

# THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT: PERCEIVED SUPERVISOR SUPPORT RELATED TO PERFORMANCE

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## ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This article examines the effect of perceived supervisor support on the job performance of lecturers at five private universities in the area of the Lembaga Layanan Perguruan Tinggi V with perceived organizational support as a mediator.

**Methods:** This research is quantitative research by testing the relationship between variables. The data collected by accidental sampling through online and offline surveys using a questionnaire instrument.

**Analysis data:** The data was processed using multiple linear regression analysis and mediation testing using the method Baron & Kenny (1986).

**Result and discussions:** The findings prove that there is a full mediation effect of perceived organizational support on the influence of supervisor support on job performance.

**Conclusion:** Organizational leaders need to encourage the Head of the Study Program on these cases as a supervisor from lecturers to strengthen perceived supervisor support which will strengthen perceived organizational support and job performance. However, because the influence relationship is based on felt obligation, testing the presence of the reciprocal principle becomes an opportunity for future research.

**Keywords:** Perceived organizational support; perceived supervisor support; job performance.

## INTRODUCTION

This article tries to link Perceived Supervisor Support (PSS) and Perceived Organizational Support (POS) in understanding Job Performance (JP) specifically on lecturer performance. The problem of lecturer performance is focused on the task of lecturers in Indonesia which is called the Tridharma of lecturers. At the level of education, things that are not ideal can be found in the demographic data of lecturers based on the education level of Private Higher Education (PHE) lecturers at the Higher Education Service Institute or Lembaga Layanan Perguruan Tinggi (LLDikti) V with 1,091 lecturers with doctoral degrees out of 7,493 doctors, or only 14.56% (Achjari *et al.*, 2020). The performance of lecturers in the field of scientific publications in Indonesia in 2019 produced 46,344 articles but this number is not comparable to the number of lecturers in Indonesia as many as 296,040 lecturers

(Pddikti.kemdikbud.go.id, 2019). Lecturer performance is also reflected in the results of the study program accreditation assessment which measures aspects of the lecturer's Tridharma (education and teaching, research, and community service). Achjari *et al.* (2020) presented study program accreditation showing that of the 660 Study Programs at PHE LLDikti V only 142 (21.55%) received "A" accreditation and only 6 (.95%) received "Superior" accreditation showing performance in teaching and community service that did not meet university national standards. The existence of a phenomenon related to the problem of lecturer performance that is not yet ideal is studied related to its antecedents, especially the role of the Head of the Study Program through his support (PSS) and the role of organizational support (POS) as matters related to performance (JP) from lecturers.

The concept of POS, since it first

appeared in the article by Eisenberger et al. (1986), has gained academic acceptance for its clear antecedents, including JP and its impact on well-being that benefits workers and organizations (Eisenberger et al., 2020). The form of POS through favourable treatment of workers and policies that benefit workers (not because of organizational obligations) has presented a norm of reciprocity in the form of a feeling of responsibility to help the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1997).

The closeness of workers with their supervisors studied in the PSS concept observed was to be able to shape workers' perceptions of the organization or POS (Eisenberger et al., 2010). Workers identify organizational orientation to their supervisors in their interactions (Eisenberger et al., 2010) although supervisors can choose to take their interests, the realization of the organization is often still seen from the behavioural choices taken by organizational leaders who are seen as representatives of the organization by subordinates. PSS has made a positive contribution to the formation of subordinate POS.

Previous research has linked the influence of PSS on JP, for Gillet, Colombat, Michinov, Pronost, and Fouquereau (2013) and then Oentoro, Popaitoon, and Kongchan (2016). However, the inconsistency of results is still found, with the insignificant effect of PSS on JP (e.g. Nagami *et al.*, 2010 and Zahrah *et al.*, 2019). It is suspected that there are other variables that mediate the effect of PSS on JP. The opinion that supervisors often considered as organizational representations that shape perceptions of it concern for workers (Eisenberger et al., 2010) leads to the situation of POS mediating the influence of PSS on JP. Research by Eisenberger et al. (2002) prove the contribution of PSS to POS, as well as robust evidence regarding the effect of POS on performance (Rockstuhl et al., 2020).

## THEORETICAL BASIS

Perceived supervisor support explained the extent to which employees believe their supervisor cares about their well-being and values their contribution to the organization (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Perceived supervisor support is the extent to which employees believe their superiors value the contributions that employees make, offer assistance, and care about the welfare of employees (Burns, 2016). Akram, Kamran, Iqbal, Habibah, and Atif Ishaq (2018) state that providing supervisory support to employees at work may be a strategic way to increase employee work engagement.

Perceived organizational support is defined as the degree to which employees believe that the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986; Robbins & Judge, 2013). Organizational support is related to the management's desire to compensate the various efforts of its employees, provide welfare assistance, provide solutions to problems at work, and ensure a comfortable work environment (Puah, Ong, & Chong, 2016). The impact of job support makes employees feel valued and experience less stress, feel more satisfied with work and reduce employee intentions to leave the organization (Joiner, 2007).

Job performance is expressed as an individual's ability successfully perform tasks in collaboration with available resources at work (Johari, Tan, & Zulkarnain (2016). Job performance is workability or something achieved or demonstrated achievement. Job performance is determined by the level of participation in daily activities of employees in various activities at every organization (Zacca & Dayan, 2018). Employees will lose motivation for task performance when they believe that employees will not benefit from their efforts (Vogel et al., 2016). Employees who lose performance in work showed decreased task performance in teams or individual tasks, loss of

coordination, and loss of motivation (Shantz et al., 2013).

## HYPOTHESES

Supervisors are a source of influence for solidarity in superior-subordinate relationships (Sanders et al., 2006). Supervisors who seem to be highly valued and treated well by the organization will be very synonymous with the fundamental character of the organization and significantly affect POS (Khan *et al.*, 2015). Supporting subordinates with pride in their success, respecting their values and goals, and paying attention to their particular needs is meaningful to workers (Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988). Supervisors with concern for subordinates provide a contributive picture of the organization's concern for the welfare of its workers (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006).

H1: Perceived supervisor support significantly positive effect on perceived organizational support.

Organizational support is an employee's belief about how far the organization pays attention to the welfare and provides value for the contribution to the organization (Jain, Giga, & Cooper, 2013). When the organization serves to support, employees will feel motivated to learn and share the knowledge gained among employees, improve learning abilities, and provide opportunities for knowledge distribution (Puah, Ong, & Chong, 2016) which improves outcomes. Organizational support plays a prominent role in determining the performance of a job because it is related to the formation of individual commitment, social behavior, and employee welfare (Newman et al., 2015).

H2: Perceived organizational support significantly positive effect on job performance.

Supervisor support helps employees cultivate positive attitudes toward organizational employees, and it will increase employee job involvement, motivation, and performance (Newman *et al.*, 2011). An employee who believes that

his supervisor at work supports his performance will have a higher job involvement (Puah, Ong, & Chong, 2016). On the other hand, an indifferent attitude towards subordinates leads to weak relationships that do not foster reciprocity to help improve unit performance. Puah, Ong, and Chong (2016) prove that when employees get support from supervisors, employees become motivated and return to produce high-quality output.

H3: Perceived supervisor support significantly positive effect on job performance.

There are several ways which superiors can support their employees, such as providing keys resources (i.e. equipment and training) or providing emotional support in the form of sympathy, concern, comfort, and encouragement that strengthens employee engagement with the organization (Jose & Mampilly, 2015). Supervisory or managerial support helps individuals cultivate a positive attitude towards the organization later encourages them to fulfill job involvement, increase motivation, and optimize performance (Newman *et al.*, 2011).

H4: Perceived organizational support mediates perceived supervisor support on job performance.

## METHOD

The population in this study were all lecturers at five private universities in the form of universities at LLDikti V Yogyakarta (Table 1). The sample size used in this study amounted to 103, with the questionnaire instrument being distributed and responding to accidental sample. Researchers distributed questionnaires through online and offline surveys. To maintain the quality of data collection, the researcher explained the purpose of giving a written questionnaire at the beginning of the research instrument. Data were analyzed using multiple regression analyses and mediation tests (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Researchers used a Likert scale 1-5 from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree

(5) on the perceived supervisor support and perceived organizational support variables. The measurement of perceived supervisor support adapts Kottke and Sharafinski (1988), for example, "As a supervisor, the Head of Study Program is willing to help me when I need special assistance." The measurement of perceived organizational support adapts from Eisenberger et al. (2020), for example, "The organization is very considerate of my goals and values." The Likert scale on the job performance variable starts from very poor (1) to very good (5). Measurement of job performance adapted from Smeenk et al. (2008) adapted to conditions in Indonesia by Sukirno and Siengthai (2011), for example, "My performance as a lecturer in the field of teaching."

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Validity and Reliability Test

The validity test item is stated to be valid if the value of  $r$  count  $>$   $r$  table .163 (1-tailed;  $n=103-2$ ;  $\alpha=.05$ ). The test resulted in  $r$ -count PSS (.027 - .759)  $>$  .163, except for the statement "If given the opportunity, the Head of Study Program as a supervisor will take advantage of me" with an  $r$ -count of .027, it was dropped. The value of POS (.613 - .805), and JP (.597 - .787)  $>$  .163 means that all items are valid. Cronbach's Alpha PSS (.909), POS (.922), and JP (.882)  $>$  .60 or reliable instrument.

### Respondent Characteristics

The gender of the respondents showed that 54.4% were male and 45.6% female (Table 1). Based on age, most respondents are in the age range of 31-40 years (38%). Although lecturers are required to have doctoral education, most lecturers' education is still master's (73.8%). Based on academic positions, the majority are Assistant Professor (*Asisten Ahli*) (44.7%), and the least are full professors (3.9%).

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

Variables	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	56	54.4
Female	47	45.6
Age		
20-30	21	20.4
31-40	38	36.9
41-50	15	14.6
>50	29	28.2
Education		
Master	76	73.8
Doctoral	27	26.2
Academic Position		
Lecturer	7	6.8
Assistant Professor ( <i>Asisten Ahli</i> )	46	44.7
Assistant Professor ( <i>Lektor</i> )	37	35.9
Associate Professor	9	8.7
Full Professor	4	3.9
Private Universities		
Universitas Amikom	33	32.0
Universitas Respati	8	7.8
Universitas Sanata	26	25.2
Dharma		
Universitas	23	22.3
Sarjanawiyata		
Tamansiswa		
Universitas Teknologi	13	12.6
Yogyakarta		

Source: Primer data, 2022.

**Table 2. Classic Assumption Test Results**

Ind.	Dep.	Multicollinearity		Glejser Test		Monte Carlo
		Tol.	VIF	t	Sig.	Sig. (2-tailed)
PSS	POS	-	-	.984	.327	.071
POS	JP	-	-	-1.175	.243	.071
PSS	JP	-	-	.331	.742	.058
PSS	JP	.769	1.301	1.245	.216	.272
POS	JP	.769	1.301	-1.637	.105	

Description: PSS=Perceived Supervisor Support; POS=Perceived Organizational Support; JP=Job Performance.

Source: Primer Data, 2022.

The results of the classical assumption test (Table 2) show that there is no heteroscedasticity (Glejser test,  $p>.05$ ) and normality met (Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, Asymp. Sig. $>.05$ ). Multicollinearity does not occur in the regression model with tolerance  $>$  .10 and VIF  $<$  10.

### Hypotheses Testing

The results of the H1 test in Table 3 show the  $t$  value of PSS (5.512) has a significance of  $.000 <$  .05, this means that H1 stated PSS has a positive effect on POS is supported. This finding confirms the results of a previous study (Eisenberger et al., 2002) through three studies investigating

the association between PSS and POS. This study shows supervisors who identified with the organization and the supervisors contribute to POS. In higher education, the Head of the Study Program acts as a supervisor to subordinates by named lecturer in his unit role of the Head of the Study Program is crucial for the formation of subordinate POS. The PSS that subordinates receive is positively related to their POS (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006).

The results of the H2 test show that the t-value of POS (5.006) has a significance of  $.000 < .05$ . This means that H2 stated POS has a positive effect on JP is supported. Similar to previous research (such as Muse & Stamper, 2015, Kim, Moon, & Shin, 2018, and Tremblay & Simard, 2018), this finding confirms that POS is a significant antecedent for JP. Study Rockstuhl *et al.* (2020) strengthen evidence of the contribution of POS to JP in various industries covering 54 countries. Likewise, the findings in the PTS field are that lecturers who perceive universities to pay attention to their welfare, values, and opinions raise a felt obligation to perform higher.

The results of the H3 test show that the PSS t value (3.300) has a significance value of  $.001 < .05$ , which means that the H3 statement that PSS has a positive effect on JP is supported. These results confirm the earlier findings (such as Gillet, Colombat, Michinov, Pronost, & Fouquereau, 2013, Tremblay & Simard, 2018, and Talukder & Galang, 2021) regarding the contribution of PSS to JP. The attention of the Head of the Study Program, for example, the specific needs of subordinates, being proud of the achievements of subordinates, and paying attention to the values and goals of subordinates will present the principle of reciprocity for subordinates to contribute by improving their performance. Even in the research of Guchait, Paşamehmetoğlu, and Dawson (2014) supervisor support for mismanagement has a positive effect on service recovery performance. It is possible errors taken can be corrected with ease when

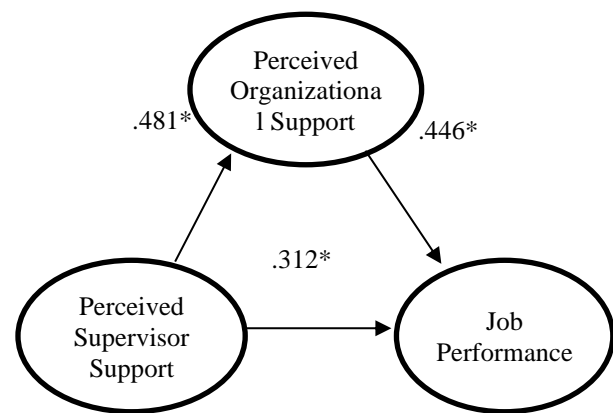
the PSS perceived by the subordinates is strong.

**Table 3. Multiple Linear Regression Results**

Ind.	Dep.	Unst. Coef.		B	t	Sig.	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>
		B	Std. Err.					
H1	PSS POS	.365	.066	.481	5.512	.000	.231	.224
H2	POS JP	.250	.050	.446	5.006	.000	.199	.191
H3	PSS JP	.133	.040	.312	3.300	.001	.097	.088
H4	PSS	.054	.043	.127	1.253	.213	.211	.195
	POS	.216	.057	.385	3.799	.000		

Description: PSS=Perceived Supervisor Support; POS=Perceived Organizational Support; JP=Job Performance.

Source: Primer Data, 2022.



Description=\*  $p < .05$

Source: Primer Data, 2022.

Picture 1. POS Mediation Model

The mediation test on H4 uses the results in Table 3 and Figure 1. The variable functions as a mediator because it meets the requirements (1) PSS affects POS; (2) POS affects JP; (3) PSS affects JP; (4) the effect of PSS on JP decreased after being controlled by POS (Baron & Kenny, 1986). The full mediation effect is accepted because the beta coefficient value of PSS's influence on JP decreased after POS was included as a control variable and was not significant (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Therefore, H4 is accepted POS acts as a full intermediary toward the independent variable (PSS) to the dependent variable (JP). The findings of the full mediation impact the Head of the Study Program in a prominent position. Failure to build PSS leads to the fail of strengthening POS. Employees organization identification

often represented by good relations with their supervisors (Eisenberger et al., 2010). Thus, low POS encourages negative reciprocity because POS brings lecturers assurance that the organization is a trusted exchange partner for future-building performance efforts and provides assistance when needed (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003).

In Table 3, the result of the  $R^2$  first regression model .231 shows that PSS can explain 23.1% of POS, and the remaining 76.9% explained by variables outside the first regression equation model. The value of  $R^2$  for the second regression model is .199, indicating that POS can explain 19.9% of JP, and the remaining 80.1% explained by other variables outside the second regression model. The  $R^2$  value of the third regression model is .097, indicating that PSS can explain 9.7% of JP, and the remaining 90.3% explained by variables outside the third regression model. Adjusted  $R^2$  of the fourth regression model .195 shows that PSS and POS can explain 19.5% of JP and the remaining 80.5% explained by variables outside the fourth regression model.

## CONCLUSION

This research was conducted on lecturers at five major private universities at LLDikti V. There was a significant positive effect of PSS on POS. Furthermore, it found that PSS and POS partially impact lecturer performance positively. Research also proves that there is a role for the full mediation effect of POS in the influence of PSS on JP. As an implication, university managers need to encourage the head of the study program to strengthen PSS because it can urge the improvement of POS in the form of the view that the organization cares about lecturers. Affirmation of POS is a good thing because lecturers who feel supported by the organization follow the reciprocal principle by improving performance.

This research limited to a small number of universities that are selected. Thus, testing a broader range of private universities is still needed. Lecturer performance will appear because they feel prosperous by supervisors and organizations based on the assumption that there is a reciprocal effect. Thus, the mutual aspect itself needs tested as a variable that needs to exist in this influence relationship.

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