## THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL SUPPORT AND COMPETENCE ON CAREER DEVELOPMENT MEDIATED BY JOB PERFORMANCE

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to test and prove empirically the role of social support and competence on career development and improve work performance of the Regional Apparatus Organisation of the Batu City Transportation Office. Theoretically, the results of this study are expected to enrich and complement knowledge in the field of strategic management, so that it can be useful for academics and practitioners. The quantitative approach is used as the main analysis method supported by a qualitative approach. The research population is all employees who are in the Batu City Transportation Office consisting of civil servants, non-permanent employees (Honorary) and Pramubakti. that is 84 employees. All employees were sampled and thus analysed data processing techniques using the Partial learst Square (PLS) based SEM method with SmartPLS software.

The results of this study indicate that: (1) Social support has a direct and significant influence on work performance. (2) Competence has a direct and significant influence on job performance. (3) Social support has a direct and significant influence on career development. (4) Competence has a direct and significant influence on career development. (5) Job performance has a direct and significant influence on career development. (6) Job performance mediates the relationship between social support and career development. (7) Job performance mediates the relationship between competence and career development.

Keywords: Social Support, Competence, Career Development, Job Achievement

## **INTRODUCTION**

According to Hodson (1997), social support provided by colleagues or supervisors in the workplace can contribute to employee productivity and wellbeing. This is where the role of social support comes into play. Emotional support, according to Wanberg (2000), is a form of social support that involves having a positive social relationship with colleagues or supervisors within an organization. It is this positive relationship that makes employees feel comfortable at work and helps them resolve problems that arise, thereby enhancing work performance.

This is reinforced by research conducted by Muhaimin, et al. (2013), and Adnyaswari and Adnyani (2017), which states that social support has a positive impact on performance. In short, providing social support by colleagues or supervisors within the workplace can foster good relationships. Social support is one form of interpersonal relationships in the form of assistance, either materially or in actions, and providing verbal or non-verbal information. This can drive the work performance (productivity) of employees in an organization. The most important aspect of social support is that employees feel recognized and appreciated by the organization they work for. People with good social support are less likely to react negatively to what they experience in their daily lives compared to those who receive very little social support (Lahey, 2007).

Apart from social support, job performance is also influenced by employee competence. This aligns with Robbins' (2001) assertion that job performance is a function of the interaction between ability or competence, meaning that the higher the level of ability, the higher the performance. Competence, according to Robbins (2001), includes intellectual and physical abilities.

High-performing employees will benefit and advance the organization, while underperforming employees will harm the organization. If a large number of employees in an organization are underperforming, the losses could lead to the organization's downfall. According to the Republic of Indonesia's Civil Service Law No. 5 of 2014, Article 75, Performance Evaluation of Civil Servants aims to ensure objective development of civil servants based on a merit system and career system.

Spencer and Spencer (Palan, 2007) suggest that competence refers to the underlying characteristics of behavior that describe motives, personal characteristics, self-concept, values, knowledge, or skills that a superior performer brings to the workplace. This aims to improve employee productivity or output, in other words, to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of each employee's work. The level of effectiveness is determined by employees' abilities, which include aspects of knowledge, skills, attitude, teamwork, problem-solving skills, and various other managerial capabilities.

According to the Government of Indonesia's Regulation No. 5 of 2011 on Civil Servants' Job Performance Assessment, Article 4, performance evaluation for civil servants consists of elements of SKP (Employee Performance Targets) and work behavior. The Employee Performance Targets as referred to in Article 7, paragraph 1, cover aspects such as quantity, quality, time, and cost, while the assessment of work behavior as referred to in Article 4 includes aspects such as service orientation, integrity, commitment, discipline, teamwork, and leadership.

According to Armstrong (Moeheriono, 2012), competence is the dimension of actions for tasks, where these actions are used by employees to satisfactorily complete their job duties, and employees provide different levels of performance. This definition implicitly indicates a relationship between competence and employee performance. Spencer (Sudarmanto, 2009) suggests that the components of competence include motives, traits, self-concept, knowledge, and skills. Spencer (Moeheriono, 2012) further explains that the relationship between employee competence and performance is very close and significant. In fact, if employees want to improve their performance, they should have competencies that match their job tasks (the right man in the right job). The study by Zaim, et al. (2012) shows that competence is related to job performance. Similarly, the study by Bismark, et al. (2012) shows that competence affects job performance. Moreover, job performance also influences career development. Rivai (2011) states that career development factors include job performance, recognition, networking, resignations, organizational loyalty, mentors and sponsors, key subordinates,

growth opportunities, and experience.

Career development is a process of improving individual work capabilities to achieve the desired career. The goal of all career development programs is to align employee needs and goals with the career opportunities available in the organization now and in the future. Career development emphasizes providing support and opportunities for employees to set realistic career goals. Essentially, an organization wants all its employees to work with high productivity and improve their career development compared to previous periods. Every employee, naturally, wants success and satisfaction in their career; they do not want to be trapped in the same job without clear career development. Career development has two interests: organizational interests and employee interests. For the organization, career development ensures succession planning to prepare qualified employees for every level of position. For employees, career development provides a sense of clarity or future certainty that encourages enthusiasm in their service (Susanto and Sari, 2013). Factors that affect career development include abilities, culture, work experience, education, luck, job performance, attitude, leadership, training, placement, workload, employee regulations, and others. Typically, employee job performance evaluation is crucial because it allows the organization to gauge the effectiveness of placing and developing employees and helps determine career paths and motivate employees to be more enthusiastic about their work.

Job performance evaluation is the process by which organizations assess employee performance to improve personnel decisions and provide feedback to employees on their work. Every leader certainly wants their organization to sustain and grow according to the predetermined plan. To boost job performance and employee career development, organizations must motivate employees to be enthusiastic and passionate about their work. The better the job performance evaluation, the better the employee career development will be. Job performance evaluations conducted by organizations reflect employees' work results over a certain period and are intended to determine next steps, such as training, pay raises, promotions, and career planning (Jeni, 2016).

Several experts state the relationship between job performance and career development. Ardana, et al. (2011), mention that employee performance in performing assigned tasks is the starting point for career development. Unsatisfactory employee performance makes it difficult for employees to be promoted to higher positions in the future. Siagian (2012) also highlights that employee job performance evaluation plays a significant role in identifying training needs, recruitment, selection, placement, rewards, promotions, and other aspects of human resource management. Previous studies by Wati (2015) and Nugraha and Sriathi (2014) show that job performance affects employee career development. Similarly, Rosyawati's (2007) research concludes that job performance, recognition, growth opportunities, education, and work experience simultaneously influence career development. In the relationship between social support and career development, research on social support indicates that individuals with high social support tend to have a more positive mindset, higher self-esteem, and greater optimism compared to individuals with low social support (Sarason, Levine, Basham, & Sarason, 1983). Research on career planning and exploration also suggests that high social support enhances an individual's career-setting abilities (Rogers, Creed, & Glendon, 2008). Additionally, Lee and Hughey (2001, in Gallo,

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2009) found a correlation between parental affection and career planning and exploration among students. The researchers noted that individuals with higher career maturity tend to receive helpful information that guides them in choosing their future careers (Lau, Low, & Zakaria, 2013).

## THEORETICAL REVIEW

Social support was initially defined based on the number of individuals providing social support. This definition evolved to include not only the number of friends offering support but also the satisfaction with the support provided (Ogden, 2004). According to research by Purba (2006), social support is a relationship that involves the provision of assistance and support that carries specific value.

Agustin (2010) stated that meaningful social support can significantly improve employee performance. Johana et al. (2007) explained that social support from superiors has a positive impact on employee performance, which is evidenced by Jonathan and Ronald (2006), who found that positive social support from family positively impacts employee performance.

Based on the above theoretical review and previous studies, Hypothesis 1 (H1) is formulated as follows:

H1: Social support has a significant effect on job performance.

Siagian (2006) argued that one factor influencing career development is support from subordinates, which involves the assistance provided by subordinates to help managers succeed in their tasks, thus creating opportunities for growth. Rinanti and Sahrah (2014) stated that women tend to perceive career development as requiring more support or assistance from others. For instance, emotional support from a husband who is willing to cooperate in managing household needs, as well as assistance from colleagues and superiors at work, helps them overcome work difficulties. Social support is one of the factors affecting career development (Siagian, 2006).

Based on the above theoretical review and previous studies, Hypothesis 2 (H2) is formulated as follows:

H2: Social support has a significant effect on career development.

Efforts to improve employee performance can be made through employee competence. Spencer and Spencer (Palan, 2007) explained that competence refers to the underlying characteristics that reflect motives, personal traits, self-concepts, values, knowledge, or skills brought by high performers in the workplace. This aims to increase employee productivity or outcomes, or in other words, to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of each employee's work. The level of effectiveness is determined by the employee's abilities, which include knowledge, skills, attitude, teamwork, problem-solving abilities, and other managerial skills.

Suyitno (2017) conducted a study to determine the impact of competence, satisfaction, and discipline on employee performance at the Office of Women's Empowerment and Family Planning in Fakfak, West Papua. The study revealed that competence has a significant impact on performance. Nurlela (2016) researched the impact of competence on employee performance at the Lingga District Office and found that competence significantly affects employee performance in the Lingga

District Office.

Based on the above theoretical review and previous studies, Hypothesis 3 (H3) is formulated as follows:

H3: Competence has a significant effect on job performance.

Job performance is the result of efforts made by employees in completing the tasks assigned to them. High-performing employees are confident in completing their tasks with attention to detail, precision, and skill. As a result, high-performing employees will increase their productivity, showing good progress in their work, which in turn reflects strong career development. According to Gibson (2005), factors influencing career development include performance, attitude, adaptability, and identity. Rivai (2010) stated that career development is influenced by factors such as job performance, experience, education, and luck.

Based on the above theoretical review and previous studies, Hypothesis 4 (H4) is formulated as follows:

H4: Competence has a significant effect on career development.

According to Saidi (2002), job performance is the ability, willingness, and skill of an individual or a nation. Job performance is the result achieved by an employee in carrying out the tasks assigned to them. Theoretically, the assessment or measurement of job performance provides information that can be used by managers to make decisions regarding promotions, which is one component of career development. Job performance is one of the factors influencing career development (Gibson, 2005).

Rivai (2010) found that one of the factors affecting career development is job performance. Jeni (2016) conducted research on the effect of job performance evaluation on career development at PT Thies in West Kutai, East Kalimantan, using a sample of 50 respondents. The study found that job performance evaluation has a significant effect on career development.

Based on the above theoretical review and previous studies, Hypothesis 5 (H5) is formulated as follows:

H5: Job performance has a significant effect on career development.

According to Sondang P. Siagian (2006), the most important factor in improving and developing an employee's career is their job performance in completing the tasks assigned to them. Without satisfactory job performance, it is difficult for a worker to be recommended by their superior for promotion to a higher position in the future. Therefore, every employee should be given the opportunity to develop their career, as a means to motivate them to perform better.

Career development in this study refers to opportunities for growth, such as improving skills, achieving success, and fulfilling work through a series of status improvements within an organization, according to the career path established within the organization where they work.

According to Haryani (2013), career development opportunities have four indicators, one of which is that employees with high performance have greater opportunities for career development. The most important factor in improving and

developing an employee's career is their job performance in completing the tasks assigned to them. Without satisfactory job performance, it is difficult for a worker to be recommended for promotion to a higher position in the future.

Siagian (2006) suggested that factors influencing career development include mentors and sponsors, as well as social support. A mentor is someone who provides advice or suggestions to an employee in an effort to develop their career, while a sponsor is someone within the company who can create opportunities for the employee to develop their career.

Based on the above theoretical review and previous studies, Hypothesis 6 (H6) is formulated as follows:

H6: Social support has a significant effect on career development through job performance.

Based on the above theoretical review and previous studies, Hypothesis 7 (H7) is formulated as follows:

H7: Competence has a significant effect on career development through job performance.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This quantitative approach is used to identify all the concepts that are the objectives of the research (Malhotra, 2005). The questionnaire is intended to obtain descriptive data for testing the hypotheses and analytical models. To obtain this data, a closed-ended questionnaire is used, consisting of a series of statements/questions where several alternative answers or responses are provided, and respondents are asked to choose only one answer from the available alternatives. In this research, since the population is relatively small and easily accessible, the author uses the total sampling method. This sampling method is expected to yield results that are more likely to approximate the actual values and minimize errors or deviations from the population values (Usman & Akbar, 2008). The mathematical model reflecting the causal relationship between endogenous and exogenous variables in this research uses path analysis.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

## **Respondent Characteristics**

Respondents by age: respondents aged 21–30 years totaled 3 respondents (3.57%), respondents aged 31–40 years totaled 34 respondents (40.48%), respondents aged 41–50 years totaled 32 respondents (38.10%), and respondents aged 51–60 years totaled 15 respondents (17.86%). Respondents by position: respondents with Echelon II B (Head of Department) totaled 1 respondent (1.19%), respondents with Echelon III A (Secretary) totaled 1 respondent (1.19%), respondents with Echelon II B (Head of Division) totaled 3 respondents (3.57%), respondents with Echelon III B (Head of Division) totaled 3 respondents (3.57%), respondents with Echelon IV A (Head of Subdivision/Head of Section/Head of UPT) totaled 8 respondents (9.53%), respondents with Echelon IV B (Head of UPT General Affairs) totaled 1 respondent (1.19%), and respondents in staff positions, including civil servants (PNS) and non-civil servants, totaled 70 respondents (83.33%).

Respondents by rank: respondents with rank IV totaled 6 respondents (7.14%), respondents with rank III totaled 27 respondents (32.14%), respondents with rank I totaled 31 respondents (36.90%), respondents with rank I totaled 3 respondents (3.57%), and respondents with non-civil servant rank totaled 17 respondents (20.24%). Respondents by education: respondents with junior high school (SMP) education totaled 4 respondents (4.76%), respondents with high school (SMA) education totaled 36 respondents (42.86%), respondents with a diploma totaled 2 respondents (2.38%), respondents with a bachelor's degree (S1) totaled 34 respondents (40.48%), and respondents with a master's degree (S2) totaled 8 respondents (9.52%).

#### Social Support has a Direct and Significant Effect on Job Performance

The research results indicate that social support has a direct effect on job performance. Based on the analysis, the significant positive relationship indicates that the two are aligned. In other words, the better the social support, the higher the job performance, and vice versa. The overall descriptive analysis of social support is interpreted as good, with an average score of 3.75. The highest score is for emotional support, followed by instrumental support, reward support, and informational support.

Based on respondents' perceptions of the job performance variable, the average response score is good. This is supported by the research results, which show a significant loading factor for the social support variable in relation to job performance. This research supports various empirical studies showing that social support plays an important role and has a direct influence on improving job performance, such as Adnyaswari and Adnyani (2017), who stated that social support positively affects the performance of nurses at Sanglah Hospital in Denpasar. Similarly, Malik et al. (2010) confirmed that social support is significantly linked to performance. The same is true for the Department of Transportation employees in Batu City, where good emotional support from family, colleagues, and superiors contributes to increased job performance.

#### **Competence has a Direct and Significant Effect on Job Performance**

The research shows that competence has a positive and significant effect on job performance. This means that the better the competence, the higher the performance, and vice versa. The results support various empirical studies showing that competence plays an important role and directly influences job performance. Competence has a significant effect on employee performance at the Lingga District Office (Nurlela, 2016). Panggabean (2013) found that work competence, which consists of education level, work experience, educational background, English proficiency, technology mastery, job motivation, job relevance, and training, influences job performance both partially and simultaneously, with work experience contributing the most. The overall descriptive analysis of competence is interpreted as good, with an average score of 3.84. The highest scores are for knowledge, followed by skills and attitude.

Based on respondents' perceptions of the competence variable, the average response score is good. This is supported by research results showing a significant loading factor for the competence variable in relation to job performance.

#### Social Support has a Direct and Significant Effect on Career Development

The research shows that social support has a positive and significant effect on career development. This means that the better the social support, the better the career development, and vice versa. These results align with the research of Adnyaswari and Adnyani (2017), who found that social support positively affects the performance of nurses at Sanglah Hospital in Denpasar. The overall descriptive analysis of social support is interpreted as good, with an average score of 3.75. The highest scores are for social support, followed by instrumental support, reward support, and informational support. Based on respondents' perceptions of the career development variable, the average response score is good, with an average of 3.75. The highest scores are for career management, followed by career planning. These results are supported by the research showing a significant loading factor for job performance in relation to career development.

#### **Competence has a Direct and Significant Effect on Career Development**

The research shows that competence has a positive and significant effect on career development. This means that the better the competence, the higher the career development, and vice versa. The results support various empirical studies showing that competence and motivation have significant and positive effects on performance simultaneously. Competence has a significant positive effect on performance, as Winarno and Perdana (2015) found. The overall descriptive analysis of competence is interpreted as good, with an average score of 3.84. The highest scores are for knowledge, followed by skills and attitude. Based on respondents' perceptions of the career development variable, the average response score is good, with an average of 3.75. The highest scores are for career management, followed by career planning. These results are supported by research showing a significant loading factor for the competence variable in relation to career development.

#### Job Performance has a Direct and Significant Effect on Career Development

The research shows that job performance has a positive and significant effect on career development. This means that the higher the job performance, the higher the career development, and vice versa. These results support various empirical studies showing that job performance plays an important role and directly influences career development. Susanto and Sari (2013) found a significant effect of job performance on career development. The overall descriptive analysis of job performance is interpreted as good, with an average score of 3.81. The highest scores are for work discipline, followed by initiative, work quantity, work quality, and teamwork. Based on respondents' perceptions of the career development variable, the average response score is good, with an average of 3.75. The highest scores are for career management, followed by career planning. These results are supported by research showing a significant loading factor for job performance in relation to career development.

## Job Performance Mediates the Relationship Between Social Support and Career Development

The research shows that social support affects career development through job performance. The significant positive relationship indicates that the two are aligned. In other words, the better the social support, the better the career development, and vice versa. Empirical studies have shown that job satisfaction plays an important role and directly influences employee performance, as Malik et al. (2010) stated. The study found that social support is related to employee performance and job satisfaction and is highly related to work-family balance, while employee performance is somewhat related to job satisfaction and weakly related to work-family balance. Multiple regression analysis shows that social support and job satisfaction have a strong and significant positive relationship with work-family balance, while employee performance has a moderately significant relationship with work-family balance. The overall descriptive analysis of social support is interpreted as good, with an average score of 3.75. The highest scores are for social support, followed by instrumental support, reward support, and informational support. Based on respondents' perceptions of the career development variable, the average response score is good, with an average of 3.75. The highest scores are for career management, followed by career planning. The overall descriptive analysis of job performance is interpreted as good, with an average score of 3.81. The highest scores are for work discipline, followed by initiative, work quantity, work quality, and teamwork. These results are supported by research showing a significant loading factor for social support and job performance in relation to career development.

# Job Performance Mediates the Relationship Between Competence and Career Development

The research shows that competence affects career development through job performance, and job performance plays a significant role in bridging competence and career development at the Batu City Department of Transportation. This means that job performance significantly influences the relationship between competence and career development. Empirical research has shown that job performance plays an important role and directly influences career development, as Susanto and Sari (2013) found. Their research shows that: (1) education has no significant effect on career development, and (2) job performance has a significant effect on career development. The overall descriptive analysis of competence is interpreted as good, with an average score of 3.84. The highest scores are for knowledge, followed by skills and attitude. Based on respondents' perceptions of the career development variable, the average response score is good, with an average of 3.75. The highest scores are for career management, followed by career planning. The overall descriptive analysis of job performance is interpreted as good, with an average score of 3.81. The highest scores are for work discipline, followed by initiative, work quantity, work quality, and teamwork. These results are supported by research showing a significant loading factor for member satisfaction and participation in relation to cooperative performance.

#### SUMMARISED

The development of concepts and models in this research represents a novelty, particularly in the development of career development indicators, which measure and test the causal and predictive relationships between social support, competence, and job performance. The results of this study reinforce the concept that social support and competence have a positive role in job performance. When mediated by the competence variable, it shows that competence has a greater impact on improving job performance. These findings have important implications for the Department of Transportation of Batu City in career development through social support, competence, and job performance.

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