



# The effect of career development and work motivation on employee performance mediated by leadership (Study at PT. Wom Finance, Gorontalo Branch)

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of career development and work motivation on employee performance, with leadership serving as a mediating variable at PT WOM Finance, Gorontalo Branch. The research is motivated by several key issues, including unequal distribution of training, fluctuating levels of work motivation, and branch performance that consistently falls below corporate targets. A quantitative approach was employed using a saturated sample of 46 employees. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using multiple linear regression and the Sobel Test to assess mediation effects. The findings indicate that career development and work motivation have positive and significant effects on employee performance. Both variables also significantly influence leadership, and leadership itself significantly affects employee performance. However, the Sobel Test results demonstrate that leadership does not mediate the effect of career development or work motivation on employee performance. These findings suggest that improvements in performance are driven primarily by the direct effects of career development and work motivation, while leadership does not function as an intervening variable in these relationships.

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## INTRODUCTION

PT Wahana Ottomitra Multiartha Tbk ("WOM Finance" or the Company) was established in 1982 under the name PT Jakarta Tokyo Leasing, specializing in motorcycle financing, specifically for Honda motorcycles (Ananda, 2021). The Company changed its name to PT Wahana Ottomitra Multiartha in 2000 in line with its business transformation (Aprianto, 2020). Currently, WOM Finance provides financing not only for Honda motorcycles, but also for other Japanese brands such as Yamaha, Suzuki, and Kawasaki (Astuti, 2021).

PT WOM Finance has an operational network spread throughout Indonesia. One of its branches is the Gorontalo Branch, established in 2011 and under the auspices of the Sulawesi Region (Dewi, 2020). This branch plays a strategic role in expanding financing services to districts,

with assets under management reaching Rp74 billion (Fitriani, 2022). Based on internal data, this branch has approximately 46 employees divided into operational, marketing, and other support functions (Firmansyah, 2021). The performance of each individual is key to achieving business targets and providing quality customer service (Gibson, 2020).

Human resources are a vital asset for organizational success. In the financing industry, such as PT WOM Finance, employee performance is a strategic factor determining the achievement of operational targets, service quality, and business sustainability (Gunawan, 2023). To achieve optimal performance, companies need to ensure that each employee has adequate competencies, strong work motivation, and effective leadership support (Handayani, 2022). One key strategy for improving competency is through career development, particularly through training (Kusuma, 2021).

Based on training data from PT WOM Finance's Gorontalo Branch in 2024, it appears that the company has implemented various training programs, with a total of over 400 participants. These training programs include technical training, compliance training, behavioral development, and managerial training. However, data analysis indicates that training has not been evenly distributed across positions or individuals (Lestari, 2022).

Based on attendance data from the Gorontalo Branch of PT WOM Finance, a pattern of lateness was identified that could reflect the state of employee work motivation (Lussier, 2020). Data processing revealed significant variations in tardiness levels between individuals. The attendance data was then classified into three categories: Good (<5 times late), Needs Attention (6-15 times), and Poor (>15 times) (Maulida, 2023).

At the beginning of the year, performance in January and February reached 77.78% and 79.67%, respectively, but still fell short of the set target. From March to July 2024, the performance trend fluctuated between 72% and 84%, with the highest achievement occurring in May at 84.58%. However, this figure still fell short of the company's ideal target of at least 100%.

The situation declined further in August and November, reaching 65.08% and 53.39%, respectively, the lowest levels achieved throughout the year. This decline indicates serious obstacles impacting operational performance, both internally, such as employee competency and motivation, and externally, such as market conditions and financing challenges.

Several other studies have added intervening or mediating variables, such as job satisfaction (Pebianti et al., 2022; Wahyuni & Safitri, 2020) and compensation (Eka Fadillah, 2022). These studies demonstrate that the relationship between career development, work motivation, and employee performance can be influenced by other variables. This strengthens the premise that the relationship between variables in human resource research is indirect and can be mediated by internal organizational factors.

Thus, this study has strong relevance to previous research on the relationship between career development, work motivation, and employee performance, but has the novelty of including leadership as a mediating variable. This study is expected to provide new empirical contributions and strengthen understanding of how leadership plays a role in increasing the effectiveness of career development and work motivation, thus impacting employee performance, particularly at PT WOM Finance, Gorontalo Branch.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The objects of this research are the main variables studied, namely career development, work motivation, leadership, and employee performance. These variables were selected for analysis to determine the influence of career development and work motivation on employee performance, as well as the role of leadership as a mediating variable in this relationship. Therefore, the research objects encompass all concepts focused on in this research model.

The population in this study was all employees of PT WOM Finance, Gorontalo Branch, who were actively working at the time of the research. This population includes all employees from various positions, both operational and non-operational. The total number of employees in the study population was 45, in accordance with the organizational structure and workforce data recorded at the Gorontalo Branch.

The subject and object of research are two variables that must be present in any research. In a research report, this is explained in Chapter 3 of the research methodology. This provides a detailed explanation of the subject and object of the research.

The research sample is a subset of the population used as respondents to obtain research data. Considering the 45 employee population of PT WOM Finance, the Gorontalo Branch, and the relatively small population (<100 respondents), the sampling technique used was census sampling, where all members of the population were sampled (Sugiyono, 2021). Therefore, the sample size was 45 respondents. In this study, the data analysis technique used is path analysis with the help of the SPSS version 21 program. Path analysis was chosen because this study involves a mediating variable, namely leadership, which plays a role in explaining the relationship between career development and work motivation on employee performance.

## RESULT AND DISSCUSSION

### Validity and Reliability Test Results

This section presents the results of testing the research instrument to ensure that each statement item used is truly capable of measuring the intended variable. Validity testing was conducted to assess the accuracy and appropriateness of the items, while reliability testing was used to see the consistency of the instrument when used under similar conditions. The results of these two tests serve as the basis for determining whether the instrument is suitable for use in the next stage of analysis. Validity testing was conducted using the Pearson Product Moment method.

#### a. Variable A

Table 1 Variable A Validity test

	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	SUMA
A1 Pearson Correlation	1	.627**	.488**	.406*	.449*	.758**	.814**
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.006	.026	.013	.000	.000
N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
A2 Pearson Correlation	.627**	1	.514**	.558**	.566**	.622**	.825**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.004	.001	.001	.000	.000
N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
A3 Pearson Correlation	.488**	.514**	1	.517**	.163	.433*	.693**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.004		.003	.390	.017	.000
N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
A4 Pearson Correlation	.406*	.558**	.517**	1	.656**	.500**	.772**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.026	.001	.003		.000	.005	.000
N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
A5 Pearson Correlation	.449*	.566**	.163	.656**	1	.546**	.700**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.013	.001	.390	.000		.002	.000
N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
A6 Pearson Correlation	.758**	.622**	.433*	.500**	.546**	1	.840**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.017	.005	.002		.000

	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
SUM	Pearson Correlation	.814**	.825**	.693**	.772**	.700**	.840**	1
A	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

## b. Variable B

Table 2 Variable B Validity test

		B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	B12	SUMB
B7	Pearson Correlation	1	.403*	.238	.544**	.619**	.372*	.696**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.027	.205	.002	.000	.043	.000
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
B8	Pearson Correlation	.403*	1	.557**	.553**	.467**	.631**	.787**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.027		.001	.002	.009	.000	.000
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
B9	Pearson Correlation	.238	.557**	1	.300	.402*	.621**	.672**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.205	.001		.107	.027	.000	.000
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
B10	Pearson Correlation	.544**	.553**	.300	1	.646**	.545**	.782**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.002	.107		.000	.002	.000
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
B11	Pearson Correlation	.619**	.467**	.402*	.646**	1	.653**	.825**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.009	.027	.000		.000	.000
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
B12	Pearson Correlation	.372*	.631**	.621**	.545**	.653**	1	.832**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.043	.000	.000	.002	.000		.000
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
SUMB	Pearson Correlation	.696**	.787**	.672**	.782**	.825**	.832**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

## c. Variable C

Table 3 Variable C validity test

		C13	C14	C15	C16	C17	C18	SUMC
C13	Pearson Correlation	1	.845**	.243	.671**	.712**	.598**	.904**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.196	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
C14	Pearson Correlation	.845**	1	.081	.531**	.553**	.444*	.759**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.671	.003	.002	.014	.000
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
C15	Pearson Correlation	.243	.081	1	.352	.169	.282	.492**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.196	.671		.056	.371	.131	.006
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
C16	Pearson Correlation	.671**	.531**	.352	1	.607**	.566**	.835**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.003	.056		.000	.001	.000
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
C17	Pearson Correlation	.712**	.553**	.169	.607**	1	.336	.768**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.002	.371	.000		.069	.000
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
C18	Pearson Correlation	.598**	.444*	.282	.566**	.336	1	.710**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.014	.131	.001	.069		.000
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
SUMC	Pearson Correlation	.904**	.759**	.492**	.835**	.768**	.710**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.006	.000	.000	.000	
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

Based on the analysis results, all statement items in the variables Career Development (X1), Work Motivation (X2), Leadership (Z), and Employee Performance (Y) showed a calculated r-value > r-table with a significance below 0.05. This means that all statement items in the questionnaire are declared valid and suitable for use in further analysis. Next, reliability testing will be conducted by looking at the Cronbach's Alpha value.

## Reliability Test Results

**Table 4.** Reliability Test Result

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Information
Career Development	0.862	Reliable
Work motivation	0.859	Reliable
Leadership	0.834	Reliable
Employee performance	0.850	Reliable

The reliability test results showed that all variables had a Cronbach's Alpha value > 0.70, namely: Career Development (0.862), Work Motivation (0.859), Leadership (0.834), and Employee Performance (0.850). Therefore, all research instruments were reliable. Therefore, the research instruments used met the validity and reliability criteria, ensuring that all statement items could be relied upon to support the data analysis process in the next stage.

## Classical Assumption Test

Before conducting a regression analysis, a series of classical assumption tests must be performed to ensure that the data meets the necessary statistical requirements. These tests include normality, autocorrelation, heteroscedasticity, and multicollinearity, ensuring that the model can provide accurate and reliable estimation results. The test results will be performed on substructural models I and II. The results of the classical assumption tests on substructural model I are presented in the following table:

**Table 5.** Results of the classical substructural assumption test I

Test	Test Statistics	Significance Value	Conclusion
Normality	0.105	0.200	Data is normally distributed
Autocorrelation	2.196	$d = 2.196 > d_U = 1.5969$	No autocorrelation occurs
Heteroscedasticity	X1 = 0.258 X2 = -1.723	X1 = 0.798 X2 = 0.093	There is no heteroscedasticity
Multicollinearity	Tolerance = 0.708 VIF = 1.412		No multicollinearity occurs

The results of the classical assumption test for substructural model I indicate that the Kolmogorov-Smirnov significance value for normality is 0.200 > 0.05, indicating a normal distribution of the data. The Durbin-Watson value is 2.196, where  $\alpha = 2.196 > \alpha = 1.5969$ , indicating no autocorrelation. In the heteroscedasticity test, the significance value for each variable is > 0.05, indicating no heteroscedasticity. For the multicollinearity test, the VIF value is <10, and the Tolerance value is >0.10, indicating no multicollinearity. Next, the classical assumption test for substructural model II will be tested. The results of the classical assumption test for substructural model II are presented in the following table:

**Table 6.** Results of the classical substructural assumption test II

Test	Test Statistics	Significance Value	Conclusion
Normality	0.092	0.200	Data is normally distributed
Autocorrelation	2.572	$d = 2.572 > d_U = 1.5969$	No autocorrelation occurs
Heteroscedasticity	X1&UR = -0.001	X1 → UR = 0.996	There is no heteroscedasticity
	X2&UR = -0.051	X2 → UR = 0.756	
Multicollinearity	Z&UR = 0.054 Tolerance	Z → UR = 0.746	

$$X1 = 0.681, X2 = 0.557, Z = 0.626$$

VIF

$$X1 = 1.468, X2 = 1.795, Z = 1.596$$

The results of the classical substructural assumption test II indicate that the Kolmogorov-Smirnov significance value for normality is  $0.200 > 0.05$ , indicating a normal distribution of the data. The Durbin-Watson value is 2.572, where  $\alpha = 2.572 > \alpha = 1.5969$ , indicating no autocorrelation. In the heteroscedasticity test, the significance value for each variable is  $> 0.05$ , indicating no heteroscedasticity. For the multicollinearity test, the VIF value is  $< 10$ , and the Tolerance value is  $> 0.10$ , indicating no multicollinearity. With all classical assumptions met, the regression model used can be declared suitable for further analysis. The resulting calculation results can be interpreted more accurately and provide a strong basis for decision-making in this study.

### Path Analysis

Path analysis is used to examine the magnitude of direct and indirect influences between variables in a research model. This approach reveals how structural relationships are formed and the extent to which each variable contributes to explaining other variables. Path analysis is used to determine the direct and indirect influences between variables. The following are the results for substructural model I:

**Table 7.** Parameter Estimation Results of Substructural Model I

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized		
		Coefficients		Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	11.439	3.369		3.396	0.002
	X1	0.154	0.129	0.187	1.194	0.240
	X2	0.452	0.145	0.489	3.121	0.004

a. Dependent Variable: Z

Based on the parameter estimation results in structural model I, the substructural equation I is obtained, namely  $Z = 0.187X1 + 0.489X2 + e$ . The results show that career development has a positive but insignificant effect on leadership ( $\text{sig} = 0.240$ ), while work motivation has a positive and significant effect on leadership ( $\text{sig} = 0.004$ ). The  $R^2$  value of 0.374 indicates that 37.4% of the variation in leadership is explained by the two variables. The following will present the results of parameter estimation for substructural model II:

**Table 8.** Parameter Estimation Results of Substructural Model II

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized		
		Coefficients		Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	13.839	3.463		3.996	0.000
	X1	0.341	0.117	0.511	2.906	0.006
	X2	0.016	0.146	0.021	0.108	0.915

a. Dependent Variable: Z

Based on the parameter estimation results in structural model II, the substructural equation II is obtained:  $Y = 0.511X1 + 0.021X2 - 0.024Z + e$ . The results indicate that career development has a positive and significant effect on employee performance ( $\text{sig} = 0.006$ ), while work motivation and leadership have no significant effect ( $\text{sig} > 0.05$ ). The  $R^2$  value of 0.262 indicates that 26.2% of the

variation in employee performance is explained by the model. Overall, the results of this path analysis indicate that career development plays a more dominant role in influencing other variables, both directly and indirectly, while work motivation and leadership variables show limited contributions to the model. These findings provide an important basis for the discussion and implications of the research in the following section.

### Significance Test (F Test and t Test)

Significance tests are conducted to determine the extent to which independent variables exert a simultaneous or partial influence on the dependent variable. In path analysis research, the F-test is used to examine the combined influence, while the t-test is used to assess the influence of each variable individually. The results of the F-test are presented in the following table:

**Table 9.** F Test Results of Substructural Model I

ANOVA <sup>a</sup> Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	108.727	2	54.363	10.733	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	182.350	36	5.065		
	Total	291.077	38			

a. Dependent Variable: Z  
b. Predictors: (Constant), X2, X1

The F-test results for substructural model I show an F-value of 10.733 with a significance level of  $0.000 < 0.05$ , indicating that career development and work motivation simultaneously have a significant effect on leadership. Furthermore, the F-test results for substructural model II are presented in the following table:

**Table 10.** F Test Results of Substructural Model II

ANOVA <sup>a</sup> Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	50.428	3	16.809	4.147	.013 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	141.880	35	4.054		
	Total	192.308	38			

a. Dependent Variable: Z  
b. Predictors: (Constant), X2, X1

The results of the F test on substructure I show that the F value = 4.147 with a significance of  $0.013 < 0.05$ , meaning that all variables have a significant effect on employee performance. Based on the results of the substructural t-test I in the table, it shows that  $X1 \rightarrow Z$  is not significant (0.240) and  $X2 \rightarrow Z$  is significant (0.004). Furthermore, the results of the t-test on the substructural model II can be seen in Table 4.9. The results of the t-test of the substructural model II in Table 4.9, show that  $X1 \rightarrow Y$  is significant (0.006),  $X2 \rightarrow Y$  is not significant (0.915), and  $Z \rightarrow Y$  is not significant (0.896). Thus, the results of the F-test and t-test provide a clear picture of the pattern of influence of variables in the model, where not all relationships are partially significant, but simultaneously the model still shows a significant influence on the dependent variable in each substructure.

### Mediation Test (Sobel Test)

A mediation test was conducted to determine whether the leadership variable was able to mediate the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The results of this test indicate that for H6: Leadership mediates the influence of career development on employee

performance. Based on the existing test results, it was found that for  $X_1$ , the test statistic value  $|t| = |0.1334| = 0.1334 < t_{tabel} = t_{0.05,36} = 2.02809$ . This means that career development does not affect employee performance through the Leadership variable as an intervening variable. For  $H_7$ : Leadership mediates the influence of work motivation on employee performance. Based on the existing test results, it was found that for  $X_1$ , the test statistic value  $|t| = |0.1341| = 0.1341 < t_{tabel} = t_{0.05,36} = 2.02809$ . This means that work motivation does not affect employee performance through the Leadership variable as an intervening variable.

Thus, this study has strong relevance to previous research regarding the relationship between career development, work motivation, and employee performance, but has novelty in including leadership as a mediating variable. This study is expected to provide new empirical contributions and strengthen understanding of how leadership plays a role in increasing the effectiveness of career development and work motivation, thus impacting employee performance, particularly at PT WOM Finance Gorontalo Branch.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and the discussion presented, this study can draw the following conclusions: Career development has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. These results indicate that the better the company's career development system, the higher the employee performance. Work motivation has a positive but insignificant effect on employee performance. This means that individual work motivation is not strong enough to improve performance without the support of a good work environment and system. Leadership has no significant effect on employee performance, indicating that leadership's role in improving performance at PT WOM Finance, Gorontalo Branch is not yet optimal. Career development has a positive but insignificant effect on leadership, indicating that career programs do not directly influence leadership patterns. Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on leadership, meaning that highly motivated employees tend to have a positive perception of their superiors' leadership. Leadership does not mediate the relationship between career development and work motivation on employee performance. The direct effect of both variables is stronger than the indirect effect through leadership. Overall, career development is the most dominant variable in improving employee performance at PT WOM Finance, Gorontalo Branch.

The implications of the research findings encompass two areas: implicit and managerial. Theoretical implications relate to expert theories, providing insights into the references used in this research, including problem-based references, modeling, results, and previous research agendas. Managerial implications relate to policies that can be linked to the research findings; managerial effectiveness provides practical contributions to management.

This research is expected to provide practical benefits for PT WOM Finance, Gorontalo Branch, in improving the effectiveness of human resource management and contribute to the scientific development of studies on the influence of career development, work motivation, and leadership on employee performance. Despite its limitations, the results of this study can serve as a reference for further, more in-depth research.

This research is expected to provide practical benefits for PT WOM Finance, Gorontalo Branch, in improving the effectiveness of human resource management and contribute to the scientific development of studies on the influence of career development, work motivation, and leadership on employee performance. Despite its limitations, the results of this study can serve as a foundation for further, more in-depth research.

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