlation between career development and employee performance in the transmission and distribution engineering department. It explores how career development programs enhance motivation, engagement, and competence. The research also identifies challenges, such as low education levels and lack of self-initiative. Findings aim to support management in designing more effective career development strategies to improve productivity, job satisfaction, and overall organizational performance. The study offers insights to strengthen employee capabilities and drive goal achievement.

LITERATURE REVIEW & HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

To support company growth, employees with superior performance are essential as the foundation for achieving organizational goals (Syardiansah et al., 2020). High performance reflects individual effectiveness and helps identify human resource potential. Consistent performers contributing positively to team and organizational outcomes have better chances for promotion, training, or career development. Hence, a fair and objective performance management system is crucial to sustain company success. However, employee performance cannot rely solely on technical skills; managerial support is needed to foster motivation and work commitment (Uloli et al., 2019; Bahagia & Astuti, 2021).

Career development is an essential aspect of human resource management that enhances employee motivation and productivity. Firman (2021) emphasizes that employees significantly influence the success of career development. High-performing employees often gain more opportunities due to their capability for greater responsibilities. Organizations also require clear performance indicators for promotion and planning, ensuring advancement is based on competence, not just seniority (Nasution et al., 2018; Matic & Mirica, 2020; Nicolaescu et al., 2020). A well-defined career path increases enthusiasm and loyalty, improving performance (Lestari & Waskito, 2025). There is a mutual relationship between career development and performance: effective programs boost motivation and productivity, while strong performance opens career opportunities. Continuous evaluation is essential to sustain this cycle.

Career initiatives encourage employees to improve knowledge, skills, and competencies (Oktafien & Santoso, 2020; Moustaghfir et al., 2020; Okolie et al., 2020). Career development includes organizational strategies that align employee growth with company goals (Kurniawan et al., 2018). Hameed and Waheed (2011), Bianca et al. (2013), Caroline and Susan (2014) and Kakui (2016), and Napitupulu (2017) show that career development has positive impact on performance. Pillay (2015), Uloli et al. (2019), Bahagia and Astuti (2021), and Lubis et al. (2024) also confirm performance improvements. Rozak et al. (2021), Gandrita (2023) and Cheng et al. (2024), highlight

how strategic planning enhances productivity, making employee development a key driver of organizational success.

H1: Career development has a positive correlation with employee performance.

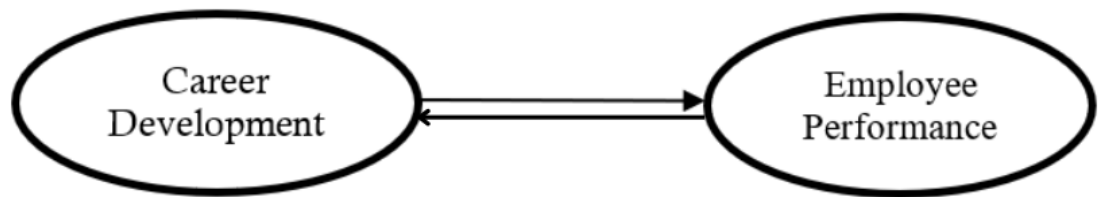


Figure 1. Research Framework

The framework in Figure 1 shows the relationship between career development in this case related to various organizational efforts in helping employees plan and develop their career paths through training, promotion, job rotation, and mentoring. Furthermore, it affects employee performance where when employees feel supported in their career development, they tend to be more motivated, have higher competence, and show greater commitment and productivity.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a quantitative approach to examine the correlation between career development and employee performance within the Transmission and Distribution Engineering Department at PERUMDA Tirtauli, located in Pematang Siantar City. A total of 32 employees were selected as research respondents, ensuring the sample was representative and provided objective, quantifiable insights into the relationship between the variables. The primary data collection method used in this study was a structured questionnaire. Each item in the questionnaire was carefully designed and subsequently subjected to both validity and reliability testing to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the measurement instruments.

Validity testing was conducted by evaluating the correlation between each item and the total score of the respective variable. An item was considered valid if the correlation coefficient exceeded 0.3, as recommended by Hajjar (2018), indicating a meaningful contribution to the construct being measured. To confirm the reliability of the research instrument, Cronbach's Alpha was employed. According to the standard criteria, a Cronbach's Alpha value greater than 0.7 signifies that the instrument is sufficiently reliable for research purposes (Hajjar, 2018). Following validation, the data were analyzed using a simple linear regression test. The regression equation used was $Y = a + bX$, where Y represents employee performance and X denotes career development. This equation enabled the researcher to quantify both the strength and direction of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Keith, 2019).

Furthermore, a partial hypothesis test (t-test) was applied to determine the statistical significance of the influence of career development on employee performance. The t-test serves to assess whether the observed relationship is likely to have occurred by chance or represents a genuine effect. By utilizing these rigorous analytical methods, the study provides a solid empirical foundation for understanding how career development initiatives influence employee performance. The findings offer valuable insights that can guide organizational strategies aimed at enhancing employee productivity, satisfaction, and long-term engagement.

RESULTS

Validity is an important indicator in a study to ensure that the instrument used is truly capable of measuring what should be measured. In the context of a questionnaire, an item is said to be valid if the score of the item has a high correlation with the total score of the variable it represents, so that it can accurately reflect the concept being studied. One way

to assess convergent validity in the analysis of the measurement model is through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value. A high AVE value indicates that most of the variance contained by the indicator can be explained by the construct being measured, not by error or other variables. Therefore, in this study, validity was tested by observing the AVE value for each variable, indicating that the instrument is valid and suitable for use to measure the intended variable

Table 1. Validity Test Results

Variable	Correlation Count	Limit Correlation	Criteria
Career Development	0.651	0.3	Valid
Employee Performance	0.495	0.3	Valid

Table 1 displays the results of the instrument validity test, conducted using a correlation method to assess the relationship between each individual question item and the total score of the corresponding variable. The correlation value for the career development variable was recorded at 0.651, while for employee performance it was 0.495. Both exceed the minimum correlation limit required of 0.3, which is the general threshold in determining the validity of instrument items. Correlation values surpassing the threshold demonstrate a robust connection between each questionnaire item and the measured construct (Quoquab et al., 2019). This confirms that all indicators for career development and employee performance are statistically valid, ensuring the instrument accurately captures the intended variables and provides reliable data for analyzing the relationship between career development and performance. With confirmed validity, this research instrument can be considered capable of representing the concepts being studied accurately. Good validity ensures that the data collected comes from the right measurements, so that the results of the analysis will reflect the actual conditions of the relationship between variables.

Table 2. Reliable Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	t critical	Criteria
Career Development	0.904	0.7	Reliable
Employee Performance	0.909	0.7	Reliable

Table 2 presents the reliability test outcomes, revealing Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.904 for career development and 0.909 for employee performance, both significantly exceeding the critical threshold of 0.7. These high values indicate exceptional reliability of the research instrument, reflecting strong internal consistency among the items within each variable. This consistency ensures that the items collectively measure the same constructs—career development and employee performance—in a stable and dependable manner. The robust Cronbach's Alpha scores affirm that the questionnaire is a trustworthy tool, capable of generating reliable data that accurately represent the studied phenomena. This reliability strengthens the credibility of the study's findings, enhancing confidence in the analysis and conclusions drawn. By surpassing the 0.7 benchmark, the instrument demonstrates its ability to consistently capture true conditions, enabling precise and meaningful insights into the relationship between career development and employee performance. Such dependable data supports further statistical analyses, ensuring that the research outcomes are valid and can effectively inform organizational strategies aimed at improving employee growth and productivity.

Table 3. Simple Regression Equation

Model	Unstd. Coef B	Unstd. Coef Std. Error	Std. Coef Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	23.701	3.505		6.762	0.000
Career development	0.278	0.112	0.413	2.481	0.019

Table 3, the simple regression equation $Y = 23.701 + 0.278X$ is derived. This indicates that, with a constant of 23.701 and a career development value of zero, employee performance is 23.701. The regression coefficient of 0.278 suggests that for each unit increase in career development, employee performance rises by 0.278. This can explain when there is an addition of 1 value to career development, employee performance will increase by 0.278. This can explain when there is an addition of 1 value to career development, employee performance will increase by 0.278. The results of the equation show a positive direction coefficient from career development to employee performance. The positive coefficient between career development and employee performance shows that employee performance tends to increase when career development is given or improved. This means that there is a positive relationship between the two variables. When employees have more opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and experience, they tend to become more competent and efficient at work, thus improving their performance.

Table 4. Hypothesis Test

Model	t	Sig.
(Constant)	6.762	0.000
Career development	2.481	0.019

To test the hypothesis, based on Table 4 partial hypothesis test (t-test) was conducted, yielding a t-value of 2.481 for career development and a significance level of 0.019. The degrees of freedom were calculated as $df = n - 2 = 32 - 2 = 30$, with a critical t-table value of 2.042 at a 0.05 significance level. Since the t-value (2.481) exceeds the t-table value (2.042) and the significance (0.019) is below 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, and H1 is accepted. This confirms a positive correlation between career development and employee performance. For optimal outcomes, organizations must implement well-structured career development programs, supported by committed management and active employee engagement. Such initiatives foster skill enhancement and motivation, driving improved performance and aligning individual growth with organizational objectives.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study are in line with the findings of Efenji and Fidelis (2023) and Mustafa and Lleshi (2024) which show that career development programs provide significant benefits to organizations by improving employee skills, knowledge, and expertise. This improvement has a direct impact on higher work productivity. Career development programs not only help individuals improve their competencies but also create added value for the organization as a whole. This initiative greatly affects employee performance because it is able to encourage higher motivation, better skills, stronger work commitment, and increased job satisfaction. By investing in career development, organizations can build a more engaged, motivated, and competent workforce. This will ultimately have an impact on improving employee performance and achieving the company's strategic goals. Nguyen (2020) explains that organizations that pay serious attention to career development tend to experience increased productivity, employee retention, and overall organizational success. Therefore, it is important for every company to create a work culture that supports employee career development. This culture must be embedded in the human resource management system, including in aspects of training, job promotion, mentoring, and performance evaluation. Career development that is systematically designed will provide a clear path for employees to grow and develop, thus encouraging them to give their best contribution.

The results of this study also strengthen the findings of Wau and Purwanto (2021) which show that well-designed career development initiatives have been proven to

significantly improve employee performance. Likewise, the findings of Kakui (2016) and Napitupulu (2017) which state that career development has a positive impact on improving performance. This study also supports the results of Caniago and Rustanto (2022), which state that when employees feel they have the opportunity to develop and advance their careers, they will be more motivated, emotionally involved, and become more productive. Similar findings were also stated by Pillay (2015), Uloli et al. (2019), Bahagia and Astuti (2021), and Lubis et al. (2024), which stated that increased productivity due to career development programs results in higher work quality and overall improved performance. Employee performance is one of the key elements in achieving organizational competitive advantage. If the company has superior human resources, the overall performance and productivity of the organization will also increase.

However, these results differ from the findings of Napitupulu et al. (2017) and Wusqo and Iqbal (2023), which state that career development does not always significantly affect employee performance. They emphasize that if career development is considered irrelevant, unreal, or does not have a direct impact on employee position or income, work motivation will decrease. In fact, if the career development program is designed inappropriately or does not meet employee needs, it can cause disappointment, frustration, and dissatisfaction. This is also emphasized by Ilmi and Juliana (2023) and Retno et al. (2024), which shows that unmet employee expectations can have a negative impact on their performance and loyalty to the organization.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study show that career development has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. This occurs when the career development process is carried out in a planned manner and in line with the needs of the organization and individual aspirations. When employees feel support and opportunities to develop, they tend to show higher job satisfaction, strong loyalty, and increased motivation in completing their tasks. This satisfaction will have a direct impact on improving performance, both individually and as a team. The role of leadership is very important in the success of a career development program. Leaders who are able to provide attention, support, and guidance consistently will create a conducive and empowering work environment. A supportive, proactive, and development-oriented attitude from a leader not only strengthens the relationship between superiors and subordinates, but also becomes a major driver in achieving employee career goals. Thus, organizations need to place career development as a strategic part of human resource management, while encouraging leaders to become active facilitators in the process. When the synergy between leadership support and employee needs is met, career development will contribute significantly to the productivity and success of the organization as a whole. However, this study has limitations, such as a small sample size (32 employees) and a focus on only one department, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research could expand the sample to include multiple departments or organizations and explore additional variables like organizational culture or leadership styles to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between career development and performance. Practical implications suggest that organizations should design structured career development programs, supported by leadership commitment, to enhance employee performance and retention.

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