Research Article

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The Effect of Training and Work Discipline on Employee Performance with Career as A Moderating Variable for Employees at PT PLN (Persero) Implementation Unit Customer Service North Medan

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Abstract: *This study aims to analyze the influence of training, work discipline, and career development on employee performance, as well as to examine the moderating role of the interaction between variables on performance. The research approach used was quantitative with Partial Least Square (PLS) analysis technique. Data was obtained through distributing questionnaires to 65 respondents. The results showed that training, work discipline, and career development have a positive and significant influence on employee performance. This indicates that the better the training is provided, the higher the discipline, and the clearer the direction of career development, the more employee performance will improve. Meanwhile, the first and second moderating effects did not have a significant influence, so the interaction between variables did not strengthen the relationship on performance. This finding implies that organizations need to focus more on strengthening the main variables in an effort to improve employee performance.*
Keywords: *Training, Work Discipline, Career, Performance.*

Introduction

In any organization, whether it is an agency, institution, or company, one of the most valuable assets is the workforce. Workers or employees contribute their abilities, strengths, skills, and competencies, which directly impact the productivity and success of the organization. These traits, which are developed through experience, education, and training, form the foundation for both individual and organizational growth. As stated by Vij and Akshay (2023), the abilities and competencies of workers must be nurtured and developed by the organization to ensure sustained performance and productivity.

The development of these abilities and competencies is not always a natural process. While some employees possess inherent skills and strengths, others may need targeted training and development to fully realize their potential. Regular and structured training programs are essential to cultivating these qualities in employees. According to Hirschi and Spurk (2021), ongoing training equips workers with the necessary skills to respond to sudden changes within the organization or the external environment. These changes, whether they are internal organizational shifts or external market dynamics, often require employees to adapt and enhance their competencies to maintain or improve performance.

Changes in the work environment, such as shifts in business goals, industry standards, or new technologies, demand that employees continuously develop their abilities to meet new challenges. As Mithout (2021) points out, the need for self-development becomes even more pressing during times of organizational transformation. This development enables employees to master their current job functions while expanding their knowledge and skills beyond their core competencies. This process not only increases work productivity but also prepares employees for higher-level responsibilities, creating dual competence in both their areas of expertise and other fields.

Training is crucial in enabling employees to adapt to changing work conditions, as highlighted by Steindórsdóttir, Arnulf, and Norbom (2024). Continuous training provides employees with the tools and knowledge to excel in their roles, while fostering creativity and innovation that are essential for meeting organizational objectives. When employees are able to apply their skills effectively and efficiently, they contribute not only to their personal growth but also to the overall productivity of the organization. Therefore, training is a key investment for companies seeking to maintain a competitive edge in their industries.

Training programs do more than just enhance skills; they also play a significant role in shaping the attitude and behavior of employees. According to Waworuntu, Lapian, and Pandowo (2022), training fosters discipline, which is critical for creating a work culture that values punctuality, responsibility, and adherence to company procedures. A disciplined workforce leads to smoother operations, reduced errors, and a more organized environment, all of which contribute to improved performance. Discipline, particularly in the workplace, has direct benefits for both the employee and the company. For employees, discipline helps in developing a humble and focused approach to work, making them more likely to complete tasks with dedication and accuracy. For the organization, disciplined employees ensure that work is completed efficiently and according to set standards, which increases overall productivity.

Ma (2020) further emphasizes the importance of work discipline in enhancing organizational performance. Employees who consistently follow procedures, avoid mistakes, and work with integrity play a critical role in achieving organizational goals. High work discipline also strengthens the company's reputation, as it ensures that employees consistently meet or exceed expectations, which in turn contributes to the organization's success.

In the context of PT PLN (Persero) UP3 North Medan, these factors are particularly relevant. As a critical service provider in the electricity sector, PT PLN relies on the performance of its employees to meet the demands of its customers and achieve its organizational targets. Given the nature of the industry, where operational efficiency and timely service delivery are paramount, the role of employee training, work discipline, and career development cannot be overstated.

Therefore, understanding how these factors influence employee performance is vital. Based on the literature, it is clear that training, work discipline, and career development are interconnected elements that contribute to an employee's overall performance. Training equips employees with the necessary skills to perform their jobs effectively. Work discipline ensures that employees follow procedures and complete tasks efficiently, while career development provides employees with opportunities for growth and advancement. Together, these elements create a work environment conducive to high performance.

The research presented here aims to explore the relationships between these factors at PT PLN UP3 North Medan. The formulation of the problem for this study includes several key questions: (1) Does training have a positive and significant effect on employee performance at PLN UP3 North Medan? (2) Does work discipline have a positive and significant effect on employee performance at PLN UP3 North Medan? (3) Does employee career development have a positive and significant influence on employee performance at PLN UP3 North Medan? (4) Does employee training have a positive and significant effect on employee performance, moderated by employee career development at PLN UP3 North Medan? (5) Does work discipline have a positive and significant effect on employee performance, moderated by employee career development at PLN UP3 North Medan?

The objectives of this research are to analyze the impact of these factors on employee performance at PT PLN UP3 North Medan. Specifically, the study will (1) determine and analyze the influence of training

on employee performance, (2) determine and analyze the influence of work discipline on employee performance, (3) determine and analyze the influence of employee careers on employee performance, (4) determine and analyze the influence of training on employee performance moderated by employee careers, and (5) determine and analyze the influence of work discipline on employee performance moderated by employee career development.

The findings of this research will provide valuable insights into how training, work discipline, and career development intersect to impact employee performance at PT PLN UP3 North Medan. By understanding these dynamics, the company can implement more effective policies and strategies to enhance employee performance, improve organizational productivity, and achieve its long-term goals.

Literature Review

Performance

According to Mangkunegara (2017) Performance is the work results in terms of quality and quantity achieved by an employee in carrying out his duties in accordance with the responsibilities given to him.
a. Quality of work refers to the level of accuracy, precision, and work results that meet standards.
b. Quantity of work refers to the volume or amount of work completed in a given time.
c. Performance reflects the level of effectiveness and efficiency of an individual in carrying out his duties.

According to Mangkunegara (2017) the performance indicators are as follows:
1. Work quality
   Level of accuracy, neatness and work results according to standards.
2. Quantity of work
   The amount of work completed in a given time period.
3. Punctuality
   Completion of work according to the schedule or specified deadline.
4. Work effectiveness
   The ability to complete tasks by minimizing errors and optimizing resources.
5. Independence in working
   The level of initiative and ability to work without constant supervision.

Training

According to Sastrohadiwiryo (2015) Training is an activity undertaken by a company or organization to improve the technical, theoretical, conceptual, and moral skills of employees to improve their work performance. In other words, training aims to improve and develop the quality of human resources to meet job demands and organizational development.

According to Sastrohadiwiryo (2015) Training indicators are as follows:
1. Improvement of technical skills
   Employees are able to carry out operational tasks more skillfully.
2. Improvement of theoretical abilities
   Employees understand the basic principles and concepts relevant to their work.
3. Improvement of conceptual abilities
   Employees can design, analyze, and make decisions based on a comprehensive understanding.
4. Improved work morale
   Employee work enthusiasm, discipline, and loyalty increased after participating in the training.

5. Positive changes in work behavior

   Employees show behavioral changes in working that are more effective and efficient.
6. Support for achieving organizational goals

   Training results help organizations achieve productivity and efficiency.

Work Discipline

According to Hasibuan (2016), work discipline refers to an individual's awareness and willingness to adhere to the regulations and norms set within an organization. Hasibuan further elaborates that awareness is characterized by a voluntary commitment to follow the rules, as the individual understands their significance. In contrast, willingness refers to an active and enthusiastic effort to comply with regulations, demonstrating a proactive attitude toward organizational norms.

Discipline plays a crucial role in fostering an efficient and orderly work environment. It ensures that tasks are executed smoothly, helping to maintain consistency and productivity. A disciplined workforce contributes to the effective implementation of work processes, minimizing disruptions and optimizing performance. Thus, work discipline is not only essential for the individual employee but also vital for the success of the organization as a whole.

According to Hasibuan (2016), employee work discipline indicators, namely:
1. Employee attendance

   How often do employees arrive on time and do not play truant?
2. Compliance with company regulationsThe level of compliance with applicable policies, rules and regulations.
3. Implementation of duties and responsibilities

   Employees carry out tasks according to predetermined procedures and targets.
4. Behavior and attitude towards superiors and coworkers

   Be polite, respect your superiors, and cooperate with your coworkers.
5. Use of work facilities and equipment

   Maintain and use office facilities properly according to their function.
6. Compliance with working hours and overtime. Arrive and go home according to working hours and be willing to work overtime if needed.

Career

According to Handoko (2016), a career is all the jobs or positions held during a person's working life. Handoko emphasized that a career is not just the current position, but the entire career path of a person, including promotions, transfers, and work experiences throughout their life.

According to Handoko (2016) Career Indicators include the following:
1. Promotion

   Employees get higher positions or responsibilities.
2. Increased income or compensation

   Salary, benefits, and bonuses increase as your career progresses.
3. Increased work responsibilitiesRoles and workloads become more strategic or complex.
4. Recognition and status in the organization

   Be recognized for your achievements and hold a respected position among your colleagues.
5. Job satisfaction and motivation

Feeling satisfied with the career path you are on and motivated to continue developing.

Conceptual Framework
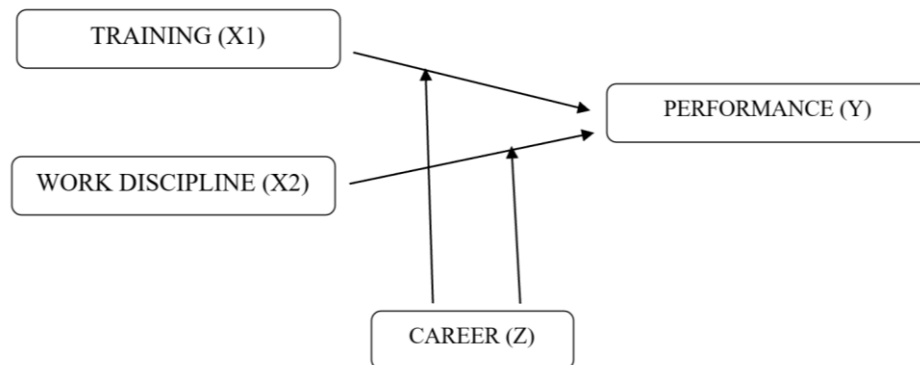
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Hypothesis
1. Training has a positive and significant impact on employee performance at PLN UP3 North Medan.
2. Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at PLN UP3 North Medan.
3. Employee career has a positive and significant influence on employee performance at PLN UP3 North Medan.
4. Employee training has a positive and significant effect on employee performance moderated by employee career at PLN UP3 North Medan.
5. Work Discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance moderated by employee career at PLN UP3 North Medan.

Method

The type of research used is quantitative research. According to Sugiyono (2018), quantitative data is a research method based on positivity (concrete data), research data in the form of numbers that will be measured using statistics as a calculation test tool, related to the problem being researched to produce a conclusion.

This research was conducted starting in May 2025. This research was conducted at the PT PLN UP3 North Medan location.

This study used a research population of all 65 employees. According to Sugiyono (2018), a population is a generalization area consisting of objects or subjects that have certain qualities and characteristics determined by the researcher to be studied and then conclusions drawn.

The sample of this study was all the population at PT PLN Persero UP3 Medan Utara, namely 65 people using the saturated sampling technique. According to Sugiyono (2018), the sample is the total part of the number and characteristics possessed by the population.

The research data sources used by researchers are primary data sources, primary data sources are where researchers obtain data directly. Sugiyono (2018) Primary data sources are data sources that directly provide data to data collectors or researchers.

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1. Primary Data: Collected through a questionnaire distributed to employees of PT PLN (Persero) UP3 Medan Utara.
2. Secondary Data: Derived from company reports, academic literature, and previous research.

   The data collection technique used is a questionnaire, the researcher will distribute the questionnaire to the respondents who are the sample. According to Sugiyono (2018), a questionnaire is a data collection technique carried out by giving a set of written questions or statements to respondents to answer.

   This research method uses a quantitative descriptive method using structural equation model (SEM) analysis, where according to(Putri, Ayu Lian, Cik & and Digdowiseiso, 2024)SEM analysis is a data analysis that understands and teaches researchers to examine the influence of construct variables on other construct variables through moderating variables. The population in this study is65 employees at PT PLN UP3 North Medan, where the sampling method was carried out using the saturated sampling method, where according to(Kurtaliqi, Fidan, 2024)a sampling method in which the sample members come from several existing populations. The number of samples that appear is65 employees at PT PLN UP3 North MedanThe data collection technique is by using observation and distributing questionnaires to research objects.

Path Analysis Model
1. Direct Effect:
   Direct influence is an influence that occurs directly from one variable to another without going through other variables. It shows the direct influence of training (X1) on employee performance (Y), or the direct influence of work discipline (X2) on employee performance (Y).
2. Indirect Effect:
   Indirect influence is an influence that occurs through the moderating variable. It shows the indirect influence of training (X1) on performance (Y) through career (Z).
3. Total Effect:
   The total effect is the sum of the direct and indirect effects between two variables. It shows the total effect of training (X1) on performance (Y), which is calculated from the direct influence and indirect influence involving career (Z).
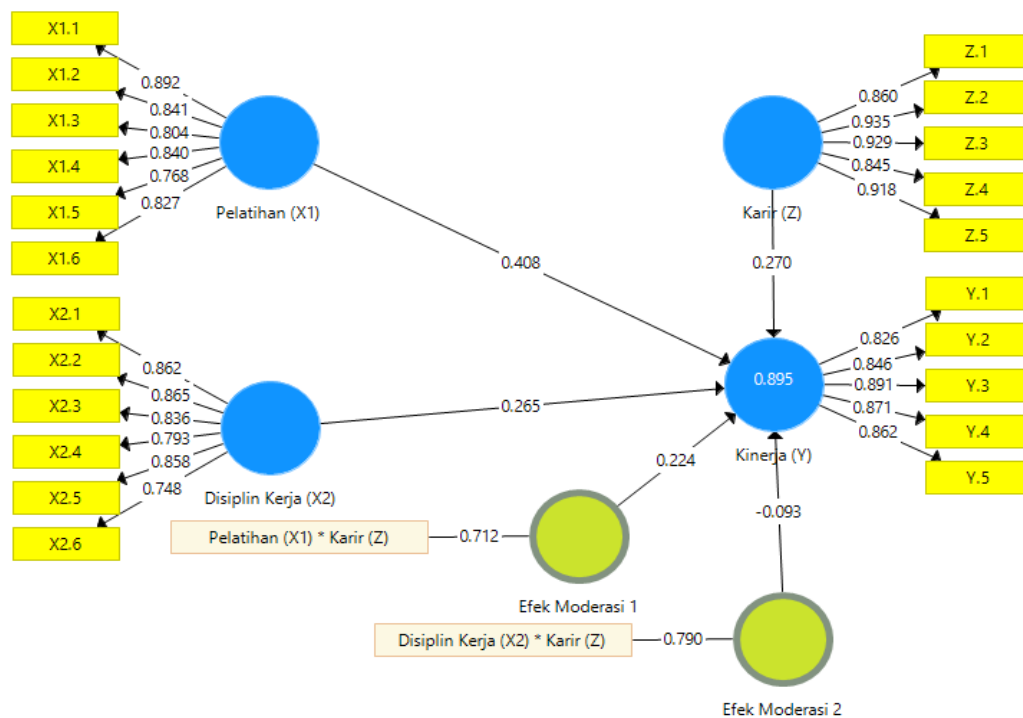
Results and Discussion

Outer Model Analysis

   Measurement model testing (outer model) is used to determine the relationship between latent and manifest variables. This test has convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability.

Convergent Validity

   This test is seen from the factor loading; the limit value is 0.7, and the limit value Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is 0.5; if it exceeds this number, it is considered valid. This means that the indicator value is considered valid if it describes the build variable with a value greater than 0.7. The structural model used in this study is depicted in the figure below:

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Figure 2. Outer Model

The Smart PLS output for loading factors gives the results in the following table: Outer Loadings In this study there are equations and the equation consists of two equations.

$Y = b_1X_1 + b_2Z + b_3X_1Z \, e_1$

$Y = 0.408 + 0.270 + 0.224 + e_1$

$Y = b_2X_2 + b_3Z + b_4X_2Z + e_2$

$Y = 0.265 + 0.270 - 0.093 + e_2$

Table 1. Outer Loadings

	Work Discipline (X2)	Moderation Effect 1	Moderation Effect 2	Career (Z)	Performance (Y)	Training (X1)
Work Discipline (X2) * Career (Z)			0.790			
Training (X1) * Career (Z)		0.712				
X1.1						0.892
X1.2						0.841
X1.3						0.804
X1.4						0.840
X1.5						0.768

	Work Discipline (X2)	Moderation Effect 1	Moderation Effect 2	Career (Z)	Performance (Y)	Training (X1)
X1.6						**0.827**
X2.1	**0.862**					
X2.2	**0.865**					
X2.3	**0.836**					
X2.4	**0.793**					
X2.5	**0.858**					
X2.6	**0.748**					
Y.1					**0.826**	
Y.2					**0.846**	
Y.3					**0.891**	
Y.4					**0.871**	
Y.5					**0.862**	
Z.1				**0.860**		
Z.2				**0.935**		
Z.3				**0.929**		
Z.4				**0.845**		
Z.5				**0.918**		

The table above shows the value of each variable, and states that the indicator of each variable is greater than 0.7, which means that each indicator item has a value greater than 0.7, which indicates that the data is original and can be subjected to additional research.

Discriminant Validity

Further research will determine the validity of the data using Discriminate Validity, with the aim of determining whether the cross-loading value is greater than other latent variables in order to identify indicators that have a strong relationship with the concept. The following table displays the cross-loading findings from the validity test, as follows:

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Table 2. Discriminant Validity

	Work Discipline (X2)	Moderation Effect 1	Moderation Effect 2	Career (Z)	Performance (Y)	Training (X1)
Work Discipline (X2) * Career (Z)	0.086	0.860	1,000	0.093	0.199	0.214
Training (X1) * Career (Z)	0.238	1,000	0.860	0.224	0.338	0.290
X1.1	0.779	0.267	0.212	0.857	0.805	0.892
X1.2	0.699	0.266	0.190	0.818	0.787	0.841
X1.3	0.706	0.207	0.130	0.731	0.764	0.804
X1.4	0.795	0.240	0.172	0.729	0.775	0.840
X1.5	0.779	0.205	0.150	0.608	0.668	0.768
X1.6	0.778	0.255	0.208	0.709	0.779	0.827
X2.1	0.862	0.295	0.170	0.798	0.803	0.821
X2.2	0.865	0.181	0.016	0.779	0.807	0.786
X2.3	0.836	0.222	0.145	0.644	0.701	0.763
X2.4	0.793	0.274	0.183	0.667	0.769	0.745
X2.5	0.858	0.194	0.034	0.716	0.763	0.743
X2.6	0.748	-0.030	-0.165	0.698	0.609	0.647
Y.1	0.723	0.344	0.239	0.818	0.826	0.806
Y.2	0.705	0.311	0.218	0.751	0.846	0.789
Y.3	0.844	0.274	0.100	0.799	0.891	0.830
Y.4	0.853	0.242	0.115	0.772	0.871	0.786
Y.5	0.739	0.284	0.190	0.698	0.862	0.746
Z.1	0.700	0.121	0.051	0.860	0.745	0.743
Z.2	0.809	0.200	0.094	0.935	0.842	0.848
Z.3	0.893	0.205	0.057	0.929	0.848	0.886
Z.4	0.701	0.229	0.075	0.845	0.775	0.733
Z.5	0.779	0.246	0.138	0.918	0.801	0.814

It can be seen in the table above that the cross loading factor value of each variable and its indicators can be explained that the cross loading value of each variable gets a greater value than the cross loading on other latent variables for each variable, meaning that this research is discriminantly valid.

Composite reliability

In composite reliability research, each variable is evaluated using its reliability value. If the variable value is greater than 0.60, the research is considered reliable; if it is between 0.60 and 0.7, it is unreliable. The table below shows the Coranbach's alpha, composite reliability, and AVE values, which are used to determine whether the research is reliable and valid.

Table 3. Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Work Discipline (X2)	0.908	0.929	0.686
Moderation Effect 1	1,000	1,000	1,000
Moderation Effect 2	1,000	1,000	1,000
Career (Z)	0.940	0.954	0.807
Performance (Y)	0.912	0.934	0.739
Training (X1)	0.909	0.930	0.688

In Table 3 above, the Cronbach's alpha column shows that each variable has a value greater than 0.7, indicating that the variable's dependability data is reliable. The composite reliability column has a value greater than 0.6, indicating that each variable is considered reliable because the data exceeds 0.6. The AVE column shows that each variable has a value greater than 0.7, indicating that the data is authentic in terms of AVE. All variables in the Cronbach's alpha, reliability, and AVE columns have values above 0.7 and 0.6, indicating reliability and validity.

Inner Model Analysis

Structured model evaluation (inner model) is conducted to ensure that the base model is accurate and well-constructed. The review stages carried out in the primary model assessment can be identified by several indicators, namely:

Coefficient of Determination (R2)

Based on the data processing that has been carried out using the SmartPLS 3.0 program, the R Square value is obtained as follows:

Table 4. R Square Results

	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Performance (Y)	0.895	0.886

In table 4, there is an Rsquare value for the Performance variable of 0.895 or 89.5%, meaning that the influence of training, work discipline and career on job satisfaction is 0.915 or 91.5% and the remainder is in other variables.

Hypothesis Testing

After examining the inner model, the next step is to investigate the relationship between idle build and idle build, as suggested in this review. In this review, speculative testing was conducted using T-statistics and P-values. Speculation was made whether T-values were greater than 1.96 and P-values <0.05. The following are the results of the direct impact path coefficients:

Table 5. Hypothesis and Moderation Effect

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (| O/STDEV |)	P Values	Results
Work Discipline (X2) -> Performance (Y)	0.265	2,428	**0.008**	**Accepted**
Moderation Effect 1 -> Performance (Y)	0.224	1,357	**0.088**	**Rejected**
Moderation Effect 2 -> Performance (Y)	-0.093	0.650	**0.258**	**Rejected**
Career (Z) -> Performance (Y)	0.270	2,501	**0.006**	**Accepted**
Training (X1) -> Performance (Y)	0.408	2,933	**0.002**	**Accepted**

In table 5 there are the results of the hypothesis, which will be explained as follows:

1. Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on performance, with an original sample value of 0.265 and a p-value of 0.008. Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on performance. This means that improving work discipline will improve employee performance.

2. Moderation Effect 1 has a positive but insignificant effect on Performance with a value of 0.224 and p values of 0.088. Moderation effect 1 is not significant, meaning that the first moderating variable (the possibility of interaction between training and career on performance) does not strengthen or weaken the tested relationship.

3. Moderation Effect 2 has a negative but insignificant effect on Performance with an original sample value of -0.093 and p values of 0.258. Moderation Effect 2 is also insignificant, even tending to be negative, indicating that the tested interaction does not have a significant impact on performance.

4. Career has a positive and significant effect on performance, with a value of 0.270 in the original sample and a p-value of 0.006. Career development has a positive and significant effect on performance. This means that better career development leads to higher employee performance.

5. Training has a positive and significant effect on performance with an original sample value of 0.408 and p values of 0.002. The effect of training on performance is positive and significant, meaning that the better the training received, the better employee performance will be.

Closing
Conclusion

1. Work Discipline has a positive and significant effect on Performancewith an original sample value of 0.265 and a p-value of 0.008. This means that the higher the level of work discipline an employee possesses, the better their performance will be.

2. Moderation Effect 1 does not have a significant effect on Performance, although the direction of the influence is positive with a value of 0.224 and a p-value of 0.088. This indicates that the interaction between training and career variables neither strengthens nor weakens the relationship with employee performance.

3. Moderation Effect 2 also has no significant effect on Performance, even showing a negative influence with a value of -0.093 and a p-value of 0.258. This indicates that the interaction tested in the second moderation did not make a significant contribution to improving employee performance.

4. Career has a positive and significant effect on performancewith a coefficient value of 0.270 and a p-value of 0.006. This indicates that better employee career management and development will improve their performance.

5. Training has a positive and significant effect on performancewith an original sample value of 0.408 and a p-value of 0.002. This means that effectively provided training can improve employee capabilities and productivity in carrying out their duties, thus having a positive impact on performance.

Suggestion

1. For Company/Organization Leaders:It is hoped that this will continue to improve the quality of employee training on a regular and structured basis. Relevant and tailored training tailored to job needs has been proven to significantly improve employee performance.

2. For HR Managers (Human Resources):It is necessary to pay more attention to aspects of work discipline, for example by compiling clear work rules, providing rewards for disciplined employees, and a consistent monitoring system, because discipline has been proven to make a positive contribution to performance.

3. In Employee Career Development:It is recommended that organizations strengthen career development systems through fair promotions, competency-building training, and clear career paths. This has been shown to improve employee motivation and performance.

4. Regarding Moderation Effect:Even though the moderation effect (interaction between variables) is not significant, companies can still re-evaluate the integration strategy between training and career development, so that both run in harmony and support each other in improving performance.

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