

ABSTRACT

The Management Trainee (MT) program has recently gained popularity as a formal on-the-job learning platform for talented individuals. However, successfully completing the program does not guarantee a smooth journey to the early-career phase. Moreover, MTs are expected to perform well after completing the program, despite challenges beyond their expectations. While prior studies have analysed the MT program itself, few have examined the conditions after completion and the unfolding of the post-MT phase.

This study investigates the impact of perceived effectiveness of MT program, personality traits, and educational achievement on early-career performance, as well as the expectations of post-MT and the challenges encountered during the post-MT phase. This research used a quantitative approach with the Structural Equation Modelling Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). Responses from 114 former MTs were collected across a project-based organization in Indonesia. Qualitative responses were also analysed via thematic coding to offer insights into post-MT expectations and challenges.

The findings indicate that mentor support and leadership training positively impact early-career performance. Additionally, personality traits are key variables influencing early career performance. Specifically, conscientiousness, intellect, and agreeableness are significantly associated with both task and contextual performance. Conversely, neuroticism significantly influences counterproductive work behaviour.

Keywords: Early Career Performance, Perceived Effectiveness of MT Program, Personality Trait, Educational Achievement, Challenge, Post Management Trainee

INTISARI

Dalam beberapa tahun terakhir, Program Management Trainee (MT) semakin populer sebagai platform pembelajaran terstruktur berbasis *on-the-job training* untuk individu dengan potensi tinggi. Namun, keberhasilan menyelesaikan program tersebut tidak langsung menjamin kelancaran transisi ke fase awal karier. Selain itu, lulusan MT juga diharapkan mampu menunjukkan kinerja yang baik setelah program berakhir, meskipun sering kali dihadapkan dengan tantangan yang melampaui ekspektasi mereka. Meskipun penelitian-penelitian sebelumnya telah menganalisis program MT itu sendiri, kajian yang secara khusus menyoroti kondisi pasca-penyelesaian program serta dinamika fase transisi masih terbatas.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh efektivitas program Management Trainee, karakteristik kepribadian, dan pencapaian pendidikan terhadap kinerja awal karier, serta mengeksplorasi ekspektasi dan tantangan yang dihadapi selama masa transisi pasca-MT. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode *Structural Equation Modelling Partial Least Square* (SEM-PLS). Sebanyak 114 responden yang merupakan mantan peserta MT pada organisasi berbasis proyek di Indonesia berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini. Selain itu, data kualitatif dianalisis menggunakan metode *thematic coding* untuk memberikan wawasan tambahan mengenai ekspektasi dan tantangan pada masa transisi.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dukungan mentor dan pelatihan kepemimpinan berpengaruh positif terhadap kinerja awal karier. Selain itu, karakteristik kepribadian juga berperan penting dalam memengaruhi kinerja karier awal. Secara khusus, *conscientiousness*, *intellect*, dan *agreeableness* berpengaruh signifikan dengan *task performance* dan *contextual performance*. Sebaliknya, *neuroticism* berpengaruh signifikan terhadap *counterproductive work behaviour*.

Kata Kunci: Kinerja Awal Karier, Efektivitas Program MT, Karakteristik Kepribadian, Pencapaian Pendidikan, Tantangan, Transisi, Pasca-Management Trainee