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The Role of Human Capital, Motivation, and Supervisor Sponsorship in Predicting Career Success in the Perspective of Employees in Indonesia

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Article Info	Abstract
	Purpose - This study aims to predicts career success from the perspective of employees in Indonesia by identifying the influential factors. Based on the theory of career mobility systems, human capital and motivation (contest-based) as well as supervisor sponsorship (sponsorship-based) were examined as influential factors. **Methodology** - The study procedures were carrried out using a quantitative method with a confirmatory design. The sample population comprised 210 employees working in various companies in Indonesia who were selected using the purposive sampling method. In addition, data analysis was carried out using Structural Equation Modeling with LISREL program. **Findings** - The results showed that human capital and motivation in employees' settings in Indonesia did not predict career success. However, the hypothesis test revealed that supervisor sponsorship was a significant predictor. Based on these results, employees were encouraged to improve career in companies through leader-member exchange and mentorship. **Originality** - The results were expected to contribute to the field of human resource management and strategic management, for developing literature on human capital, leader-member exchange, and career mobility systems theory. This study revealed the limitations of human capital and motivation in predicting career success among employees in Indonesia.

1. Introduction

Career success is an intriguing topic of study in the context of organizational behavior. Several studies have reported that individuals in companies typically aspire to achieve a successful career (Tucker, 2018). In addition, discussions in both employees and organizational circles are largely focused on this topic. At present, several companies often emphasize the management of employees career to achieve significant advancement (Augustinah et al., 2022). Companies also aim to identify factors influencing career success to facilitate the selection and development of high-potential individuals (Ng & Feldman, 2014). This topic has attracted significant interest in various fields, including management science, applied psychology, and career success science, with several studies being conducted to identify the influential factors (De Vos et al., 2011; Enache

et al., 2011; Hogan et al., 2013; Zacher, 2014). Companies also receive insights to design effective career systems that assist employees in obtaining a proper development path during their working years (Halim et al., 2021). Results showed that the majority of studies discussing the topic were conducted in Western countries using quantitative method, providing opportunities for future exploration across countries and cultures (Poon et al., 2015; Wayne et al., 1999). In Indonesia, there are limited studies on career success of employees with various occupations and levels in the management literature. Given the importance of career to employees and companies, it is essential to investigate factors influencing career success in Indonesia. A previous empirical report identified education, intelligence, personality, motivation, family status, gender, networking, human capital, and mentoring as major influential factors (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Heslin Peter A., 2005; Judge et al., 2010; Kistyanto, 2008; Wayne et al., 1999). Despite varying perspectives and professional experiences, various study teams anticipate similar results. A holistic exploration of the complete model of professional success that incorporates the supervisor's function and individuals' contribution part is expected to facilitate the comprehension of career success.

In this study, Turner's (1960) theoretical framework was used which delineates two competing norms in career mobility systems, namely contest-based and sponsorship-based. This theoretical framework also serves as the foundation for the study hypothesis, that human capital, motivation, and supervisor sponsorship all predict career success. The contest-based system provides fair and open competitions for employees' advancement choices, where performance is determined by efforts, abilities, education, and training. According to the planned contest norm, these factors foster motivation and human capital qualities that predict career success (Djajasinga et al., 2021). Motivation has been reported to have a significant influence on efforts to perform successfully, and human capital with the necessary degree of education for work, work experience, and training is expected to make advancements. Based on Human Capital theory proposed by Becker (1975), employees typically make rational decisions about personal investment, determining whether to invest more time, effort, and money in education, training, and experience (Inrawan et al., 2022). This investment is expected to offer various benefits, including an increase in wages. Employees with a higher level of education have greater prospects for success due to their wealth of resources. Companies that help individuals advance in career often rely on their efforts, talents, education, and training (Kistyanto, 2008). A previous report revealed that educational attainment, wage increase, and promotion assessment were positively associated with management advancement (Bretz D. R. & Judge A. T., 1994; Sheridan et al., 1997; Tharenou & Latimer, 1994). Human capital is often created through job tenure and organizational tenure. Job tenure is defined by the amount of time employees have been in their current position, which is related to continuous work rather than finished labor (OECD, 2001). The period spent by employees in companies is referred to as organizational tenure, which is widely considered a significant factor in determining success at work. This is because individuals with extended organizational tenure often perform better due to the accumulation of knowledge and important experience. Several studies have shown that training is a type of investment that can enhance and boost human capital. For both men and women, training and development opportunities are favorably associated with management level and compensation (Tharenou & Latimer, 1994). This is demonstrated through the norms of a contest-based career mobility system that companies reward individuals with a high level of human capital, particularly employees with a higher degree of education, longer job tenure, and organization tenure.

According to Vroom's (1960) expectancy-valence motivation theory, employees' actions are driven by the anticipation of outcomes resulting from their selected course of action. Individuals are also promoted to exert effort when their endeavors are expected to yield high performance and

play a significant role in attaining work value (Katzell & Thompson, 1990). Effort levels also increase when there is a perception that strong performance is likely to provide intrinsic and external incentives (Afwa et al., 2021). To evaluate the expectancy-valence theory of motivation, several studies have examined factors such as weekly working hours and work centrality as indicators of effort, and anticipated compensation and promotions as representations of desired outcomes. A previous study revealed that work motivation coud be quantified using three indicators, including typical weekly working hours, predicted future income, and work centrality (Whitely & Dougherty, 1991). Consequently, average weekly hours worked and predicted future earnings were reported to be positively associated with remuneration (Judge et al., 1995). Work centrality is described as the emphasis individuals place on work in comparison to other aspects of their lives such as leisure, family, and religion. Individuals who are overly focused on work have a plot of identity ascribed to job-related events (Borges & Tamayo, 2001 in Moura & Oliveira-Silva, 2019). Motivation can also be quantified through career planning, which is based on Hall and Foster's (1977) goal-setting model of psychological achievement. Career planning concept was established and supported by (Gould, 1979). According to the model, career planning leads to the execution of professional objectives, which facilitates accomplishment. In addition, the primary concept is that a plan is a type of goal setting that leads to greater expenditure to accomplish the objective. This indicates that career planning must be followed by attempts to put ideas into action or improve motivation. Salary and career participation have also been reported to have a significant association with the concept. Aryee & Debrah (1993) revealed that planning was indirectly connected to employees satisfaction and commitment through career strategy, which comprises converting aspirations into action. Wayne et al. (1999) discovered that three factors, namely working hours per week, ambition or desire for upward mobility, and career planning, positively influenced pay progression and were associated with promotion ratings. Therefore, employees motivation is valued by companies in terms of compensation increases and regarded favorably by superiors, influencing their judgment of promotions.

In line with these results, individuals who achieve professional success in a sponsorship-based career mobility system receive high levels of assistance and direction from superiors. The provision of strong mentoring often leads to more promotions and satisfactory compensation (Wayne et al., 1999). Therefore, the norm of career mobility based on sponsorship assumes that the supervisor provides support to some selected employees while excluding others. The similarity of political views in companies and alumni can explain why supervisors and employees support each other. Employee ties or relationships (personal contracts) with different individuals in companies aid in the formation of supervisor sponsorship relationships (Kistyanto, 2008). The notion of sponsorship-based career mobility system predicts that certain employees receive preferential treatment from more senior supervisors (Dreher et al., 1991). Individuals who receive career-related help and coaching are often selected for assistance. The two basic kinds of assistance in this context are leader-member exchange and mentorship. High degrees of trust, support, and contact between superiors and subordinates are required for high-quality leader-member interchange (Dienesch & Liden, 1986). The quality of the relationship between supervisors and subordinates is represented by leader-member interchange, where the supervisor's emotional concern or care is frequently a characteristic of the relationship (Liden et al., 1997). A previous report revealed that mentorship is associated with professional success in terms of income and promotions (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Scandura, 1992; Whitely & Dougherty, 1991). Career development and psycho-social assistance are the two primary goals of support through mentoring. Supervisor typically give their subordinates exposure and visibility in the business, demanding work, and protection in career development support. In addition, supervisor befriends selected

subordinates, reinforces a sense of self-worth, and provides advice as part of psycho-social support (Kram & Isabella, 1985). In keeping with the norms of contest-based career mobility systems through human resources and motivation, support (sponsor-based career mobility system) through mentorship is shown to be related to improved income and professional satisfaction, which are indicators of career success (Fagenson, 1994). The study's analytical results (Choy et al., 2016) also support the impact of leader-member interchange on job performance. Therefore, this study aims to determine the effect of human capital, motivation, and supervisor sponsorship on career success indicators from the perspective of Indonesian employees. Based on the study framework, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H1: Human capital positively predicts career success

H2: Motivation positively predicts career success

H3: Supervisor sponsorship positively predicts career success

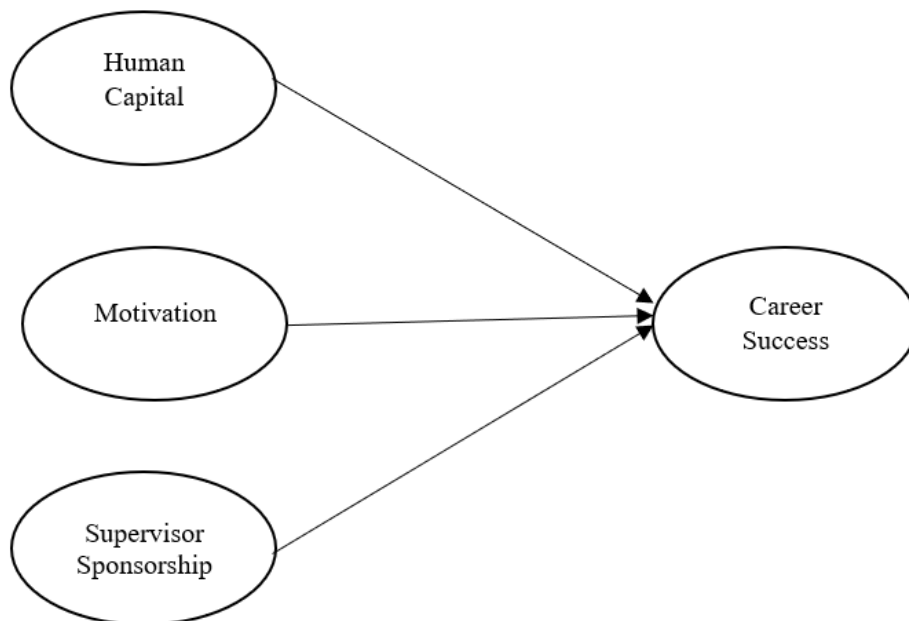The conceptual model of this study is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model

2.   Research Methods

This study used a quantitative method with a confirmatory design, utilizing purposive sampling to select employees from enterprises based in Indonesia as respondents. Previous studies on career success had predominantly focused on Western nations, to provide more consistent results. These objectives were established to analyze career success across countries, cultures, jobs, and companies, with a specific focus on Indonesia. In addition, Indonesia was known for the diversity with several tribes and faiths. By capturing the demographic characteristics of the sample, it became possible to accurately identify the factors that determine career success. Data collection involved disseminating questionnaires in the form of statements and questions meticulously designed to measure the variables of human capital, motivation, and supervisor sponsorship concerning employees career success. This study relied exclusively on self-report data for all variables. The operational definitions and indicators utilized were comprehensively detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Variables and Operational Definitions

Variable	Operational Definitions	Indicator
Human Capital (Becker, 1960)	Employees had a rational choice to invest for themselves.	Educational Level Job Tenure Organization Tenure Training
Theory of Motivation Expectancy-Valency (Vroom, 1964)	Employees could behave or act in a specific manner because some were driven to select specific behaviors or other actions based on the consequences expected.	Working hours Desire for mobility Career planning
Supervisor Sponsorship (Dreher dan Brez 1991)	Supervisors provided support and mentoring for career of employees selected.	Leader-Member Exchange Mentoring
Career Success (Judge et al, 1995)	Employee development and experience relating to their employment were viewed objectively and subjectively from time to time.	Salary increases Career Satisfaction Promotion Assessment

Source: processed data

Employees' education levels could be examined by asking, "What degree of education did you currently have as an employee at the location where you work?", Employees' Job Tenure was determined by asking them, "How long have you been in your present job position and supervisor role at companies where you work?", Organization Tenure was assessed by asking employees, "How long have you worked at your present company?", Training was measured by asking employees, "how many training and development programs, both outside and within companies, had been attended while working at companies?".

The variable of motivation was measured through working hours, with employees being asked, "On average, how many hours per week did you spend working for the company?", the desire for mobility was adopted using a modified version of the 6-item statement developed by Landau and Hammer (1986) in (Wayne et al., 1999). Career planning was measured using 6 items developed by (Gould, 1979). Leader-Member Exchange was assessed based on employee responses by (Liden et al., 1993), which were originally developed by (Scandura & Graen, 1984). In addition, 4 statement items regarding mentoring were adopted and modified from (Noe, 1988), and 3 items were adapted from (Whitely & Dougherty, 1991). Employees' career success could be evaluated by asking, "What percentage of wage rise did you earn in the previous two years?", while their promotion was assessed using a modified version of the 4-item statement developed by Landau and Hammer (1986) in Wayne et al., (1999). Moreover, career satisfaction was be measured using 5 statement items from (Greenhaus et al., 1990).

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with LISREL 8.8 program was utilized to examine the validity, reliability, and assumptions in this work. SEM involved 2 standard models, which were measurement and a structural model. Several assumptions must be satisfied when assessing the structural model, including sample size, normality, and model appropriateness test. The model fit was assessed using the following criteria, namely (1) X2-Chi-Square, a low chi-square value indicated an excellent model fit, (2) Goodness of fit index (GFI) values ranged from 0 to 1, with higher values suggesting a good fit, (3) Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA),

Acceptable RMSEA value was less than 0.8, (4) Adjusted Goodness of Fit (AGFI), Acceptable value ≥ 0.90.

3.   Results and Discussions

After the survey, questionnaires were distributed in the form of Google Form (G-Form) through social media such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and others, which were provided to employees of various Indonesian companies. Out of the 222 questionnaires completed, thorough screening and completeness checks were conducted, resulting in 12 questionnaires (5.4%) being excluded. Consequently, the maximum number of surveys that could be processed was 210 representing 94.5% of the total collected. Respondents' characteristics in this study included gender, age, type of company, and location of employees. The demographic analysis revealed that the majority of respondents were male (71%), with the largest group aged 31-40 years (45.2%). Most respondents were employed in banking companies (13.8%) and the highest concentration of respondents worked in North Sumatra (40.5%).

Table 2. Univariate Normality Data Test

Variable	Skewness		Kurtosis		Skewness and Kurtosis	
	Z-Score	**P-Value**	**Z-Score**	**P-Value**	**Chi-Square**	**P-Value**
Human Capital	0.029	0.977	0.085	0.932	0.008	0.996
Motivasi	-0.003	0.998	0.076	0.939	0.006	0.997
Supervisor Sponsorship	-0.037	0.970	0.036	0.971	0.003	0.999
Career Success	-0.002	0.999	0.099	0.921	0.010	0.995

Source: processed data

Several disputes on the assumptions and outcomes of data processing using LISREL software, specifically: (a) Evaluation of Sample Adequacy: The total number of samples collected and processed in this study was 210, therefore, the necessary minimum sample size was satisfied for sample adequacy. (b) Evaluation of Data Normality: The normality test results showed that the data were normally distributed, both univariately and multivariate, as evidenced by P-Values of Skewness and Kurtosis > 0.05. The detailed results of the data normality test in this study were presented in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 3. Multivariate Normality Data Test

Skewness			Kurtosis			Skewness and Kurtosis	
Value	**Z-Score**	**P-Value**	**Value**	**Z-Score**	**P-Value**	**Z-Score**	**P-Value**
0.362	-1.237	0.216	24.928	1.193	0.233	2.953	0.228

Source: processed data

This study employed a 2-stage method, with the first stage which consisted of evaluating the measurement model or Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). For this initial step, the measurement model was assessed for data appropriateness, validity, and reliability. The structural model in the first stage outcome measurement model was then evaluated in the second stage to develop a Full SEM model (Hair Jr. et al., 2019). The measurement model was evaluated for each variable, such as human capital, motivation, supervisor sponsorship, and career success, to determine the validity

and reliability of indicators and the overall applicability of the model. Table 4 summarized the results of the measurement model evaluation for each variable.

Table 4. Evaluation of Measurement Model for Each Study Variable

Variable	Loading Factor Standardization Value	Goodness of Fit Test	Conclusion
Human Capital	1 out of 4 measurement items that met the Cut-value standardized Loading Factor ($\geq$0.50)	GFI criteria declared Fit: • X2- Chi-Square (5.31 (P = 0.070) • GFI (0.99) • RMSEA (0.089) • AGFI (0.94)	Human Capital's measurement items were considered valid, reliable, and fit.
Motivation	3 of the 13 measurement items met the Cut-value standardized Loading Factor ($\geq$0.50) after modification indices	GFI criteria declared Fit: • X2- Chi-Square (0.00 (P = 1) • GFI (0.90) • RMSEA (0.08) • AGFI (0.9)	Variable Motivation was assessed using 3 statement items that had been determined to be valid and trustworthy concerning career planning.
Supervisor Sponsorship	10 out of 14 measurement items met the Cut-Value Standardized Loading Factor ($\geq$0.50) after modification indices	GFI criteria stated Fit/marginal fit: • GFI (0.82) • NFI (0.86) • CFI (0.88) • AIC and CAIC	Supervisor Sponsorship variable was measured using 10 valid and reliable fit statement items.
Career Success	5 out of 10 measurement items that met the Cut-Value Standardized Loading Factor ($\geq$0.50)	GFI criteria stated Fit/marginal fit: • GFI (0.84) • NFI (0.84) • CFI (0.84) • AIC and CAIC	Career Success variable was measured using 5 valid, reliable, and fit statement items.

Source: processed data

After the measurement model had been confirmed fit, valid, and reliable, the next step involved evaluating the structural model by integrating the validated measurement model into it. The model suitability test was conducted during the testing stage, using the same criteria as those applied in the measurement model suitability test. The output results, which included the structural model flowchart and appropriateness test were illustrated in Figure 2 and Table 5.
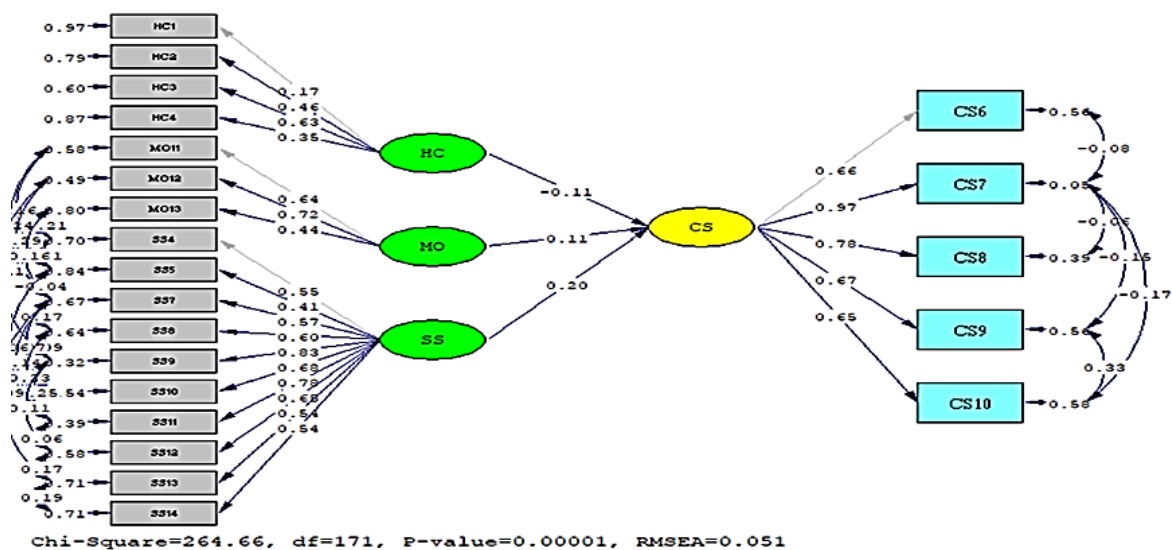

Chi-Square=264.66, df=171, P-value=0.00001, RMSEA=0.051

Figure 2. Structural Model

The results of the analysis indicated that the previous model had not been fit, as revealed by several test results showing values close to the cut-off thresholds, rendering the model marginally fit. Modifications were made using modified indices to improve the model fit, which involved correlating the error covariance between the statement items of each construct. Based on these results, the analysis of goodness of fit test output showed that all criteria met the cut-off values. This indicated that the structural model was appropriate and had achieved a satisfactory fit. The details of these results were presented in the following table.

Table 5. Output Results of Structural Model Suitability Test

Goodness of Fit Criteria	*Cut-off Value*	Result	Conclusion
X^{2-} Chi-Square	Lower (P> 0.05)	264.66 (P = 0.0001)	Fit
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.90	Fit
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0.051	Fit
AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.85	Marginal Fit
NFI	≥ 0.90	0.90	Fit
NNFI	≥ 0.90	0.94	Fit
CFI	≥ 0.90	0.96	Fit
IFI	≥ 0.90	0.96	Fit
AIC	Smaller value than independence and closer to the saturated model	M*= 428.66 S***= 506.00 I***= 2804.73	Fit
CAIC	Smaller value than independence and closer to the saturated model	M = 785.13 S = 1605.82 I = 2804.73	Fit

Source: processed data

Based on the study of the model suitability test output results, it satisfied the cut-off value for all criteria, indicating that the was appropriate or fit. After confirming that the estimated structural models met the appropriateness test conditions, the next step was to examine the relationships in the structural model. The structural equation was derived from the output of LISREL 8.8 as followed:

$$CS = -16HC + 0.15MO + 0.097SS, Errorvar = 0.44, R^2 = 0.065$$
$$(0.17) \quad (0.11) \quad (0.039) \quad\quad (0.093)$$
$$-0.93 \quad 1.39 \quad 2.48 \quad\quad 4.73$$

Figure 3. Structural Equation

The structural model equation was analyzed, and the t-value of the estimated coefficient greater than or equal to 1.96 indicated statistical significance. Subsequently, the coefficient value was examined to determine the hypothesized relationship, and the coefficient of determination (R^2) was analyzed to ascertain the variance of the exogenous variables explaining the endogenous variables. According to the structural equation, the variables human capital, motivation, and supervisor sponsorship could explain 6.5% of career success ($R^2 = 0.065$).

Table 6. Summary of Hypothesis Testing Analysis Results

Hypothesis	Relationship Between Variables	Information
H_1	Human capital positively predicts career success	Not supported
H_2	Motivation positively predicts career success	Not supported
H_3	Supervisor sponsorship positively predicts career success	Supported

Source: processed data

This study investigated the factors that influence individual career success in companies from the perspective of employees in Indonesia. Specifically, it examines the roles of human capital, motivation, and supervisor sponsorship in predicting career success. This was a survey study conducted on a sample of Indonesian employees. The analysis results did not support the hypothesis that human capital positively predicted career success. Contrarily, human capital was found to have no significant impact on employees career performance. According to Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1975), employees make rational decisions to invest in themselves by working longer hours or enhancing their education, training, and experience. The norms of career mobility system also suggested that supervisors reward individuals who demonstrated strong human capital values, such as higher levels of education, longer tenure in their positions in companies, and more frequent participation in training programs. However, the degree of education, duration of job tenure, length of employment at the current company, and the number of training programs attended, did not significantly predicted career success. The results could be attributed to the diversity of the samples, because respondents were not selected based on their specific profession, leading to a varied amount of education and training followed by a different level of career success across companies. The report's limitation was highlighted as a good proposal for future studies on employees who work in one field of employment so that it could give an accurate assessment of how education and training impact career success.

The hypothesis that motivation positively predicted career success was similarly unsupported by the structural equation analysis results, indicating that employees' career success was not significantly predicted by motivation. According to Vrom (1964), employees could be driven to behave or act in a particular manner based on the anticipated outcomes of their action. It was initially assumed that motivation could predict career success through factors such as the length of time employees had been with companies, their desire to relocate, and career planning efforts. Further studies must explore this assumption further. The results suggested that the statement items used to evaluate motivation were accurate and valid, primarily when assessing career planning. This could be due to potential bias in the responses provided by respondents. Since working hours and desire were not adequately quantified as indicators, motivation did not significantly predicted professional success. In contrast, supervisor sponsorship predicted employee career success. According to the framework developed by Dreher and Brez (1991), employees who received career-related assistance and training from supervisors were more likely to be optimally supported. Supervisor sponsorship, which included leader-member interchange and mentoring, significantly influences employees' level of professional achievement, according to the third hypothesis. These results were consistent with previous studies (Wayne, et.al. 1999), suggesting that supervisors in Indonesian companies positively promoted their subordinates or employees by assisting in work process.

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, the study found that employees' career success was negatively predicted by human capital, with the impact of education and training varying across different fields. The study's limitation included not confining years of service to employees with over five years, which affected the quantification of career success. Motivation did not predict career success due to the invalid and unreliable measures of working hours and mobility desire, suggesting potential respondent misunderstanding and bias. However, supervisor sponsorship positively and significantly predicted professional achievement through leader-member interaction and mentorship. Good superior-subordinate relationships were noted in Indonesian companies, particularly in the banking sector in North Sumatra, with a male-dominated respondent pool aged

31 to 40. The study's use of self-report data suggested a need for future research to obtain employee data from secondary sources and to focus on specific company types. The study's cross-sectional nature limited causal inferences, highlighting the need for longitudinal methods. Future research should use suitable measurement scales, focus on employees with at least five years of service, and consider companies like manufacturing and technology-based services. The study underscored the importance of supervisor sponsorship in enhancing career success through leader-member exchange and mentorship, suggesting that improved supervisor-employee interactions could boost productivity and meet organizational objectives.

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