

Polychronic Behaviour and Employee Performance: Do Perceived Organizational Support and Job Complexity Matter?

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Abstract

The purpose of this study to examine the impact of polychronic behaviour on employee's performance with regard the existence of perceived organizational support and job complexity. Using financial industries as the setting of the study, the topic deemed relevant considering that the post-covid pandemic the financial institutions are driving force in seizing the opportunity provided by pro-growth environment. Employees are supposed to perform many tasks to take the opportunity bravely. However, the existence of perceived organizational support and job complexity may strengthen or lessen the relationship of polychronic behaviour and performance. Considering the context of the study, the research contribution is by examining the recent practice of polychronicity to performance in financial sectors post-covid 19 pandemics. Questionnaire were distributed to employees of financial institutions in Indonesia resulting in 196 usable respondents. Process SPSS implemented to analyse the data. Results indicated that polychronic behaviour influence employee performance. While job complexity negatively moderated the relationship of polychronicity to performance, this was not the case for perceived organizational support. Thus, there was a limit of polychronicity to performance in relation to job complexity, while the context of financial institutions with tight standard operating procedure might nullify the power of perceived organizational support.

Keywords—employee performance; financial institutions; job complexity; perceived-organizational support; polychronic behaviour

I. INTRODUCTION

After experiencing slowdown in economic growth and the world lost \$15 trillion in output as a consequence of COVID-19 (Okamoto, 2021) most of countries proposed aggressive policies for seizing opportunity for pro-growth. Starting from March 2020, governments have spent \$16 trillion providing fiscal assistance amid the pandemic, and global central banks have raised their balance sheets by a combined \$7.5 trillion (Okamoto, 2021). Pro-growth policy creates wide opportunity for firm to materialize it in many forms such as raising investment, increasing revenue, lowering cost, supporting innovation, facilitating workforce readiness (Shannon and Carlson, 2022). Post Covid-19 pandemic has demanded a tremendous response in many organizations across the globe, namely seizing the wide opportunity to bounce back from adverse condition during the pandemic (Smith et al., 2023). This dynamic environment condition requires organizational member, both employer and employees, to implement the changes if organization is to prevail.

Although there is possibility of firm increasing the number of employees so that able to grasping the opportunity provide by pro-growth policy, it is unlikely to happen considering the firm already recover from turbulent environment along with the length of pandemic, and consequently do not execute aggressive

recruitment and selection. Many organizations believed that employees are obliged to perform their tasks flawlessly and accomplish multiple duties simultaneously (Twaissi et al., 2022; and Asghar et al., 2021), especially in the time of seizing opportunity that are shown post Covid-19 pandemic. Involvement in multitasking or polychronicity is the area this study is emphasizing, and deemed timely relevant considering latest dynamic environment. It is polychronic behaviour that is relevant and be expected to have consequences in performance (Wu et al., 2020). Polychronicity involves doing many tasks simultaneously or switching between different activities (Bluedorn, et al., 1992; Kaufman-Scarborough, 2017). It is hypothesised that the ability of employee in performing many tasks will be related to employee's performance. Accordingly, this research focuses on examining the role of current employees in performing multiple activities simultaneously and be related to employee's performance. A number of relevant research have established a relationship between polychronicity and job outcome, such as low turnover and show good performance (Asghar et al., 2020).

The direct relationship of polychronic behaviour on employee's performance is subject to discussion, as it is only taking into account the dispositional point of view and ignoring the situational environment in which employee is working. To complement that, this study will focus on the relationship of polychronic behaviour and employee performance, along with perceived organizational support and job complexity as moderating variable. Borrowing the Heider's Attribution Theory (Heider, 1958; Bridger et al., 2023), the study explores the dispositional and situational attribution to give clearer relationship of polychronic and employee performance. Borrowing the organizational support theory, the perceived organizational support encourages subordinates' desire to give back kindness to the organization (Eisenberger et al., 2002), and thus strengthen the link of polychronicity to performance of employee. Workers who have a high perceived organizational support tend to have an effect on positive behaviour of workers which will certainly benefit to the organization (Asghar, et al., 2021). Thus, the higher the support from the organization the stronger the relationship of polychronic behaviour on employee's performance.

Arguably, the direct relationship of polychronic behaviour on employee's performance will vary depending on the nature of job complexity faced by employee, where more complex job tends to reduce such relationship since it requires more efforts, skills, and time to perform, while less complex task will give the impact in opposite direction. Thus, following Sia and Appu (2015), this research assumed that the existence of job complexity moderate in negative way the link between polychronic behaviour on employee's performance. Therefore, the higher the job complexity the lower is the relationship of polychronic behaviour and employee's performance.

Previous studies focused on the role of polychronic behaviour on different outcomes (Kaufman-Scarborough, 2017; Korabik, et al., 2017), but that relationship is limited in certain industry (Asghar, et al., 2021). To complement the above studies, the current study will be conducted in the financial sector with ultimate consideration that it is that industry that drives directly resurrection of other industries in a uniform economic system. There is strong evidence that the financial sector crucially affects the speed and pattern of economic growth through the financial instruments, markets, and institutions in which organizations rely on capital to seize the wide opportunity following Covid-19 pandemic (UN, 2022). According to Bacinello et al., (2017) the banking and financial services characterize by having unique features, among others are in terms of complexity, specificity and high level of risk, and in recent times, the banking services have experienced a substantial transformation, altering from an interpersonal orientation of relative intensity to interactions of high technology which demanded the employees to perform many tasks. Furthermore, whatever the tasks the employees performed and the approaches the companies implemented, there is no excuse for good quality (Dahlgaard-Park, 2011).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Polychronic

Poposki and Oswald (2010) defined polychronicity as the preference for a person to transition between tasks that are currently in progress as opposed to concentrating on one job until it is finished before moving on to another. Several authors claimed that polychronicity is an individual's level of preference for performing several activities within a given time block (Kaufman-Scarborough & Lindquist, 1999; Konig & Waller, 2010; Weeks & Fournier, 2010). Polychronicity refers to involvement in simultaneous activities or the alternation between different tasks (Bluedorn et al., 1992; Kaufman-Scarborough, 2017). Based on Konig & Waller, (2010) polychronicity is deemed relevant for particular types of jobs that demanding performing several activities at given allocated time, including in the financial industry. A person-job fit in terms of the fit between the

individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) and the requirements of the job, expands into person-environment fit in which modern workplace is demanding multiple knowledges, skills, and abilities (Wu et al., 2020) that has to be performed in given time.

Numerous scholars have emphasized the influence of polychronicity on various employment outcomes, in particular the performance in various situations (Jang & George, 2012; Wu et al., 2020; Arasli et al., 2018; Conte et al., 2019; Kantrowitz et al., 2012). The ability of individual in performing multitasking always plays a significant contribution in an individual's high performance whenever the workload is high and complex (Asghar, 2020). Studies have found a relationship between multitasking activities and job outcome in the hospitality industry sector, among many other, research conducted by Asghar, et al., (2020 and 2021) who conducted studies in restaurants and hotels. People that are polychronic have been seen to be able to successfully manage numerous tasks at once and provide results that are up to par with supervisors' and customers' expectations. In order to do that, these employees might go above and beyond the scope job duties assigned to them (Karatepe et al., 2013). Additionally, polychronic staff members have a method for solving problems that enables them to handle difficult and complex customer interactions. Following the previous studies and reasoning that polychronicity have a positive influences on performance, this study develops the hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1. Polychronic behaviours influences employee performance

The role of job complexity on the influence of polychronicity on employee performance

Studies showed that polychronicity is suitable for some job kinds (Konig & Waller, 2010). Furthermore, research on person-job fit provides theoretical backing for the association between polychronicity and employee performance by demonstrating that, among other benefits, a person's comfort level and job compatibility are enhanced when they match (Bluedorn & Jaussi, 2007; Hecht & Allen, 2005). The principle of this work is that attitudes and behaviours, including performance, are directly influenced by resemblance between polychronic individuals and the characteristics of environment, such as jobs that require managing multiple tasks without a set routine (Conte & Gintoft, 2005; Fournier et al., 2013; Weeks & Fournier, 2010).

According to existing studies, polychronicity can improve performance in a variety of specialized circumstances (Arndt et al., 2006; Conte & Gintoft, 2005; Konig & Waller, 2010). The higher the ability to behave polychronically (as opposed to the lower) seem to be more suitable for employment that involve multiple task completion or higher levels of ambiguity (Bluedorn & Jaussi, 2007; Konig & Waller, 2010), for instance, those who are more (as opposed to less) polychronic do better on tasks that have a high degree of uncertainty and a wide range of skills. Accordingly, we believe that the impact of polychronicity is not unidirectional; rather, it changes depending on how complicated the task is. Within the person-job fit concept, not everybody can be fit with the particular job, as job complexity is one way that jobs differ, certain employees may find it fit, while others may find it not fit (Shalley, Gilson, & Blum, 2009). Shalley et al. (2009) defined the complexity of job as the degree of autonomy or irregularity and the degree of latitude for decision-making that a job affords; in comparison to less complex jobs, complex jobs are more complex, flexible, and encourage employees to integrate knowledge from multiple sources. Polychronic behaviours can enhance performance in certain situations when there is a suitable person-job match. To balance the above reasoning, job demand resource model (JDR) highlighted in what way job demands and resources have an impact on job performance through employee well-being (Baker & Demerouti, 2017). In accordance to this, there will be limit for employees in doing polychronic behaviours and achieving better performance. Such limitations come from increased effort, emotional exhaustion, burnout, well-being that reduced the performance.

Overall, research indicates that this kind of differentiation is critical since the impacts of polychronicity are contingent upon the kind of task requirements for a particular profession (Arndt et al., 2006; Hecht & Allen, 2005). In summary, the influences of polychronicity seem to depend on the environment; job complexity of the employee moderates the influences of polychronicity on employee performance. Thus, we propose:

Hypothesis 2. Employee job complexity moderates the relationship between polychronicity and employee performance, such that the higher the job complexity of the employee, the stronger the negative impact of the polychronicity on employee performance.

The role of perceived organizational support on the relationship of polychronicity on employee performance

Organizational support is essential for providing assistance from the organization in order to properly manage challenging circumstances and successfully fulfil one's tasks with skill and efficiency (George, et al., 1993). Wayne (2002) established that perception of organizational support experienced by employees signifies the extensive level of connection between the individual and the organization (Konijnenburg, 2010). Employees will perceive organizational behavior through their managers (Eisenberger et al., 1986), in the form of the approaches chosen by organization, the standards employees had to follow, and culture of behaving among them (Levinson, 1965). In essence, all organization activities or behaviors (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003) can be interpreted as perceived organizational support by employees (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Thus, perceived organizational support has a considerable influence on both employee performance and well-being (Farh, et al., 2007; Lie, et al., 2023). Well-being and job satisfaction are highest among employees who receive high levels of support. They understand that it is their responsibility to give back in constructive ways, such as by improving their performance (Du et al., 2018). The jobs of supervisor are complicated, among others are taking corrective actions when something went wrong such as resolving employee conflicts, motivating employees to achieve desired performance, allocating resources for employee training and development, and maintaining a compassionate response to what happen in organization. These all are most likely to be perceived as a form of organizational support by employees (Karatepe et al., 2013). POS affected organizational performance and employee performance (Karatepe, 2012), and following social exchange theory, worker who feel they get extra support from their organizations is arguably perform better to individuals who do not (Eisenberger et al., 1986). In addition, Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), claimed that there is a positive relationship between employees' POS and their job performance. This correlation is observed when employees feel empowered, understand the significance of their work, and have the autonomy to make their own decisions. When employees see the impact of their work on the organization, it enhances their competence and ultimately improves their job performance.

The positive relation between Employees POS and Job Performance have already been confirmed on many previous study (Wayne et al., 2002). Research observed that POS can have a direct and indirect effect on employee behavior and relation among them (Hakkak et al., 2014). On the Polychronicity, several recent authors also have acknowledged that the perceived supervisors' support to the employees and co-workers increases employee performance while performing multiple jobs in a given time (Arici-Ozcan, 2019; Koo et al., 2020). Further, the stronger the positive relationship between polychronicity and performance among employee who report receiving more perceived supervisor support was prevalent. Asghar et.al (2021) in their study found that the presence of POS can improve the influence between polychronicity and performance. Following this discussion, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: The relationship of of polychronicity on employee employee's performance is moderated by perceived organizational support, the greater the perceived organizational support, the stronger the positive effect of the polychronic on employee performance.

To execute the proposed reasoning and hypotheses, the study figures out the following research framework:

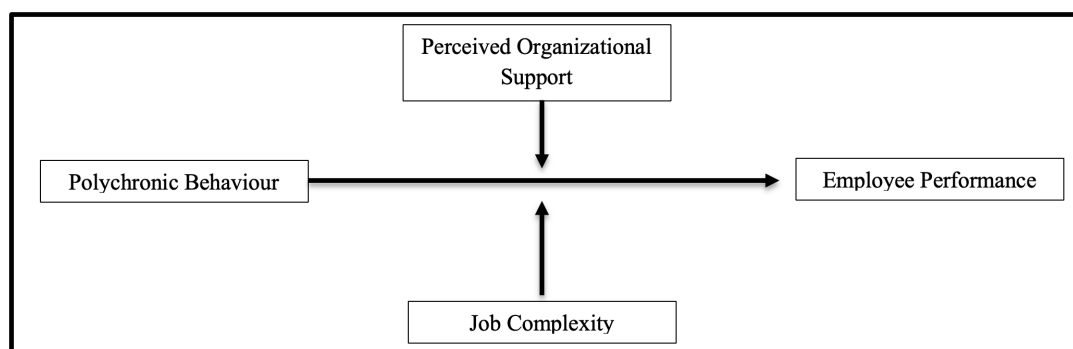


Fig. 1. The Framework of Research

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Study Context and the Procedure of Data Collection

A survey was administered to Indonesian employees who work in financial sectors, ranging from banking industries, capital markets, insurance industries, pension fund, financing industries, and fiduciary industries.

Importantly, financial industry drives directly revival of other industries in a uniform economic system. The recognition that this industry has a big influence on the rapid recovery of other industries after the Covid-19 pandemic through instruments, markets and financial institutions is recognized by many parties (UN, 2022; Pham, et al., 2024). The inclusion of various industries was used to rule out influence of certain industry on polychronic behaviour on employee's performance as found by previous studies (Arasli et al., 2014). Furthermore, Indonesia is amongst other countries that were hit severely by the COVID-19 pandemic (Wibowo and Paramita, 2022).

In measuring the polychronicity this study adopted the measurement of 10 instrument Inventory of Polychronic Values (IPV), initially developed by Bluedorn et al. (1999). An example of a question is "I like to do several activities at once". Perceived organizational support is measured using Rhoades and Eisenberger (2022) items. As an example of questions is, "The company cares about my opinion". The task complexity measure of Jung, et al., (2020) was adopted, and an example of a question is "My job is complicated". Employee's performance is measured using Babin and Boles (1996) items. An example of question is "I am an accomplished employee here". All variables were measured using the 5-Likert scale.

Hayes Process of SPSS will be utilized to test the proposed hypotheses. It is developed by Andrew Hayes applied for an observed variable OLS and logistic regression path analysis modelling tool. Process is estimating the parameters of each equation independently.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondent

Distributed to employees who are working for financial industry, 209 responses were administered, 196 of them passed the initial screening of the data completeness. Of the respondents, 53,2% were males, and 46.8% were females. Respondents dominated by those with age of 21-30 years old (67.1%), followed by 31-40 years old (18.4%), and 41-50 years old (10.9%). Respondents with age less than 20 years old, and between 51-60 years old shared the same percentage of 2.5%. In terms of work experience, respondent who have experience 1-2 years were 41.8%, between 2-4 years of experience were 19.4%, between 4-6 years of experience were 11.4%, and above 6 years of experience were 27.4%.

IV. RESULT / FINDING

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Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 showed the descriptive statistical results of all the variables. Polychronic behaviour was not significantly related to job complexity and perceived organizational support, but significantly related to employee performance (.168*), meaning the higher the polychronic behaviour the higher the employee performance. Job complexity was not significantly related to perceived organizational support, but significantly related to employee performance (.215**). Perceived organizational support related significantly to employee performance (.324**). Cronbach's alpha in the diagonal box showed the reliability test was fulfilled.

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, Inter-correlations among Variables, Reliability, Skewness, and Kurtosis

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	Skewness	Kurtosis
Polychronic Behaviour	2.758	.748	.833				.275	.809
Job Complexity	3.821	.747	-.052	.752			-.363	-.200
Perceived Organizational Support	3.734	.760	-.058	.089	.875		-.589	.814

Employee Performance	3.634	.725	.168*	.215**	.324**	.787	.217	-.388
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N=196

Cronbach’s alpha presented in the diagonal box grey highlighted.

*p<0.05

**p<0.01

Hypotheses Testing Results

In analysing the data, the Process v.35 Andrew F. Hayes in SPSS is utilized. Preacher and Hayes (2004) stated that this technique is a way to overcome the limitations of statistical methods that make assumptions about the shape of sampling distributions, such as normality. The output was shown in Tabel 2. In the Table 2, the dependent variable was employee performance, and the independent variable was polychronic behaviour. Data showed that polychronic behaviour significantly influence the employee performance. Thus, hypothesis 1 was supported. Observing the job complexity as moderating variable, it is summarized that there was a negative significantly coefficient and there were non-zero number in the interval between LLCI and ULCI confirming the negative moderating effect of job complexity on the relationship between polychronic behaviour on employee performance. The higher the job complexity the weaker the relationship of polychronic behaviours on employee performance. Consequently hypothesis 2 was supported. On the moderating effect of perceived organizational support, there was different result. The perceived organizational support was not moderating the relationship of polychronic behaviour on employee performance as indicated by non-significant coefficient and the existence zero number in the interval between LLCI and ULCI. The higher the perceived the organizational support, there is no evidence either higher or lower the impact of polychronic behaviours on employee performance. Therefore, hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Table 2. The Direct and Moderating Analysis of Polychronic Variable and Employee Performance with Job Complexity and Perceived Organizational Support as Moderating Variable

Variable	Employee Performance
Polychronic Behaviour	$\beta = 1.0545^{**}$
Job Complexity as moderating variable	$\beta = -.1894^{**}$
	Bootstrapping
	LLCI: -.3469 ULCI: -.0319
Perceived Organizational Support as moderating variable	$\beta = -.0326$
	LLCI: -.1772 ULCI: .1121

* p<0.05

** p<0.01

V. DISCUSSION

Hypothesis 1 postulates that polychronic behaviour has a positive relationship with employee’s performance. The outcome revealed that such relationship was confirmed by the data, meaning polychronic behaviour significantly related to employee’s performance. Consistently, previous studies indicated that polychronic behaviour of employees increases their performance (Wu et al., 2020; Asghar et al., 2020). For employees, doing several activities at once is the one they like and able to do, and for them a lot of tasks to complete is the opportunity to show their best to the company (Ibrahim et al., 2024). Alternatively, employees believe that the best results are not achieved when they focus on completing one task rather completing several or many tasks at one time. Polychronic behaviour is behaviour that preferable for them, and bring a better performance. Konig and Waller (2010) and Wu et al., (2020) offered explanation using the lens of person-environment fit perspective, in which they argued person–environment fit may enhance individual work attitudes. For example, employees feel needed in the modern workplace that demanding a multitasking philosophy. In accordance with

that argument Di Blasio (2019) emphasized that employee-environment fit satisfied her/his psychological meaningfulness. Borrowing self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985), this result indicated that self-determination motivation fulfils distinct psychological needs through perceived environment fit.

The study confirmed Hypothesis 2, such that job complexity moderates the relationship of polychronic behaviour on the performance of employees. Consistent with other literatures (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017; Van Veldhoven, 2020), there are limits on which the multitasking behaviour will be related to employee's performance, in this case is the job complexity. As great as possible, doing a lot of work at one time, but if the work being done is very complex, the performance obtained will still decrease. The complexity of the work in the form of requiring high problem-solving skills, involving the dependence of many factors, as well as the many conflicting alternatives in completing the work, and the complexity that arises weaken the relationship of polychronic behaviour and employee's performance. This result is accordance of the research of London and Klomski (1975) which stated that an employee whose abilities exceed those required by the job will become frustrated, whereas he/she will be motivated if his/her abilities fit the job requirements. However, a job that is too complex can burden the worker to such an extent that he or she cannot fulfil its requirements. Latest study confirmed that findings, for example Doost and Zhang (2023) revealed the role of job complexity in negatively moderates the relationship between social media use and job performance. Similarly, Salgado (2017) reported the negative effect of moderating variable of job complexity in his study. Lending support to this finding is the job demand and resources model (JD-R model) proposed by Demerouti et al., (2001). The model explores the influence of job condition in this case is working polychronically, and its consequence which performance. Performing polychronic behaviour with high job complexity resulted in employee exhaustion and depletion of energy, which at the end decreasing the performance of the employee.

Interest finding revealed that the moderating effect of perceived organizational support on the relationship of polychronic behaviour on the performance of employees was not justified. As such the influence of perceived organizational support—whether high or low, does not matter in the relationship of polychronic behaviour on employee's performance. Past studies of perceived organizational support had mixed results (Yang, 2009; Bai et al., 2023). For instance, the study of Bai et al., (2023) revealed that perceived organizational support moderated the relationship of work-family conflict and psychological wellbeing, as happened in the relationship of family-work conflict and psychological wellbeing. However, study of Choi (2020) claimed that moderating effect in negative way was observed in the study of the relationship of workplace ostracism and in-role performance, supporting the existence of negative moderating effect of perceived organizational support. Indeed, the zero effect of perceived organizational support was found in the the relationship of distributive justice and health outcomes (Rineer et al., 2017).

The insignificant moderating effect of perceived organizational support on this study may be attributable to the contextual factor, as such working in financial industries backed by sophisticated technology allowed employees less depend on perceived organizational supports. What they faced was organizational support in terms of technology, and facilities that permitted employees to work professionally. Alternatively, clear standard operating procedures in these industries may neutralize or substitute the need of perceived organizational supports, meaning as long as the employees worked in accordance of procedure then there was a performance associated with that. In particular, the banking sector was the most regulated industries in which strict policies and procedures were in place.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Fundamentally, the findings of this research are consistent with the person-job fit and JD-R framework and presents three theoretic contributions. First, this study confirmed that behaving polychronic is essential in increasing performance in modern workplace, especially in the effort of seizing opportunity post pandemic situation. With the knowledges, skills, and attitudes they are developing, employees will show their best performance when given several tasks and jobs at once. For them to do one thing at the time is not suitable considering job specifications they have. Accordingly, organizations need to facilitate the working descriptions to enhance the match between these two factors.

Second, this research adds to the literature especially the JD-R framework that the multitasking behaviours have the limits. The complexity of the work matters as performing polychronic behaviours demanding high problem-solving skills, concerning the dependence of many factors, as well as the many conflicting alternatives in finalizing the work, and the complexity that arises weaken the relationship of polychronic behaviour and employee's performance (Doost & Zhang, 2023). Job complexity elevates the employees to behave polychronically as shown by the utilization of knowledges, skills and attitudes in performing multiactivities in

which complexity is found. Up to a certain point this is useful because there is a match between the job description and specifications, but after that the resulting impact is no longer an increase in performance. Therefore, organizations better equip with understanding the extent to which job complexity is designed.

Third, contextual factors matter as evidence by non-significant of perceived organizational support to moderate the relationship of polychronic behaviours and employee performance. Financial industries as regulated industry has very clear standard operating procedures that in turn may neutralize or substitute the need of perceived organizational supports. Employees working in these industries will follow the procedures that already established by regulator and/or management, meaning as long as they worked in accordance of that then the performance was delivered.

Limitations and Future Research Direction

Several limitations were worthy to acknowledge. First, involvement of personality factors was excluded in this study, whereas study in the past showed that employees personality mattered. Therefore, the future research may better equip with individual personality as one of the factors in examining that relationship. Second, although the choice of industrial context was deemed relevant, this study focused only in Indonesia whereas the post pandemic recovery happened in many countries. Consequently, the interpretation of results might only be relevant to Indonesia or countries with similarities in terms of financial institutions and culture associated with the variables under investigation. Further studies may incorporate other countries to examine better such relationship shown by variables. Third, a longitudinal study may better capture the dynamic relationship of the variables, for instances the case of insignificant perceived organizational support may attributable the contextual factor in which industry chosen, but it is worthy to learn whether that condition still prevalence in longer term.

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