



## The Influence of Leadership Style and Career Development on Employee Competence Through Job Satisfaction as a Mediating Variable

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### Abstract

This research is motivated by the importance of human resources in achieving organizational effectiveness and competitive advantage. In the oil and gas industry, such as PT Pertamina EP Zona 4 Prabumulih, employee competency is a strategic factor in ensuring the company's operational success. However, complex organizational dynamics require an adaptive leadership style and a sustainable career development system to improve the quality of human resources. Based on this phenomenon, this study aims to analyze the influence of leadership style and career development on employee competency, as well as to examine the role of job satisfaction as a mediating variable at PT Pertamina EP Zona 4 Prabumulih. This study uses a quantitative approach. Data were collected by distributing questionnaires to PT Pertamina EP Zona 4 Prabumulih employees. Data analysis techniques were carried out using Partial Least Square – Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the help of SmartPLS 4.0 software. The results of the study indicate that (1) leadership style does not significantly influence employee competence, (2) career development does not significantly influence employee competence, (3) leadership style does not significantly influence job satisfaction, (4) career development does not significantly influence job satisfaction, and (5) job satisfaction does not mediate the influence of leadership style and career development on employee competence.

### Introduction

Employee competence is a crucial aspect that employees must possess (Kharub et al., 2025; Asrowi et al., 2025; Bindawas, 2025). Fiton and Efendi (2022) also stated that competence plays a crucial role in improving performance within an organization or company. Meanwhile, Krajcovicova et al. (in Fiton and Efendi, 2022) stated that competence also encompasses the attitudes employees need to carry out their work and achieve satisfactory results. Employees with appropriate competence will be better able to complete their tasks effectively and contribute successfully to the company. Employee competence encompasses the dimensions of knowledge, understanding, abilities/skills, values, attitudes, and interests (Sugiyanto & Santoso, 2018; Vijayarani et al., 2025; Asmini & Yusuf, 2025).

Employee competence encompasses not only conceptual competence but also technical and interpersonal competence (Sismiati et al., 2025; Palmquist et al., 2025). Elvina (2025) explains that work competence encompasses conceptual, technical, and interpersonal competence because it involves not only finding solutions to workplace problems but also the ability to work in a team. Elvina further explains that high competence leads to high employee performance, thereby minimizing work-related problems within or between employees.

Pertamina is one of Indonesia's largest companies and a subsidiary of a state-owned enterprise (BUMN) spread across various regions (Sukmono et al., 2025; Fadillah, 2025; Maharani et al., 2025). Therefore, it requires competent human resources from various fields to support the smooth operation and management of the company, both in technical skills (hard skills) and non-technical skills (soft skills). These competencies are crucial for employees to perform optimally, possess a relatively balanced set of abilities, and foster healthy competition to improve individual quality and organizational performance (Sadewa & Ridwan, 2024; Darmawan, 2024; Morandini et al., 2023). In addition to competency, job satisfaction also plays a crucial role for both employees and the company because it can motivate employees to continuously improve their required competencies. Job satisfaction is an internal factor that influences work motivation (Sugiono et al., 2022; Hajiali et al., 2022; Gazali et al., 2022). and has a positive relationship with employee productivity and commitment to the company (Anis et al., 2025; Megawaty et al., 2022; Latifah et al., 2024). Employees with good work competencies tend to complete their work optimally, receive recognition from the company, experience job satisfaction, and ultimately become more productive.

In practice, various policies, work standards, and competencies that should be optimally implemented have not fully aligned with the reality on the ground (Thake, 2025; Oeij et al., 2024). According to the metrotvnews website, in 2023, an alleged corruption case occurred at PT Pertamina related to the procurement of liquefied natural gas (LNG), allegedly due to inadequate market conditions (Nuralam, 2023). Arief and Tanjung (2023), as reported on the regional.kompas website, reported in January 2023 that a work accident at Pertamina Hulu Rokan resulted in the death of one worker and the arrest of three other workers for non-compliance with Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

Job satisfaction is fundamentally influenced not only by employee competence but also by several factors, including leadership, organizational or company fairness, and career opportunities (Nuryadi et al., in Anis et al., 2025). Job satisfaction has several dimensions, namely (1) work, (2) salary/wages, (3) promotion opportunities, (4) superiors, (5) coworkers, (6) working conditions/work environment (Luthans in Herminingsih and Purwanti, 2020). Job satisfaction is related to a person's leadership style in a company. Sugiono et al, (2022) revealed that leadership style is strongly related to employee job satisfaction and is a key factor in the success of a person's leadership. If the person's leadership style is good and employees feel happy and satisfied in their work, then that person is successful in their leadership. Sugiono et al, (2022) further revealed that the extent to which a leader is able to implement an effective and appropriate leadership style so that it can provide satisfaction for employees in their work is one of the factors that plays a role in creating employee job satisfaction.

A person's leadership style can determine their employees' responses to assigned tasks and responsibilities (Anis et al., 2025; Sudadi et al., 2023; Sanosra et al., 2022). Leadership styles are implemented to create synergy within the work team, increase productivity, and build an adaptive company culture. According to Hasibuan (2016), leadership styles have three dimensions: authoritarian leadership, delegative leadership, and participative leadership. Therefore, leadership styles have several indicators: (1) transformational (having a long-term vision and inspiring), (2) transactional (implementing rewards and punishments), (3) democratic (decision-making involves subordinates), (4) authoritarian (decision-making is completely and absolutely by the leader, without involving subordinates), and (5) laissez-faire (leader intervention in subordinates' tasks is minimal) (Anis et al., 2025).

In addition to leadership style, career development also plays a crucial role in providing employee job satisfaction. This is evident in one of the job satisfaction indicators proposed by

Rasyid and Tanjung (in Anis et al., 2025; Supriadi et al., 2025). Career development is a form of company policy provided to its employees. Career development aims to upgrade employee competencies and better align them with company needs through various means as needed (Fiton and Efendi, 2022). According to Simamora (2012) and Handoko (2000), career development has several dimensions: (1) transfer, (2) education, (3) training, and (4) work experience.

Based on this description, employee competency is influenced by various organizational factors, particularly leadership style and career development, and is mediated by job satisfaction (Iriani et al., 2023; Nanjundeswaraswamy et al., 2023; Natsir et al., 2024). The discrepancy between policy and practice in the field demonstrates the importance of more effective human resource management (Aguinis et al 2022; Al Jawali et al., 2022; Kramar, 2022). Therefore, this study was conducted to examine "The Effect of Leadership Style and Career Development on Employee Competence through Job Satisfaction as a Mediating Variable (Case Study of PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih)." The hypothesis is that leadership style and career development have a positive effect on employee competency, and job satisfaction acts as a mediating variable in this relationship.

## Method

### Research Design and Approach

The current research takes a quantitative research method based on a design that is explanatory in nature, and aims at explaining causality among the research variables. Precisely, the study will be designed in such a way that it will explore the effects of leadership style and career development on employee competence both directly and indirectly, using job satisfaction as the mediator. The application of quantitative explanatory framework can be considered adequate since it allows the researcher to test based on the theoretical hypotheses in a rigorous way through the use of empirical data combined with statistical analysis. Using the number of answers provided by the participants, the study will provide objective and quantifiable information about the relationships between the variables that will be considered.

The explicatory quality of the study is stressed not only in the identification of the associations but also in the understanding of the directional dynamics and the strength of influence of constructs. In the context of organizational inquiry, this method is especially useful when it comes to evaluating the functioning of managerial and human-resource practices in the framework of a systematic corporate setting. Accordingly, the chosen design is quite consistent with the research goal, which is to outline the mechanisms, according to which leadership style and career development are related to employee competence within the organization.

### Research Setting and Object of Study

The empirical study was conducted at PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih, which is an organization operating in the field of oil and gas and has an extremely technical and hierarchical system of work. This environment has been selected strategically since the competence of employees is a decisive factor in the energy industry, which determines the operational and efficiency and environmental sustainability. The study object consists of the employees of PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih who were hired at least one year ago.

The tenure requirement was set at a minimum to ensure that the respondents have gained enough exposure on the organizational environment, leadership practices and career development policies that the firm has put in place. It is assumed that employees, who have previous supervisor experience not less than one year, have been through sufficient interaction

with the supervisors and have been involved in organizational processes and have developed informed perceptions of their job satisfaction and competence. This fact improves the relevance and credibility of the data obtained.

### **Population and Sampling Technique**

The target population of this research study will be all the employees of PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih. Due to the variety of job functions and the fact that the organization is organized, not every employee was automatically recruited as a respondent. A purposive sampling method was therefore used to sample the participants based on certain criteria that was relevant to the objectives of the research.

The purposive sampling method was adopted due to its ability to allow the researcher to identify people with deliberateness and who are more likely to provide correct and useful information about the variables being studied. The main selection criteria was the active employment status with a minimum period of one year of service. This will ensure that the sample will be representative of the employees who have a satisfactory level of experience within the organization to make informed decisions regarding leadership style, career development practices, job satisfaction and their own competence.

### **Types and Sources of Data**

In this study, both primary and secondary sources of data have been used to ensure that adequate analysis is reached. Primary data were collected directly as respondents by the administration of structured questionnaires, which included the perceptions of the employees on the leadership style, career development, job satisfaction and competence as employee in the organization.

A wide range of secondary sources was used to collect secondary data including academic journals, textbooks, previous empirical research on the issue and organizational documents. The use of secondary data is to strengthen the theoretical framework of the study and make sure that the constructs and indicators used are based on the existing body of scholarly writing. The study supports empirical rigor and theory cohesiveness by incorporating the primary and secondary data.

### **Data Collection Technique**

The questionnaire technique of data collection was used, which is a common practice in the organizational and human-resource study due to its efficiency and ability to provide standardized research responses. The questionnaire was designed to be based on a five points Likert scale where strongly disagree to strongly agree were used as the options so that the respondents could clearly and consistently indicate the level of their agreement with each statement.

The concepts of the questionnaire were based on indicators that depict relevant theories and available research work therefore, content validity and conceptual compatibility were ensured. Before the device was distributed, there was careful consideration of the clarity of words and applicability of every statement in order to facilitate the respondents to practice the responses correctly. This was meant to reduce the bias of responses and improve the quality of data collected in general.

### **Operational Definition and Measurement of Variables**

These variables are four key variables of the research and each variable is operationalized with several indicators used to measure it. Leadership style is theorized as an exogenous variable

and measured through indicators that identity transformational, transactional, democratic, authoritarian and laissez faire leadership practices. These measures are meant to capture perception and experience of leadership as employees experience in the day-to-day working situations.

The career development is also placed as an exogenous construct and measured by such indicators as job transfer, education, training and work experience. The dimensions indicate the degree to which the organization provides orderly chances of employee development and professional progression. The nature of work, compensation, promotion opportunity, relationship with supervisors, relationship with co-workers and working condition are some of the indicators used to measure job satisfaction as a mediating variable. The competence of the employees is considered the endogenous construct and measured through the signs of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and work-related abilities.

### Data Analysis Technique

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was applied to the gathered data with the help of the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method, and the use of SmartPLS version 4. The reason why SEM-PLS is the best model to use in the analysis of hybrid models is that it is highly adapted in analyzing models with numerous latent variables and mediation variables. Moreover, this approach does not have strict premises on the data normality and should be used in studies with medium-sized samples.

The process of data analysis was divided into a number of stages. The outer model was firstly tested to determine the validity of the measurement tools using a measurement of convergent validity and internal consistency. Second, the inner model was tested to examine the structure relationship among variables in terms of path coefficients, coefficients of determination and effect-size measures. Third, mediation analysis was carried out to determine the indirect impact of the leadership style and career development on employee competence through job satisfaction. Lastly, standardized root-mean-square residual value was used to evaluate the model fit to provide adequate representation of the proposed model to the empirical data. By following these research steps, the research will produce statistically and theoretically significant findings.

## Result and Discussion

### Outer Model

Outer model testing was conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the research instrument. The following are the results of the outer model test using SEM PLS.

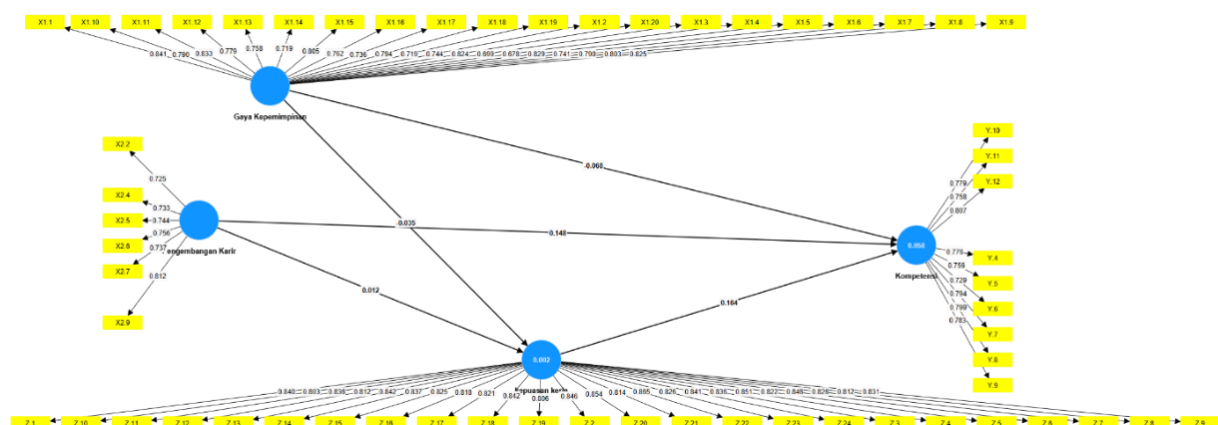


Figure 1. Outer Model Test Results

**Validity**

Table 1. Validity Test Results

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>Outer Loading</b>	<b>Information</b>
Leadership Style (X1)	X1.1	0,600	0,841	Valid
	X1.10		0,790	Valid
	X1.11		0,833	Valid
	X1.12		0,779	Valid
	X1.13		0,758	Valid
	X1.14		0,719	Valid
	X1.15		0,805	Valid
	X1.16		0,762	Valid
	X1.17		0,736	Valid
	X1.18		0,794	Valid
	X1.19		0,719	Valid
	X1.2		0,744	Valid
	X1.20		0,824	Valid
	X1.3		0,700	Valid
	X1.4		0,701	Valid
	X1.5		0,829	Valid
	X1.6		0,741	Valid
	X1.7		0,790	Valid
	X1.8		0,803	Valid
X1.9	0,825	Valid		
Career Development (X2)	X2.2	0,602	0,725	Valid
	X2.4		0,733	Valid
	X2.5		0,744	Valid
	X2.6		0,756	Valid
	X2.7		0,737	Valid
	X2.9		0,812	Valid
Competence (Y)	Y.10	0,565	0,779	Valid
	Y.11		0,758	Valid
	Y.12		0,807	Valid
	Y.4		0,776	Valid
	Y.5		0,756	Valid
	Y.6		0,729	Valid
	Y.7		0,794	Valid
	Y.8		0,799	Valid
	Y.9		0,783	Valid
Job Satisfaction (Z)	Z.1	0,691	0,840	Valid
	Z.10		0,803	Valid
	Z.11		0,836	Valid
	Z.12		0,812	Valid
	Z.13		0,842	Valid
	Z.14		0,837	Valid
	Z.15		0,825	Valid

	Z.16		0,818	Valid
	Z.17		0,821	Valid
	Z.18		0,842	Valid
	Z.19		0,806	Valid
	Z.2		0,846	Valid
	Z.20		0,854	Valid
	Z.21		0,814	Valid
	Z.22		0,865	Valid
	Z.23		0,826	Valid
	Z.24		0,841	Valid
	Z.3		0,836	Valid
	Z.4		0,851	Valid
	Z.5		0,822	Valid
	Z.6		0,846	Valid
	Z.7		0,826	Valid
	Z.8		0,812	Valid
	Z.9		0,831	Valid

Source: PLS-SEM data processing results, 2025

Based on the table above, all indicators in the variables of Leadership Style, Career Development, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Competence have an outer loading value above 0.7 and an AVE value greater than 0.5, so that all constructs are declared valid and have met the criteria of convergent validity and construct validity.

### Reliability

Table 2. Reliability Test Results

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho a)	Information
Leadership Style	0,970	0,891	Reliable
Competence	0,919	0,937	Reliable
Career Development	0,848	0,858	Reliable
Job Satisfaction	0,981	0,990	Reliable

Source: PLS-SEM data processing results, 2025

Based on the results of the reliability test, all variables have Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values above 0.7, namely Leadership Style (0.970; 0.891), Employee Competence (0.919; 0.937), Career Development (0.848; 0.858), and Job Satisfaction (0.981; 0.990), which indicates a very good level of internal consistency. In accordance with Hair et al. (2019), these values confirm that all constructs and research instruments are declared reliable and able to measure concepts consistently.

### Discriminant Validity of Actual Test

Table 3. Discriminant Validity

	Leadership Style	Competence	Career Development	Job satisfaction
Leadership Style				

Competence	0,075			
Career Development	0,136	0,169		
Job Satisfaction	0,075	0,150	0,076	

Source: PLS-SEM data processing results, 2025

Based on the HTMT table above, all correlation values between constructs are below the 0.85–0.90 limit, with the highest value being 0.169. Therefore, all variables are deemed to meet discriminant validity and show no overlap between constructs.

### Structural Model Analysis (Inner Model)

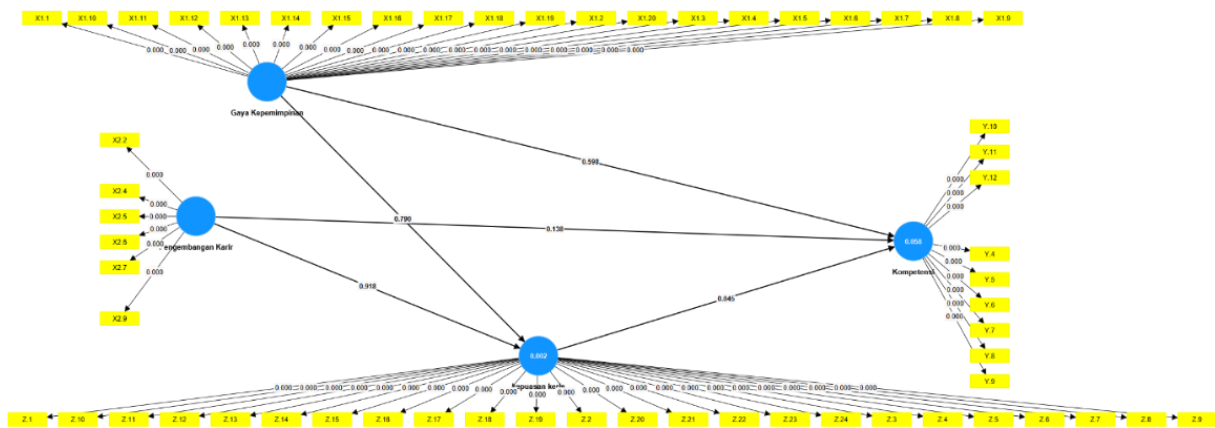


Figure 2. Inner Model Test Results

Source: SEM-PLS Results, 2025

### Coefficient of Determination (R<sup>2</sup>)

An R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.75 indicates that the model can be said to be strong, 0.50 indicates that the model is moderate, and 0.25 indicates that the model is weak (Hair et al., 2022).

Table 4. R<sup>2</sup> Test Results

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Competence	0,058	0,041
Job satisfaction	0,002	-0,010

Source: PLS-SEM data processing results, 2025

Based on the R-Square table, the R<sup>2</sup> value for Employee Competence is 0.058 and for Job Satisfaction is 0.002, indicating that Leadership Style and Career Development only explain 5.8% of the variation in Employee Competence and 0.2% of the variation in Job Satisfaction, respectively. Therefore, both are categorized as low according to Chin (1998).

### Effect Size (F<sup>2</sup>)

The F-Square model value is used to determine the effect size of the endogenous latent variable on the exogenous latent variable. An F<sup>2</sup> value of 0.35 indicates a large/good effect, an F<sup>2</sup> value of 0.15 indicates a moderate effect, and an F<sup>2</sup> value of 0.02 indicates a weak/small effect (Yustiva et al., 2023).

Table 5. R2 Test Results

	<b>Leadership Style</b>	<b>Competence</b>	<b>Career Development</b>	<b>Job satisfaction</b>
Leadership Style		0,005		0,001
Competence				
Career Development		0,023		0,000
Job Satisfaction		0,029		

Source: PLS-SEM data processing results, 2025

The f-square test results show that Leadership Style, Competence, and Career Development have a small influence on Job Satisfaction, with the largest contribution coming from Competence ( $F^2 = 0.029$ ), while the influence of Leadership Style on other variables is very minimal.

**Model Fit**

Table 6. R2 Test Results

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0,056	0,056

Source: PLS-SEM data processing results, 2025

Based on the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) criteria, a research model is considered fit if its SRMR value is  $\leq 0.10$ , and is categorized as very good if its value is  $\leq 0.08$ . In this study, the SRMR value obtained was 0.056, which is below the recommended limit. This indicates that the difference between the covariance matrix predicted by the model and the empirical data is relatively small. Thus, the research model is considered fit and has a very good level of agreement, making it suitable for further analysis of intervariable relationships.

**Direct Hypothesis Testing**

Table 7. Results of Direct Hypothesis Testing

	<b>T statistics</b>	<b>P values</b>	<b>Information</b>
Leadership Style -> Competence	0.527	0.598	No significant effect
Leadership Style -> Job Satisfaction	0.266	0.790	No significant effect
Career Development -> Competence	1.483	0.138	No significant effect
Career Development -> Job Satisfaction	0.103	0.918	No significant effect
Job Satisfaction -> Competence	2.006	0.045	Significant effect

Source: PLS-SEM data processing results, 2025

Based on the table above, the test results indicate that leadership style and career development do not significantly influence competency or job satisfaction, as indicated by all P-values  $>0.05$ . Conversely, job satisfaction significantly influences employee competency ( $T = 2.006$ ;

$P = 0.045$ ). Furthermore, job satisfaction does not mediate the influence of leadership style and career development on employee competency.

### **The Influence of Leadership Style on Employee Competency**

The results of the inner model analysis show a T-statistic of 0.527 and a P-value of 0.598 ( $>0.05$ ), indicating that leadership style does not significantly influence employee competency at PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih. Empirically, these findings indicate that differences in leadership styles implemented by leaders have not been able to produce significant variations in improving employee knowledge, skills, or work attitudes. These results are further supported by the competency R-Square value of 0.058, indicating that only 5.8 percent of the variation in employee competency can be explained by the independent variables in the model, including leadership style and career development. The remaining 94.2 percent is influenced by factors outside the research model.

These findings illustrate that employee competency in the Pertamina workplace is largely determined by standardized work systems and procedures, technical training, and formal career development policies implemented by the company, rather than by the leadership behavior of direct superiors. In a study of Human Resource Management (HRM), as stated by Mukminin (2019) and Hamali (2018), improving employee competency is the result of integrated HRM functions, such as training and development, performance evaluation, and job placement, and is not solely determined by individual leadership style.

According to the organizational behavior theory proposed by Robbins and Judge (2015), a leader's influence on the behavior and competency of subordinates depends heavily on the characteristics of the organization and the level of autonomy individuals have within the work environment. In the technical and hierarchical work structure of PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih, strategic decisions and employee competency development are largely determined by corporate policy, not by personal leadership styles at the operational level. This situation may explain why the influence of leadership style on competency is not statistically significant, because the standardized work system makes changes in the interpersonal style of leaders have little impact on employee competency outcomes, which are more dependent on certification, training, and field work experience.

Furthermore, based on the classical leadership theory proposed by Stogdill (in Benmira & Agboola, 2021), leadership effectiveness is determined by the leader's ability to adapt their behavior to the needs and maturity level of their subordinates. If the leadership style applied fails to optimally stimulate employee learning and empowerment, its impact on competency development will be limited. At PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih, it can be assumed that the leadership pattern applied tends to be oriented towards a structural and procedural approach, thus not fully encouraging a participatory style that allows for individual initiative and development. This situation has the potential to prevent leadership from directly contributing to improving employee technical and managerial skills. Nevertheless, the results of this study still have important implications for human resource management. The insignificant effect of leadership style on competency does not mean leadership is irrelevant, but rather indicates the need to adjust the leadership approach towards a more participatory, inspirational, and coaching-oriented style.

### **The Impact of Career Development on Employee Competence**

Based on the results of the inner model analysis using SmartPLS, a T-statistic of 1.784 and a P-value of 0.075 ( $>0.05$ ) were obtained, indicating that career development does not have a statistically significant effect on employee competency at PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih.

The R-Square value for the competency variable of 0.058 indicates that the independent variables in the model, including career development, only explain 5.8 percent of the variation in employee competency, while the remaining 94.2 percent is influenced by factors outside the research model. However, the positive direction of the coefficient indicates a tendency for career development to potentially improve employee competency, although this effect is not yet empirically strong.

This finding aligns with the Human Resource Management concept proposed by Mukminin (2019) and Hamali (2018), which states that career development is part of the HR development function to improve employee work capabilities. However, to have a significant impact on competency, career development must be supported by relevant training, ongoing coaching, and employee motivation and engagement. If career development is only carried out administratively, such as job rotation without structured learning, then its contribution to improving competence will be limited.

From the perspective of organizational behavior theory (Robbins & Judge, 2015), the effectiveness of career development is also influenced by employee perceptions of fairness, opportunity, and organizational support. As an organization with a technical and hierarchical operating system, career development at PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih tends to be centralized and follows corporate policies, thus not fully aligning with the needs and potential of individual employees. This situation explains why career development has not been able to become a learning experience that significantly improves employee work competency.

Furthermore, in work environments with standardized production systems such as the energy industry, employee competency development is more determined by technical training, professional certification, and field work experience than by structural career development policies. This reinforces the view that career development will only have an optimal impact when integrated with clear career planning, superior support, and learning opportunities relevant to job demands. The results of this study indicate that career development has not had a significant impact on employee competency at PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih because it remains oriented towards formal structures and has not been fully linked to learning and skills improvement processes.

### **The Influence of Leadership Style on Job Satisfaction**

The results of the inner model analysis using SmartPLS showed a T-statistic of 0.317 and a P-value of 0.751 ( $>0.05$ ), indicating that leadership style does not significantly influence employee job satisfaction at PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih. This finding is supported by the R-square value for job satisfaction of 0.002, indicating that the independent variables in the model, including leadership style and career development, only explain 0.2 percent of the variation in job satisfaction, while the remaining 99.8 percent is influenced by factors outside the research model. This indicates that differences in leadership styles implemented by leaders have not resulted in significant changes in employee job satisfaction levels.

Theoretically, these results suggest that employee job satisfaction at PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih is determined more by systemic factors than individual leadership behaviors. From a Human Resource Management perspective (Mukminin, 2019; Hamali, 2018), job satisfaction is the result of the integration of various HR policies, such as compensation, work environment, and career management. In large, structured organizations like Pertamina, institutional policies tend to be more dominant in shaping job satisfaction than direct relationships between leaders and subordinates. Consistent with Robbins and Judge's (2015) theory of organizational

behavior, the effectiveness of leadership style in influencing work attitudes is highly dependent on the organizational context and work culture.

In a bureaucratic and hierarchical structure like PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih, interpersonal interaction between leaders and employees is relatively limited, thus the role of leadership style in shaping job satisfaction is less prominent. Employees tend to assess job satisfaction based on objective factors such as job stability, welfare systems, and long-term career opportunities. Furthermore, based on the concept of job satisfaction, dimensions such as compensation, promotion opportunities, and working conditions have a more dominant influence than relationships with superiors. This situation explains why leadership style has not been a primary factor in increasing employee job satisfaction in Pertamina's environment, which is oriented towards welfare and job security.

### **The Influence of Career Development on Job Satisfaction**

The results of the inner model analysis using SmartPLS showed a T-statistic of 0.258 and a P-value of 0.796 ( $>0.05$ ), indicating that career development had no significant effect on employee job satisfaction at PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih. The R-square value for job satisfaction of 0.002 indicates that the independent variables in the model, including career development and leadership style, only explained 0.2 percent of the variation in job satisfaction, while the remaining 99.8 percent was influenced by factors outside the research model. This finding suggests that differences in career development systems have not resulted in significant changes in employee job satisfaction levels.

Conceptually, career development should contribute positively to job satisfaction, as explained in the Human Resource Management theory by Mukminin (2019) and Hamali (2018). However, the results of this study indicate that career development at PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih is still perceived as a formal and bureaucratic process, following centralized corporate policies, and therefore does not fully reflect the needs, aspirations, and professional interests of individual employees. This situation leads to career development being viewed more as an administrative procedure than as a means of self-actualization that can increase job satisfaction.

From the perspective of organizational behavior theory (Robbins & Judge, 2015), job satisfaction is influenced by the extent to which an organization can meet individual expectations regarding their work. In Pertamina's hierarchical and standardized work environment, employee job satisfaction tends to be based more on job stability, compensation systems, and a safe work environment than on career development opportunities. This explains why career development has not been a dominant factor in shaping employee job satisfaction.

In this study, career development did not have a significant effect on employee job satisfaction at PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih because existing career development practices were not fully perceived as a means of self-development and fulfilling employee psychological needs. Nevertheless, career development still has strategic potential to increase job satisfaction if designed in a more transparent, fair manner, and oriented towards the needs and aspirations of individual employees.

### **Job Satisfaction as a Mediating Variable in the Effect of Leadership Style and Career Development on Employee Competence**

The results of the inner model analysis using the bootstrapping method indicate that job satisfaction does not act as a significant mediating variable in the relationship between leadership style and career development on employee competence at PT Pertamina EP Zone 4

Prabumulih, as indicated by the insignificant T-statistics and P-value of the mediation path (P-value >0.05). The low R-square value for competence of 0.058 and the R-square value for job satisfaction of 0.002 indicate that the mediation model is only able to explain a small portion of the variation in the dependent variable.

These findings indicate that job satisfaction does not yet function as an effective psychological mechanism in bridging the influence of leadership style and career development on employee competency. In the context of a technical and hierarchical organization like PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih, interpersonal relationships between leaders and subordinates, as well as career development opportunities, tend to operate structurally and administratively. Consequently, job satisfaction is more passive, driven by job stability and well-being, rather than as an intrinsic drive to improve competency.

Furthermore, although career development has the potential to enhance professionalism, the process is not fully based on individual potential and achievement, limiting its impact on job satisfaction. This situation makes job satisfaction insufficient to encourage continuous learning and employee competency development. To enhance this mediating role, a more participatory and inspirational leadership approach is needed, along with a transparent, fair, and individual capacity-building career development system, so that job satisfaction can serve as a driver for continuous competency improvement.

## Conclusion

Based on the results of research at PT Pertamina EP Zone 4 Prabumulih regarding the influence of leadership style and career development on employee competency with job satisfaction as a mediating variable, it can be concluded that leadership style does not have a significant effect on employee competency with a T-statistics value of 0.527 and a P-value of 0.598 (>0.05), and career development also does not have a significant effect on employee competency with a T-statistics value of 1.784 and a P-value of 0.075 (>0.05). In addition, leadership style does not have a significant effect on job satisfaction with a T-statistics value of 0.317 and a P-value of 0.751 (>0.05), as well as career development on job satisfaction with a T-statistics value of 0.258 and a P-value of 0.796 (>0.05). The results of the mediation test show that job satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between leadership style and career development on employee competency, where the influence of leadership style on competency has a T-statistic value of 0.527 with a P-value of 0.598 and career development on competency has a T-statistic value of 1.483 with a P-value of 0.138, both of which are not significant. However, job satisfaction is proven to have a direct and significant effect on employee competency with a T-statistic value of 2.006 and a P-value of 0.045 (<0.05). This finding indicates that employee competency is more influenced by job satisfaction factors and other aspects such as training, work experience, and company technical policies than leadership style and career development which are still formal and administrative.

## Suggestion

For future research, it is recommended to strengthen career development that is oriented towards employee needs through cross-division rotation, mentoring, and competency-based training integrated with the improvement of technical, managerial, interpersonal, and soft skills. Theoretically, further research is recommended to expand the model by adding variables such as employee engagement, organizational commitment, learning culture, or job involvement, using a mixed methods approach, and conducting comparisons between units or operational areas to obtain a more comprehensive understanding and stronger generalization of the results.

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