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The Influence of Training, Competence, and Leadership on Lecturer Career Development Through Work Motivation as an Intervening Variable

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ABSTRACT

In the competitive landscape of higher education, lecturer career development has become crucial for institutional excellence. This study examines the influence of training, competence, and leadership on lecturer career development with work motivation as an intervening variable. Employing a quantitative explanatory approach, the research surveyed 100 permanent lecturers at Telkom University's Faculty of Creative Industries. Data collected through questionnaires were analyzed using SmartPLS with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique. Key findings reveal: (1) training has a significant positive effect on work motivation (β=1.14, t=13.524, p<0.001); (2) competence shows a negative yet significant impact (β=-0.177, t=2.593, p=0.01); (3) leadership demonstrates positive but insignificant influence (β=0.03, t=0.771, p=0.441); and (4) work motivation significantly affects career development (β=0.348, t=1.645, p=0.1). The study's unique contribution highlights that enhanced competence without adequate career opportunities may actually reduce work motivation. These findings emphasize the need for alignment between training programs, competence development, and career policies to improve lecturer motivation and professional growth.
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KEYWORDS *Training, Competence, Leadership, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), Career Development, Work Motivation, Human Resources*

INTRODUCTION

In the current era of globalization, competition in the field of educational staffing is becoming increasingly competitive (Pucciarelli & Kaplan, 2016). One of the rapidly developing education institutions is Telkom University, one of the best private universities in Indonesia. Tel-U is a merger of four higher education institutions under the *Yayasan Pendidikan Telkom* (*YPT*) foundation, namely *Institut Teknologi Telkom* (*IT Telkom*), *Institut Manajemen Telkom* (*IM Telkom*), *Politeknik Telkom* (*Poltek Telkom*), and *Sekolah Tinggi Seni Rupa dan Desain Indonesia Telkom* (*STISI Telkom*). Tel-U's main campus is located in Bandung Regency, West Java, precisely on Jalan Telekomunikasi – Terusan Buah Batu, in the Bandung Technoplex (*BT-Plex*) area. Other campuses are located in Gegerkalong Hilir, north of Bandung City, within the *PT Telkom* office complex. Tel-U specializes its study programs in "Information and Communications Technologies, Management, and Creative Industries" as a response to the rapid development of the ICT industry.

To compete with other institutions, organizations are required to acquire, develop, and retain qualified human resources. The higher the quality of employees, the higher their performance level in carrying out tasks, which, in turn, encourages greater effectiveness and efficiency of the output produced by employees (Keltu, 2024; Samdarshi, 2023). Human resource development is the process of preparing individuals to take on greater responsibilities

and become more proficient in their work (Indeed, 2025). It is extremely important for organizations because human resources are an active component of any organization; without them, the organization cannot operate effectively, potentially hindering the achievement of its goals (Wikipedia, 2025: Human capital). Therefore, human resources require substantial investment. One of the most important investments an organization can make is ensuring that it has a qualified workforce with the necessary capabilities for the company, both now and in the future (Wikipedia, 2025: Human capital). Most human resource management experts agree that the quality of human resources that enables a company to succeed depends on the abilities of its employees (ResearchGate, 2023). Training and development optimizes employee performance and fosters their growth in terms of efficiency, productivity, job satisfaction, motivation, and innovation (Samdarshi, 2023). In addition, HRM practices positively influence organizational performance (ResearchGate, 2025).

The characteristics of effective attitudes and behaviors that determine superior job performance are referred to as work competence. To achieve success within an organization, an individual must have the capacity to perform optimally, and strong evidence links specific competence facets to higher job performance (Cao, Abu Mansor, & Li, 2024; Martini et al., 2024). Competence is an important trait closely associated with improving individual or team performance; competency models translate strategic needs into the knowledge and behaviors required for effectiveness (Campion et al., 2020). According to widely used frameworks, competence is often organized around knowledge, skills, and related attributes, and recent research continues to operationalize KSAs in contemporary roles (Gilbert, 2024). This understanding highlights the correlation between work competence and improved performance, including via development efforts that measurably strengthen workplace-relevant competencies (Mehler et al., 2024). Employee productivity increases with enhanced performance; in other words, employees with high competence are essential for boosting productivity and firm outcomes, and alignment between competence and job fit further strengthens business performance (Nong et al., 2024). Consequently, organizations are prioritizing forward-looking competency frameworks that pinpoint the digital and behavioral capabilities most predictive of performance in modern work settings (Journal of Innovation & Knowledge, 2024; Blanka et al., 2022).

During interviews with several lecturers at the Faculty of Creative Industries, Telkom University, Bandung Campus, it was found that there were doubts regarding the direction and clarity of career paths. Some lecturers admitted to having participated in training and possessing adequate work experience but felt insufficiently motivated due to a lack of transparency and support from leadership in long-term career planning. This has impacted work morale, loyalty to the institution, and willingness to improve advanced competencies. This phenomenon indicates the significant role of work motivation as a variable that can bridge the gap between human resource improvement efforts (through training, competence, and leadership) and the ultimate goal of career development. However, improving competence cannot be achieved automatically; many factors influence it. Among the most significant factors are competence, leadership, training, and work motivation.

Previous research by Ismail & Sofiati (2020) examined the role of leadership in enhancing academic staff performance through motivation, highlighting the significant influence of leadership on motivation but overlooking the interplay of other critical factors

such as training and competence. Similarly, Hidayah (2019) explored the effects of training and leadership on employee performance through job satisfaction, yet the study did not address how these factors collectively influence career development, particularly in academic settings. These research gaps underscore the need for a more comprehensive analysis that integrates training, competence, and leadership as determinants of career development, with work motivation serving as a mediating variable.

Work motivation is considered a crucial factor, as both good and poor organizational performance can be observed from the level of work motivation. Only high work motivation will result in superior work achievement. Therefore, work motivation is an important consideration in human resource management. It plays a very significant role in improving employee performance. When employee motivation is high, they tend to work more effectively, display higher dedication, and show enthusiasm in achieving organizational goals. Various factors can influence work motivation, both internal—such as individual needs, values, and goals—and external—such as recognition, rewards, and a conducive work environment. Essentially, work motivation is an internal drive that encourages individuals to achieve specific goals in a work context. According to the theory of motivation explained by Robbins and Judge (2017), work motivation is influenced by individual needs, desires, and expectations in achieving desired outcomes.

Training is a systematic process of changing employee behavior to achieve organizational goals. It relates to employee skills and abilities oriented towards current job performance, enabling them to succeed in carrying out their work (Rivai & Sagala, 2014).

Based on the background above, the researcher intends to address this issue under the title: *"The Influence of Training, Competence, and Leadership on Lecturer Career Development with Work Motivation as an Intervening Variable at the Faculty of Creative Industries, Telkom University, Bandung Campus."* The problems discussed in this study are limited to the following scope: The object of research is the Faculty of Creative Industries, Telkom University, Bandung Campus. The research period is from November 2024 to March 2025.

This study aims to fill these gaps by investigating the combined influence of training, competence, and leadership on lecturer career development, mediated by work motivation, at the Faculty of Creative Industries, Telkom University. In doing so, it provides a holistic understanding of how these variables interact to foster career growth, offering practical insights for human resource development in higher education institutions. The findings will benefit university administrators in designing targeted interventions to enhance lecturer motivation and career progression, ultimately contributing to institutional excellence.

METHOD

The object of this research is all permanent lecturers at the Faculty of Creative Industries, Telkom University, Bandung Campus, totaling 100 individuals. This study employs a quantitative research method with a causal-explanatory approach, aiming to analyze the influence of independent variables (Training, Competence, and Leadership) on the dependent variable (Career Development), with Work Motivation as an intervening variable. The research design is cross-sectional, as data collection is conducted at a single point in time to examine the relationships between variables.

To obtain data regarding the characteristics of the research object, the researcher utilized questionnaires containing personal descriptions of respondents, including age, gender, education, length of service, and rank/position. From these self-description data, tabulation was subsequently performed, allowing the researcher to obtain a detailed overview of the research object or employees to construct a general profile of the research population.

The variables analyzed consist of the independent variables: Training (X_1), Leadership (X_2), and Competence (X_3), as well as the mediating variable Work Motivation (Y). The dependent variable in this study is Career Development (Z). The data analysis methods employed include descriptive statistical analysis, validity testing, reliability testing, and classical assumption tests (comprising the data normality test and heteroscedasticity test), followed by regression analysis and the simple regression coefficient test (t-test). The analytical tool used in this research was the *SmartPLS* program.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

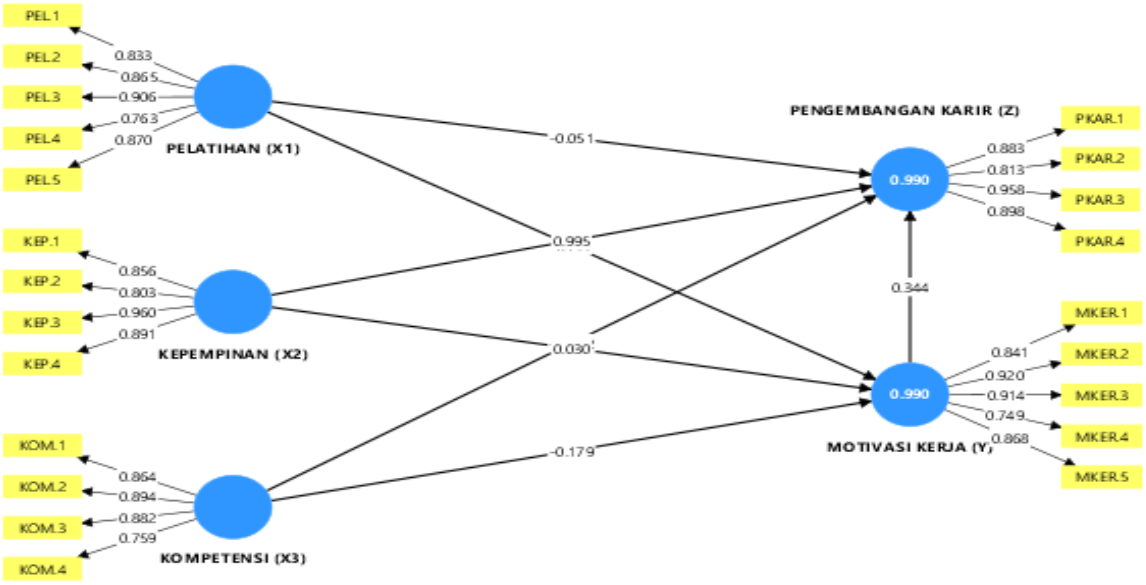

Figure 1. Research Model
Source: Output Data SmartPLS

Convergent Validity Test

The results of the Convergent Validity test on the outer model above indicate that the output image shows sufficiently reliable loadings for each indicator. The values displayed by the indicators are all greater than 0.70 ; thus, it can be interpreted that all indicators are valid as no indicator has a value below 0.70.

Tabel 1. Nilai Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variable	*Average Variance Extracted* (AVE)	Validities
Leadership (X2)	0.773	Valid
Competence (X3)	0.725	Valid
Career Development (Z)	0.74	Valid
Training (X1)	0.721	Valid
Work Motivation (Y)	0.791	Valid

Source: Processed Data

Table 1 demonstrates that the calculation results for all variables exhibit AVE values above 0.5, indicating that all instruments for these indicators are valid.

1. Discriminant Validity Test

Table 2. Results of Discriminant Validity (Cross Loading)

	Training	Leadership	Competence	Work Motivation	Career Development	Validity
KEP.1	0.839	0.856	0.833	0.828	0.836	Valid
KEP.2	0.723	0.803	0.72	0.715	0.79	Valid
KEP.3	0.868	0.96	0.843	0.879	0.958	Valid
KEP.4	0.763	0.891	0.735	0.773	0.898	Valid
KOM.1	0.833	0.743	0.864	0.841	0.723	Valid
KOM.2	0.865	0.741	0.894	0.839	0.708	Valid
KOM.3	0.906	0.886	0.882	0.909	0.894	Valid
KOM.4	0.731	0.64	0.759	0.702	0.6	Valid
MKER.1	0.833	0.743	0.864	0.841	0.723	Valid
MKER.2	0.912	0.798	0.912	0.92	0.787	Valid
MKER.3	0.904	0.876	0.878	0.914	0.889	Valid
MKER.4	0.763	0.671	0.761	0.749	0.654	Valid
MKER.5	0.858	0.812	0.765	0.868	0.823	Valid
PEL.1	0.833	0.743	0.864	0.841	0.723	Valid
PEL.2	0.865	0.741	0.894	0.839	0.708	Valid
PEL.3	0.906	0.886	0.882	0.909	0.894	Valid
PEL.4	0.763	0.671	0.761	0.749	0.654	Valid
PEL.5	0.87	0.802	0.774	0.874	0.814	Valid
PKAR.1	0.828	0.864	0.785	0.829	0.883	Valid
PKAR.2	0.736	0.809	0.726	0.735	0.813	Valid
PKAR.3	0.868	0.96	0.843	0.879	0.958	Valid
PKAR.4	0.763	0.891	0.735	0.773	0.898	Valid

Source: Processed Data, SmartPLS

Subsequently, the calculation of cross-loading and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values was performed for each instrument statement on indicators related to the variables of leadership, motivation, training, and employee performance. Each variable has a higher AVE value when compared to its correlation with other variables, as shown in the following table:

Table 3. Fornell – Larcker Test Results

	Leadership	Competence	Work Motivation	Training	Career Development
Leadership	0.879				
Competence	0.892	0.852			

Work Motivation	0.911	0.972	0.86		
Training	0.91	0.983	0.994	0.849	
Career Development	0.992	0.869	0.906	0.899	0.889

Source: Processed Data, SmartPLS

Reliability Test

Table 5. Reliability Values

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)
Leadership	0.901	0.908
Competence	0.873	0.886
Work Motivation	0.911	0.918
Training	0.902	0.909
Career Development	0.911	0.917

Source: Processed Data, SmartPLS

The reliability of a construct can be assessed from the Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values of each construct. The recommended values for composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha are > 0.7. As shown in the table above , the composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs are > 0.7, proving that all constructs possess the required reliability.

Inner Model

The results of the Inner Model Test in Table 5 show that the R^2 values for the Work Motivation and Career Development variables are both 0.990. According to Ghozali (2015), an R^2 value of 0.75, 0.50, or 0.25 indicates a strong, moderate, or weak model, respectively.

Table 6. Inner Model Test Results

	R-square
Work Motivation	0.99
Career Development	0.99

Source: Processed Data, SmartPLS

Hypothesis Test Results of Direct Effect

Table 8. Results of Direct Effect Test

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
Leadership -> Work Motivation	0.03	0.03	0.039	0.771	0.441
Leadership -> Career Development	0.995	1.001	0.031	32.076	0
Competency -> Work Motivation	-0.179	-0.177	0.069	2.593	0.01
Competency -> Career Development	-0.302	-0.299	0.107	2.819	0.005
Work Motivation -> Career Development	0.344	0.348	0.209	1.645	0.1
Training -> Work Motivation	1.144	1.14	0.085	13.524	0

Training -> Career Development	-0.051	-0.065	0.258	0.197	0.844
Training -> Employee Performance	0.255	0.257	0.057	4.492	0.000

Source: Processed Data, SmartPLS

The Influence of Training, Competence, and Leadership on Lecturer Career Development with Work Motivation as an Intervening Variable at the Faculty of Creative Industries, Telkom University, Bandung Campus

The results of this study show that training has a significant and positive effect on work motivation, in line with the findings of Hidayah (2019) who stated that structured training can increase employee motivation. However, these results differ slightly from the study by Ismail & Hasibuan (2022) which reported a weaker influence, likely due to differences in the quality of training in each institution. These findings reinforce the importance of educational institutions' investment in sustainable development programs to maintain lecturer motivation.

On the other hand, competence shows a negative but significant influence on work motivation, contrary to Sudarmanto's (2009) theory which states that high competence should increase motivation. This result can be explained through the phenomenon of lecturers who feel underappreciated or do not have adequate career development opportunities even though they are highly competent, thus lowering motivation. Implication, universities need to ensure that there is a clear career development path that is in accordance with the competence of lecturers to prevent the effects of demotivation.

Meanwhile, leadership shows a positive but weak influence on work motivation, in contrast to the research of Ismail & Sofiati (2020) which emphasizes the strong role of leadership in motivating academic staff. This difference may be due to the more decentralized leadership structure at Telkom University, so the influence is not too felt. These findings imply the need for more personalized, mentoring-based leadership training to increase its effectiveness.

The study also confirmed that work motivation has a significant effect on career development, although the effect is smaller than expected. This is in line with Robbins & Judge's (2017) motivational theory, but it also indicates that other factors such as institutional policies or market conditions play a role. Therefore, HR policies in universities need to integrate motivational incentives such as research grants and clear promotion schemes to encourage lecturers' career development.

The unexpected findings in this study, such as the negative influence of competence and weak leadership roles, make a theoretical contribution by enriching the understanding of the complexity of the factors that affect work motivation in the academic environment. Practically, the results of this study suggest the need for a more holistic approach in the development of university human resources, which not only focuses on improving competencies but also pays attention to the motivational and participatory leadership aspects. The limitations of this cross-sectional study open up opportunities for future longitudinal research to observe the dynamics of motivation and career development over a longer period of time.

CONCLUSION

Training has a significant positive impact on work motivation, with an original sample value of 1.14, a T-Statistic of 13.524, and *P*-Values of 0.000, indicating that as training

improves, work motivation also increases. In contrast, competence shows a non-positive yet significant influence on work motivation, evidenced by an original sample value of -0.177, a T-Statistic of 2.593, and *P*-Values of 0.01. This suggests that while competence is significant, it does not positively impact work motivation. Leadership, with an original sample value of 0.03, a T-Statistic of 0.771, and *P*-Values of 0.441, presents a positive and significant influence on work motivation, suggesting that effective leadership contributes to enhanced motivation levels. Furthermore, work motivation significantly affects career development, as indicated by an original sample value of 0.348, a T-Statistic of 1.645, and *P*-Values of 0.1. This implies that increased work motivation is associated with better career development outcomes, highlighting the interconnectedness of these variables in fostering a productive work environment.

Based on the findings of this study, the author suggests several strategic steps to improve lecturer career development. For educational institutions such as *Telkom University*, it is recommended to develop a training program that is more structured and relevant to the needs of lecturers, covering pedagogic, research, and academic leadership aspects. Institutions also need to develop a clear competency map accompanied by transparent career paths, as well as strengthen the reward system through performance incentives and research grants. On the other hand, lecturers are advised to be more proactive in self-development by taking advantage of the various training opportunities and mentoring programs available. For further research, it is necessary to conduct longitudinal studies to observe the long-term impact of the various variables studied, as well as expand the scope of the sample to different types of universities to obtain more comprehensive findings. With the implementation of these suggestions, it is hoped that an academic ecosystem can be created that better supports the sustainable career development of lecturers.

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