The Influence of Career Development on Employee Performance, with Human Resource Competence as an Intervening Variable, at the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business, State Islamic University of North Sumatra (FEBI UINSU) Medan

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of career development on employee performance, with human resource (HR) competence serving as an intervening variable, at the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business, State Islamic University of North Sumatra (FEBI UINSU) Medan. The study employs a quantitative approach with a causal research design. The population consists of 95 employees comprising permanent civil servant (ASN) lecturers and educational staff from which a sample of 77 respondents was selected using the Slovin formula at a 5% margin of error. Data were collected via questionnaires using a Likert scale, and the analysis was conducted using the Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method with the support of the SmartPLS 3.0 software. The results indicate that career development has a positive but non-significant effect on employee performance, with a coefficient of 0.146 and a p-value of 0.081. Career development has a positive and significant effect on HR competence, with a coefficient of 0.474 and a p-value of < 0.001. HR competence has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, with a coefficient of 0.699 and a p-value of < 0.001. Furthermore, HR competence is shown to significantly mediate the influence of career development on employee performance, with a coefficient of 0.332 and a p-value of < 0.001. The study concludes that career development can indirectly support the improvement of employee performance by enhancing HR competence. Therefore, integrating career development with competence enhancement serves as a crucial strategy for supporting the effectiveness and productivity of employees at FEBI UINSU Medan.

Keywords: Career Development, HR Competency, Employee Performance, Intervening Variable.

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1. Introduction

Higher education institutions in the modern era are required to continuously improve the quality of education, institutional governance, and academic services in response to technological developments and increasing public demands for the quality of higher education. The success of higher education institutions in implementing the Three Pillars of Higher Education (*Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi*) is determined not only by the availability of facilities and infrastructure but also largely depends on the quality of their human resources (HR). Lecturers and educational staff are essential elements in supporting the successful implementation of education, research, community service, and administrative services. Therefore, professional human resource management, particularly through career development and competency enhancement, has become a strategic necessity for achieving optimal employee performance (Muzamil et al., 2023).

Improving the quality of human resources is also closely related to quality assurance and accreditation requirements in higher education. The Independent Accreditation Agency for Economics, Management, Business, and Accounting (LAMEMBA) considers the management of lecturers and educational staff to be an important aspect of study program quality assessment. This aspect encompasses the adequacy, qualifications, development, and management of human resources to support the sustainable implementation of academic activities. This condition indicates that higher education institutions need to pay attention to competency alignment, professional development, and employee performance achievement to meet the quality standards required in higher education (LAMEMBA, 2026).

Employee performance is one of the primary indicators used to assess the success of human resource management in higher education institutions. Performance is not limited to the ability to complete tasks in accordance with assigned responsibilities but also includes work quality, timeliness, task implementation effectiveness, accountability, and adaptability to organizational changes. Within a faculty environment, lecturer performance can be assessed through the implementation of education and teaching, research, scientific publications, and community service. Meanwhile, the performance of educational staff is reflected in the quality of academic administrative services, document management, the utilization of information technology, and the timely completion of tasks. Therefore, improving employee performance is essential to supporting the effectiveness of academic activities and services provided to students (Sanda et al., 2022).

One factor expected to influence employee performance is career development. Career development is a planned process undertaken by an organization to provide employees with opportunities to improve their abilities, experience, and professional advancement in accordance with their potential and organizational needs. Career development can be implemented through opportunities to pursue further education, participate in training, improve skills, advance in functional positions, obtain promotions, and establish clear career pathways. A well-directed career development system is expected to enhance employee motivation, responsibility, and readiness to meet job demands. Opportunities for professional growth may also serve as a driving factor in improving employee work outcomes (Maulana et al., 2024).

Career development plays a strategic role in improving the quality and productivity of human resources. Employees who are given opportunities for career development tend to have greater motivation to enhance their abilities and achieve work targets. Conversely, limited

career development opportunities may lead to dissatisfaction, reduce motivation, and hinder improvements in work quality. Therefore, organizations need to establish a transparent, well-planned career development system that aligns with employee needs to improve the effectiveness of task implementation. Sustainable career development is expected to contribute positively to improved employee performance (Tarman et al., 2025).

The importance of career development is also reflected in government policies on civil servant management. Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2023 concerning the State Civil Apparatus stipulates that the development of civil servants' talent and careers must consider qualifications, competencies, performance, and the needs of government agencies. This provision indicates that career development cannot be separated from efforts to improve employees' professional capacities. In the context of public universities, career development policies that consider employees' capabilities and work achievements are relevant to establishing professional, objective, and performance-oriented employee management (Republic of Indonesia, 2023).

Although career development plays an important role, its implementation does not necessarily lead directly to improved performance unless it is accompanied by improvements in employees' ability to carry out their duties. Opportunities for promotion or participation in professional development programs need to be supported by knowledge and skills that are relevant to job requirements. Employees with promising career prospects but inadequate competencies may experience difficulties in meeting increasingly complex job demands. Therefore, human resource competency is an important factor to consider when explaining the relationship between career development and employee performance (Efendi et al., 2025).

Human resource competency refers to the combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, and work attitudes required by individuals to perform their duties effectively. Competency provides the foundation for employees to complete tasks professionally, make decisions, utilize technology, and adapt to changing organizational needs. In higher education institutions, lecturer competencies are associated with pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies, while educational staff competencies encompass administrative, technical, service-related, and information system management capabilities. Adequate competencies enable employees to carry out their responsibilities more effectively and potentially contribute to improvements in work quality and productivity (Anwar et al., 2024).

The relationship between career development, human resource competency, and employee performance can be explained through the Human Capital Theory approach. This theory views individuals' knowledge, skills, and abilities as forms of capital that can be developed through investments in education, training, and work experience. In this study, career development is expected to provide employees with opportunities to gain experience, improve their skills, and expand their professional capabilities. These improvements are subsequently expected to strengthen the competencies required to perform their jobs effectively. Accordingly, human resource competency is positioned as an intervening variable that can theoretically explain the mechanism through which career development influences employee performance (Becker, 1964).

Human resource competency, as an intervening variable, plays an important role because improved performance is influenced not only by the availability of career development opportunities but also by employees' ability to make use of those opportunities. Appropriate

career development programs are expected to enhance employees' knowledge, skills, and professional capabilities. Improved competencies subsequently enable employees to work more effectively, enhance service quality, and complete tasks in accordance with organizational standards. Therefore, career development is expected to influence employee performance both directly and indirectly through improvements in human resource competency (Kuswikanto et al., 2025).

Although career development is theoretically expected to improve employee performance, previous studies have reported inconsistent findings. Career development was found to have a positive and significant effect on employee performance at PT Ciomas Adisatwa Maros (Maulana et al., 2024). Conversely, a study conducted at PT Pos Indonesia, Bandung Branch, found that career development did not have a significant effect on employee performance (Hadiansyah & Jaya, 2025). These differences indicate that the effectiveness of career development in improving performance may be influenced by organizational characteristics, the implementation of career development programs, and employees' ability to apply the outcomes of their development.

Inconsistent findings have also been reported regarding the role of competency as an intervening variable. Auditor competency was found to significantly mediate the relationship between career development and employee performance at the Internal Supervisory Unit of the BPJS Ketenagakerjaan Head Office (Kuswikanto et al., 2025). However, a study involving civil servants at the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Rokan Hilir Regency found that competency did not significantly mediate the relationship between career development and employee performance (Karmina et al., 2025). Similar findings were reported in a study conducted within the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, which showed that competency did not mediate the effect of career development on employee performance (Junariah et al., 2026). These inconsistent findings reveal a research gap concerning the effectiveness of human resource competency as an intervening variable in the relationship between career development and employee performance.

The Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra (FEBI UINSU), Medan, is an academic unit responsible for delivering higher education in the fields of Islamic economics and business. Academic activities and administrative services within the faculty require the support of employees with professional capabilities, skills relevant to their respective fields, and the readiness to respond to developments in technology and higher education policies. Therefore, career development and human resource competency enhancement are important aspects that need to be considered to support the performance of lecturers and educational staff.

FEBI UINSU's attention to the professional development of lecturers is reflected in the Lecturer Performance Data Synchronization and Integration Socialization activity held on October 7, 2026. The activity emphasized the importance of integrated academic performance data management to support performance evaluation, competency development, and academic career advancement. This initiative demonstrates the institution's attention to the relationship between performance management and career development. However, the existence of such a development program cannot, by itself, serve as a basis for concluding that career development has a significant effect on employee performance. Therefore, empirical testing is required to

determine the relationship between career development, human resource competency, and employee performance within FEBI UINSU, Medan (FEBI UINSU, 2026).

In this context, several issues warrant further investigation, particularly the extent to which career development opportunities can improve employees' professional capabilities, whether existing competencies adequately support job requirements, and whether competency enhancement can explain the relationship between career development and performance. This study is important because well-planned career development does not always lead to improved performance if its implementation does not align with employees' competency needs. Furthermore, higher education institutions have academic and administrative responsibilities that differ from those of business organizations and other government agencies. Consequently, examining the relationships among these variables within a faculty environment has particular relevance.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to analyze the effect of career development on employee performance, the effect of career development on human resource competency, and the effect of human resource competency on employee performance. This study also aims to examine the role of human resource competency as an intervening variable in the relationship between career development and employee performance at the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business, State Islamic University of North Sumatra, Medan. The findings are expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of human resource management studies, particularly regarding the mechanisms through which career development influences performance through competency. Practically, the findings are expected to serve as a consideration for the faculty in formulating career development policies and employee competency enhancement initiatives that are more targeted, sustainable, and aligned with organizational needs.

Leterature Review

2.1 Conceptual Framework

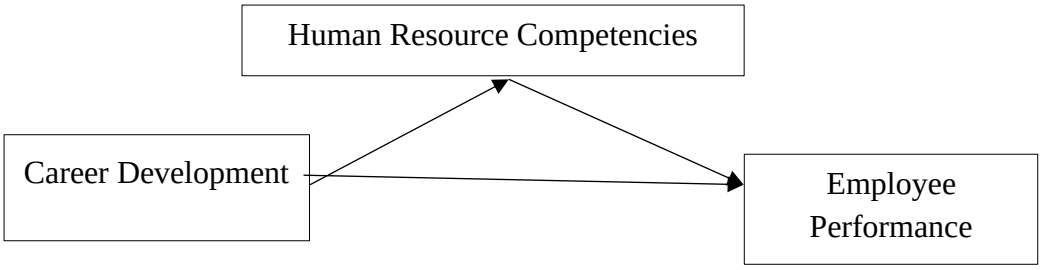


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Hypotheses:

1. H1: Career Development has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance at the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business, State Islamic University of North Sumatra (FEBI UINSU), Medan.

2. H2: Career Development has a positive and significant effect on Human Resource Competency at the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business, State Islamic University of North Sumatra (FEBI UINSU), Medan.
3. H3: Human Resource Competency has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance at the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business, State Islamic University of North Sumatra (FEBI UINSU), Medan.
4. H4: Career Development has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance through Human Resource Competency as an intervening variable at the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business, State Islamic University of North Sumatra (FEBI UINSU), Medan.

2.2 Research Method

This study employs a quantitative approach with a causal method to analyze the impact of career development on employee performance, with human resource (HR) competence serving as an intervening variable, at the Faculty of Economics and Islamic Business of the State Islamic University of North Sumatra (FEBI UINSU), Medan (Sahir, 2022). The research was conducted at FEBI UINSU Medan specifically at Campus I and Campus IV between June and July 2026. The study population consisted of 95 individuals, comprising permanent civil servant (ASN) lecturers and educational staff. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error, resulting in 77 respondents. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed via Google Forms (using a Likert scale), as well as through observation and documentation. The research variables include career development (X) as the independent variable, HR competence (Z) as the intervening variable, and employee performance (Y) as the dependent variable. Data analysis was performed using the Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method with the support of the SmartPLS 3.0 software. The analysis involved an outer model assessment to evaluate the validity and reliability of the instruments, and an inner model assessment to examine the coefficient of determination (R^2) and the relationships between the variables. Hypothesis testing was carried out using the bootstrapping technique, with criteria of a t-statistic > 1.96 and a p-value < 0.05 at a 5% significance level. Direct effects were assessed via path coefficients, while indirect effects were evaluated through specific indirect effects to determine the role of HR competence as an intervening variable in the relationship between career development and employee performance.

3. Results And Discussion

1). Evaluation of the Measurement Model (Outer Model)

The model evaluation is conducted to assess the viability of the research model by testing both the outer model and the inner model. The evaluation results are obtained from the PLS Algorithm report generated using SmartPLS software. This represents the initial stage of data processing.

a. Convergent Validity

The convergent validity test is performed by examining the loading factor value of each indicator in relation to its corresponding latent construct. An indicator is considered valid if it has a loading factor value greater than 0.70. Based on the data processing results, the convergent validity test for the variables transformational leadership, continuous improvement, and employee performance indicates that the majority of the indicators have loading factor values above 0.70, and can therefore be considered valid.

Table 1. Outer Loadings Values

Latent Variable	Employee Performance	HR Competency	Career Development
KP1	0,906		
KP2	0,899		
KP3	0,904		
KP4	0,911		
KP5	0,872		
KSDM1		0,894	
KSDM2		0,891	
KSDM3		0,900	
KSDM4		0,862	
PK1			0,895
PK2			0,896
PK3			0,912
PK4			0,923
PK5			0,911

The processing results indicate that all indicators have a loading factor value above 0.70. Consequently, it can be concluded that all indicators for the variables Human Resource Competence, Career Development, and Employee Performance meet the criteria for convergent validity and are suitable for use in further analysis..

b. Uji Descriminan validity

Tabel 2. Uji HTMT

Latent Variable	Employee Performance	Human Resource Competence
Employee Performance		
Human Resources Competence	0,829	
Career Development	0,504	0,507

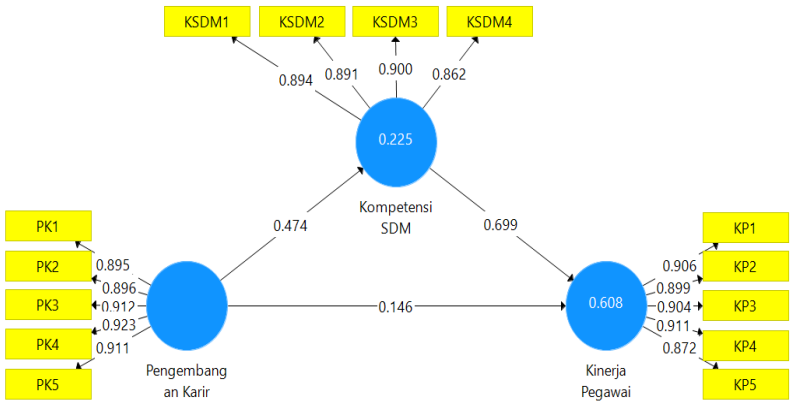
Based on Table 2, the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) test results indicate that the correlation values are 0.829 between Human Resource (HR) Competence and Employee Performance, 0.504 between Career Development and Employee Performance, and 0.507 between Career Development and HR Competence. All HTMT values fall below the 0.90 threshold and even satisfy the stricter criterion of 0.85. Consequently, all variables in this study meet the criteria for discriminant validity. These results demonstrate that the constructs of Career Development, HR Competence, and Employee Performance are sufficiently distinct, allowing them to be used in the subsequent structural model analysis.

2). Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

a. Path Coefficients

Once the model evaluation confirms that each construct meets the requirements for Convergent Validity, Discriminant Validity, and Composite Reliability, the next step is the evaluation of the structural model, which includes assessing model fit, path coefficients, and R^2. This analysis

is conducted to determine how well the model fits the data; Figure 1 illustrates the path coefficients:



Gambar 1. Path Coefficient

Berdasarkan gambar 4.2 yang merupakan hasil beberapa pernyataan yang valid, hasil analisis koefisien jalur (path coefficient) antar variabel laten dalam model struktural. padaberikut tabel path coeffisient berikut tabel Path Coeffisient:

Tabel 3. *Path Coeffisient*

Latent Variable	Employee Performance	HR Competence
HR Competence	0.699	
Career Development	0.146	0.474

Based on Table 3, the Path Coefficient analysis indicates that Career Development has a positive influence on Employee Performance, with a coefficient value of 0.146, and on Human Resource (HR) Competence, with a coefficient value of 0.474. Furthermore, HR Competence has a positive influence on Employee Performance, with a coefficient value of 0.699. These results demonstrate that HR Competence exerts the strongest direct influence on Employee Performance, whereas the direct influence of Career Development on Employee Performance is relatively smaller. These findings suggest that enhancing HR Competence has the potential to be a key factor in supporting improved employee performance at FEBI UINSU Medan. However, to determine the significance of the influence of each variable, it is necessary to examine the t-statistic and p-value results obtained through a bootstrapping procedure.

3). Construct Validity and Reliability

After testing construct validity, the next step is to assess construct reliability using Composite Reliability (CR) for the block of indicators measuring the construct. A construct is considered reliable if its composite reliability value is greater than 0.6. According to Hair et al. (2016), the composite reliability coefficient should ideally be greater than 0.7, although a value of 0.6 is still acceptable. An internal consistency test is not strictly required if construct validity has

already been established; this is because a valid construct is inherently reliable, whereas a reliable construct is not necessarily valid (Cooper & Schindler, 2014).

Tabel 4. Validitas dan Reliabilitas Konstruk

Latent Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Employee Performance	0.940	0.942	0.954	0.807
HR Competence	0.909	0.911	0.936	0.786
Career Development	0.947	0.950	0.959	0.824

Based on Table 4, the test results indicate that all variables have Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.909 to 0.947, rho_A values between 0.911 and 0.950, and Composite Reliability values between 0.936 and 0.959. All these values exceed the 0.70 threshold, confirming their reliability. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are 0.807 for Employee Performance, 0.786 for Human Resource Competence, and 0.824 for Career Development all of which surpass the 0.50 threshold. Consequently, all constructs meet the criteria for convergent validity based on both AVE and internal reliability. The results demonstrate that the indicators for the variables of Career Development, Human Resource Competence, and Employee Performance exhibit a high level of internal consistency. Strong reliability values indicate that the indicators for each construct measure their respective variables consistently, while the AVE values show that each construct accounts for more than 50% of the variance in its indicators. Therefore, based on these findings, the measurement model is considered to have met the criteria for reliability and AVE, allowing the analysis to proceed to the structural model (inner model) testing to examine the relationships between the variables in this study.

c. R Square

The inner model (also referred to as the inner relation, structural model, or substantive theory) describes the relationships between latent variables based on substantive theory. The structural model is evaluated using the R-square value for dependent constructs. The R^2 value can be used to assess whether specific exogenous variables exert a substantive influence on endogenous variables (Ghozali, 2018).

Tabel 5. *R Square*

Latent Variable	R-squared	Adjusted R-squared
Employee Performance	0.755	0.750
Human Resource Competence	0.704	0.702

Based on Table 5, the test results indicate that the R-square value for the Employee Performance variable is 0.755, or 75.5%. This suggests that Career Development and Human Resource (HR) Competence account for 75.5% of the variation in Employee Performance, while the remaining 24.5% represents variation not explained by the research model. Furthermore, the R-square

value for HR Competence is 0.704, or 70.4%, meaning that Career Development explains 70.4% of the variation in HR Competence, with the remaining 29.6% left unexplained by the model. The Adjusted R-square values are 0.750 and 0.702, respectively. These results demonstrate that the research model possesses strong explanatory power regarding both endogenous variables. A high R-square value indicates that Career Development and HR Competence, taken together, are capable of explaining a substantial portion of the variation in Employee Performance. Moreover, the relatively small difference between the R-square and Adjusted R-square values suggests that the model's explanatory power remains stable even after accounting for the number of predictors. Consequently, based on the coefficient of determination, the research model exhibits good explanatory capacity and can be further evaluated through hypothesis testing to determine the significance of both direct and indirect effects between the variables.

4). Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is conducted based on the results of the Inner Model (structural model) analysis, which includes R-square outputs, parameter coefficients, and t-statistics. To determine whether a hypothesis is accepted or rejected, one examines the significance values between constructs, t-statistics, and p-values. This research hypothesis testing was performed using SmartPLS 3.0 software, with the relevant values derived from the bootstrapping results. The rule of thumb applied in this study is a t-statistic > 1.96, with a significance level (p-value) of 0.05 (5%) and a positive beta coefficient. Figure 2 below illustrates the hypothesis testing:

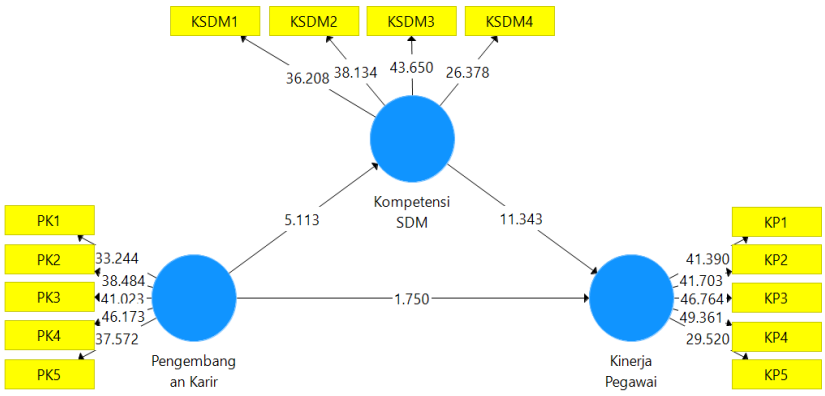


Figure 2. Hypothesis Testing Results

As shown in Figure 2, to determine the structural relationships between latent variables, hypothesis testing must be conducted on the path coefficients by comparing the p-values against an alpha level (0.05) or by examining the t-statistics (which should be >1.96). The p-values and t-statistics are obtained from the SmartPLS output using the bootstrapping method; the table below presents the direct effects.

Table 6. Direct effects

Latent Variable	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values

HR Competence_ -> Employee Performance_	0.699	0.706	0.062	11.343	0.000
Career Development_ -> Employee Performance_	0.146	0.145	0.084	1.750	0.081
Career Development_ -> HR Competence_	0.474	0.480	0.093	5.113	0.000

Based on Table 6, the results of testing the direct effects between variables using the bootstrapping method in SmartPLS 3.0 indicate two relationships that are positive and significant, and one relationship that is positive but not significant. Hypothesis testing was conducted using the criteria of t-statistics > 1.96 and p-value < 0.05. The explanation for each hypothesis is as follows:

1) The Effect of Career Development on Employee Performance (H1)

The first hypothesis (H1) states that Career Development has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance at FEBI UINSU Medan. The test results show an Original Sample value of 0.146, a t-statistic of 1.750, and a p-value of 0.081. Since the t-statistic is < 1.96 and the p-value is > 0.05, H1 is rejected. These results indicate that Career Development has a positive, yet non-significant, effect on Employee Performance. In other words, it has not been statistically proven that improvements in Career Development can directly enhance Employee Performance.

2) The Effect of Career Development on Human Resource (HR) Competence (H2)

The second hypothesis (H2) states that Career Development has a positive and significant effect on Human Resource (HR) Competence at FEBI UINSU Medan. The test results show an Original Sample value of 0.474, a t-statistic of 5.113, and a p-value of 0.000 (p < 0.001). Since the t-statistic is > 1.96 and the p-value is < 0.05, H2 is accepted. These results indicate that Career Development has a positive and significant effect on HR Competence. This means that the better the career development provided, the higher the HR competence possessed by the employees. 3) The Influence of Human Resource (HR) Competence on Employee Performance (H3)

The third hypothesis (H3) states that HR Competence has a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance at FEBI UINSU Medan. The test results show an Original Sample value of 0.699, a t-statistic of 11.343, and a p-value of 0.000 (p < 0.001). Since the t-statistic is greater than 1.96 and the p-value is less than 0.05, H3 is accepted. These results indicate that HR Competence has a positive and significant impact on Employee Performance. In other words, the higher the competence possessed by employees, the better their performance. Within this research model, HR Competence is the variable that exerts the strongest direct influence on Employee Performance.

To examine the structural relationships between latent variables, hypothesis testing was conducted on the path coefficients between variables using the bootstrapping method. The table below presents the indirect effects:

Tabel 7. Pengaruh tidak langsung

Latent Variable	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Career Development_ -> HR Competence_ -> Employee Performance_	0.332	0.339	0.070	4.706	0.000

4) The Influence of Career Development on Employee Performance through HR Competency (H4)

The fourth hypothesis (H4) states that Career Development has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance through HR Competency as an intervening variable at the Faculty of Economics and Islamic Business, North Sumatra State Islamic University (FEBI UINSU) Medan. Based on Table 7, the test results show an Original Sample value of 0.332, t-statistics of 4.706, and p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.001$). Because the t-statistics value is > 1.96 and the p-value is < 0.05, then H4 is accepted. These results indicate that HR Competency is able to positively and significantly mediate the influence of Career Development on Employee Performance. This means that good career development can support increasing HR competency, which in turn has an impact on improving employee performance. Based on the results of the direct influence test in Table 6, Career Development does not have a significant effect on Employee Performance, while the indirect influence through HR Competency is proven to be significant. This condition shows that there is a pattern of indirect mediation (indirect-only mediation), namely the influence of Career Development on Employee Performance mainly takes place through increasing HR Competency. Thus, increasing competency is an important mechanism in optimizing the contribution of career development to the performance of FEBI UINSU Medan employees.

5). Discussion

1. The Effect of Career Development on Employee Performance (H1). The research results indicate that career development has a positive but non-significant effect on employee performance, with a coefficient of 0.146, a t-statistic of 1.750, and a p-value of 0.081; therefore, H1 is rejected. This finding suggests that career development has not been proven to directly enhance the performance of employees at FEBI UINSU Medan. This result aligns with findings stating that career development does not have a significant impact on performance (Hadiansyah & Jaya, 2025). Consequently, career development initiatives should be directed toward enhancing skills that are aligned with job requirements.

2. The Effect of Career Development on Human Resource (HR) Competence (H2). The research results indicate that career development has a positive and significant effect on HR competence, with a coefficient of 0.474, a t-statistic of 5.113, and a p-value of < 0.001; therefore, H2 is accepted. This result demonstrates that career development plays a role in improving employees' professional knowledge, skills, and abilities. This finding is consistent with research showing that career development has a positive impact on competence (Kuswikanto et al., 2025). Thus, career development programs should be implemented on an ongoing basis to improve the quality of human resources at FEBI UINSU Medan.

3. The Effect of HR Competence on Employee Performance (H3). The research results indicate that HR competence has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, with a coefficient of 0.699, a t-statistic of 11.343, and a p-value of < 0.001; therefore, H3 is accepted. This finding indicates that competence is a crucial factor in enhancing the quality and effectiveness of work. This result aligns with research showing that competence has a positive impact on employee performance (Kuswikanto et al., 2025). Therefore, enhancing competence through training and skills development should be a priority for FEBI UINSU Medan.

4. The Influence of Career Development on Employee Performance via Human Resource (HR) Competence (H4). The research results indicate that Career Development has a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance through HR Competence, with a coefficient of 0.332, a t-statistic of 4.706, and a p-value < 0.001; thus, H4 is accepted. These findings demonstrate that HR Competence acts as a mediator for the influence of Career Development on Employee Performance. Since the direct effect is not significant while the indirect effect is significant, an "indirect-only mediation" pattern is observed. This finding aligns with research confirming that competence can mediate the impact of career development on performance (Kuswikanto et al., 2025). Consequently, career development initiatives must be accompanied by efforts to enhance competence to effectively support the performance of employees at FEBI UINSU Medan.

6). Research Implications

Overall, this study finds that career development does not have a direct, statistically significant impact on employee performance; however, it does have a positive and significant effect on human resource (HR) competence. Furthermore, HR competence is shown to have a positive and significant impact on employee performance and serves as a mediator for the relationship between career development and employee performance. The primary contribution of this research lies in the role of HR competence as an intervening variable that explains the connection between career development and employee performance. These results reinforce the perspective that career development initiatives must be accompanied by competence enhancement to effectively contribute to improved employee work outcomes**.**

Conclusion

Based on the research findings regarding the impact of career development on employee performance with HR competence as an intervening variable at FEBI UINSU Medan, it can be concluded that career development has a positive but non-significant effect on employee performance (coefficient: 0.146; p-value: 0.081). Meanwhile, career development has a positive and significant effect on HR competence (coefficient: 0.474; p-value < 0.001). HR competence also exerts a positive and significant influence on employee performance (coefficient: 0.699; p-value < 0.001). Moreover, HR competence significantly mediates the effect of career development on employee performance (coefficient: 0.332; p-value < 0.001). These findings indicate that career development is more effective in fostering improved employee performance when it facilitates the enhancement of HR competence. Therefore, FEBI UINSU Medan should integrate career development programs with competence-building initiatives to optimally support the quality and productivity of its employees' work.

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