

Interpersonal trust and knowledge sharing: The moderating role of leadership support

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to analyze the effect of interpersonal trust on knowledge sharing among employees of Telkom Akses Sumatera Barat and the effect of interpersonal trust on knowledge sharing with support as a moderating variable on employees of Telkom Akses Sumatera Barat. The study population was all employee Telkom Akses Sumatera Barat, with a total of 255 employee. In this study the sampling technique used cluster proportional random sampling where the number of samples was 80 people. The analysis technique used is the Structural Equation Model (SEM) with the help of the SmartPLS 3.0. The result of study revealed the moderating effect of leadership support between interpersonal trust and knowledge sharing relationship was found to be significant to employee Telkom Akses Sumatera Barat.



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INTRODUCTION

In the current era of the industrial revolution, knowledge is the main capital in a sustainable competitive advantage for organizations and employees within the organization. Knowledge is considered to be one of the main factors of organizational excellence because the performance of an organization is influenced by the intellectual resources available to employees (Chedid et al., 2020). One of the important roles of knowledge that must be utilized is knowledge sharing behavior. The importance of knowledge sharing is considered an organizational phenomenon that has not been fully fulfilled because it is considered an exchange of ideas, information, and knowledge without much consideration and with whom the knowledge can be shared. (Hardiyati, 2017). However, knowledge sharing can also affect stress on employees if knowledge sharing behavior is higher, it will not produce positive performance results (Zhang, 2014).

This study takes the object of the employees of Telkom Akses Sumatera Barat where knowledge sharing is very important for the company because it will greatly affect the company's performance where if employees are easy to share knowledge, it can improve company performance. One of the important factors to study influencing knowledge sharing is interpersonal trust (Wu et al., 2009). The higher the trust that employees have in their co-workers, the more employees want to share knowledge. Therefore, knowledge sharing behavior cannot occur if there is no interpersonal trust that exists among employees in a company.

Research conducted (Chow & Chan, 2008) said that there was a causal difference where Interpersonal trust does not have a direct contribution to knowledge-sharing behavior and knowledge-sharing intentions to individuals. Research conducted (Kim & Park, 2020) stated that there is a research

gap that knowledge sharing behavior is positively and significantly related to interpersonal trust. On the other hand, research conducted (Badar & Seniati, 2017), (Park & Kim, 2018) states that interpersonal trust directly and significantly influences knowledge-sharing behavior.

In addition to interpersonal trust, leader support can also increase knowledge-sharing behavior. The support of directed leaders in the organization can increase and encourage the value of social integration or interpersonal trust so that employees are easy to share knowledge. On the other hand, if the leader's support is low, the interpersonal trust in employees will decrease which makes employees reluctant to share knowledge (Lei et al., 2019).

Based on the description above, the objectives of this study are (1) to determine the effect of interpersonal trust on knowledge sharing among employees of Telkom Access West Sumatra, (2) to determine the effect of interpersonal trust on knowledge sharing which is moderated by leadership support for employees of Telkom Akses Sumatera Barat

LITERATURE REVIEW

Knowledge Sharing

(Llopis & Foss) 2015 states that knowledge sharing is a two-way process that must be adopted by every employee to get good things. Knowledge sharing is also defined as a set of behaviors that involve the exchange of task-relevant ideas, information, and suggestions between employees and team members (Ding et al., 2018). The same thing was also stated by (Mary Macneil, 2004) sharing knowledge as a process in the structure that introduced knowledge management and acted as an important activity for organizational strategy. Based on the explanations of experts, it can be said that knowledge sharing is a process that involves the exchange of ideas, information, and knowledge between employees and team members who are important for the company's organization. The indicators that can be used to measure knowledge sharing proposed by de Vries et al (2006) are knowledge collection and knowledge contributor. Knowledge gathering, how active individuals consult with other co-workers who encourage other co-workers, who encourage co-workers to share intellectual knowledge with other co-workers and share information that is already known to each other without having the leader ask co-workers or vice versa. Contributor of knowledge, motivational behavior of individuals to convey their intellectual capital to others including sharing work skills, sharing new information between leaders and employees, and considering knowledge sharing a normal thing in organizations.

Interpersonal Trust

Mayer and Rousseau (1998) state that interpersonal trust is a psychological state of accepting the actions of the other party based on the expectation that the other performs the action of the other, regardless of the desire to control the other party. Interpersonal trust is also defined as the expectation held or believed by individuals and groups that the words of both verbal and nonverbal from other people can be trusted or relied on (Feist and Feist, 2008). Paine (2003) states that interpersonal trust is a person's belief to believe or believe in all good behavior from the actions and words of others. Based on the explanation of the experts, interpersonal trust is the willingness and belief of individuals to trust, and believe in individuals both verbally and nonverbally from other individuals. Indicators that can be used to measure interpersonal trust put forward by Hughes et al (2018) are reliability, emotion, and honesty. Reliability, individuals who can fulfill words and promises through behavior that leads to individuals not only speaking but can implement them in actions so that they can be trusted. Emotions, individuals who are able to refrain from hurting the feelings of other individuals such as being able to keep secrets, and refrain from hurting the feelings of other individuals. Honesty, individuals who are able to give words and actions as they are and behavior based on good intentions.

Leadership Support

Anis Turmudhi (2020) defines leader support as the role of leaders in the organization in achieving the goals of the organization which has a function in achieving goals, communicator, mediator, and as an integrator. Robbins (2008) says organizational support or leader support is where the organization faces a dynamic and changing environment in which the organization can adapt. Based on the explanation of the leadership support experts, namely the role of leaders in directing and supporting employees in achieving organizational goals and objectives which increase relationships and a sense of trust in leaders and employees. The indicators that can be used to measure leader support are proposed by Kottke (1988) namely personality, ability, and tolerance. Personality, how the nature of the leader in supporting employees and how the personality of the leader in leading an organization. Ability, how a leader in leading the organization and tolerance, how the attitude of leadership tolerance towards employees and human resources who become subordinates.

Interpersonal Trust and Knowledge Sharing

Interpersonal trust has an influence on knowledge sharing. If employees have a high level of trust, it will encourage employees to share their knowledge with other employees which can improve organizational performance. Knowledge sharing behavior can work well if trust is built properly because the knowledge owner prefers to share his knowledge with trustworthy individuals. As research conducted by Lei et al (2019) shows that interpersonal trust has a positive effect on knowledge sharing. Positive influence means that if interpersonal trust is high, it will increase knowledge sharing in the organization. Furthermore, research conducted by Badar & Seniati (2017) shows that the influence of interpersonal trust is significant on knowledge sharing. Park & Kim (2018) show that interpersonal trust has a positive and significant effect on knowledge sharing.

Leadership Support as Moderating

Employees who get support from leaders will be more confident in their abilities and competencies, employees will maintain their influence in the workplace so that they will increase their intention to share knowledge. Research by Lei et al (2019) states that leader support moderates the effect of interpersonal trust on knowledge sharing. This research is supported by (Muhammed & Zaim, 2020).

Conceptual Framework

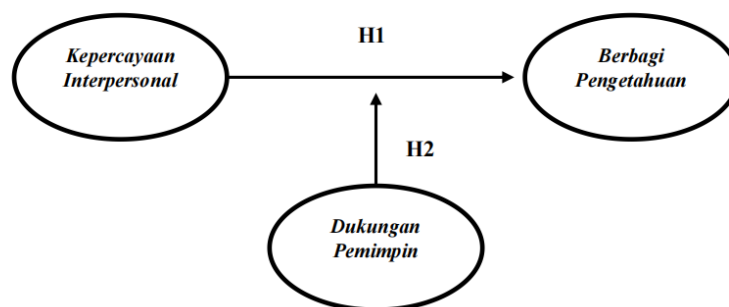


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Hypothesis

- H1 : Interpersonal trust has a positive and significant impact on knowledge sharing among employees of Telkom Akses Sumatera Barat.
- H2 : Interpersonal trust has a positive and significant effect on knowledge sharing which is moderated by the support of the leader for Telkom Akses Sumatera Barat employees.

METHOD

The research design is classified as causative research that explains the relationship or influence between variables. Population refers to the entire group of people, events or things of interest that the researcher investigates (Sekaran, 2006). The population of this study were all employees of Telkom Access West Sumatra, with a total of 255 people. The sample in this study amounted to 80 people using the cluster proportional random sampling technique. Data collection in this study used a questionnaire with a Likert scale, then analyzed using the Structural Equation Model (SEM) with the help of SmartPLS 3.0.

The measurement of the knowledge sharing variable consists of 8 statement items that adopt the instrument from de Vries et al (2006) . The interpersonal trust variable consists of 6 items that adopt the instrument from Hughes et al (2018). The leader's support variable consists of 16 statement items that adopt the instrument from Kottke (1988).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Description

The characteristics of the respondents used in this study were based on gender, age, educational background and years of service. The results of the characteristics of respondents based on gender are 39 female employees (48.75%) while male employees are 41 people (51.25%), it can be said that the characteristics of respondents based on gender are dominated by male employees. . The most respondents for characteristics based on age were employees with an age range of 25-30 years, namely 45 people or 56.25%. The results of the characteristics of respondents based on educational background are dominated by employees with a bachelor's degree as many as 33 people or 41.25%. The most respondents for characteristics based on organizational tenure are employees with a service period of 1-5 years as many as 38 people or 48.75%.

DATA ANALYSIS

Outer Model

Outer model is used to test the value of the validity and reliability of the model

Validity Test

The validity test that will be carried out in this study consists of convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity is done by looking at the loading factor or outer loading and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). It is said to meet convergent validity if it has an outer loading value > 0.5 and $AVE > 0.5$ (Sugiyono, 2018). To see whether the discriminant validity is adequate, it can be seen from the cross loading value by comparing the correlation dimensions of one variable with other variables. If the correlation dimension of a variable has a higher value than the correlation of that dimension with other variables, then the variable can be said to have discriminant validity. The following is a picture of the initial model of the relationship between variables:

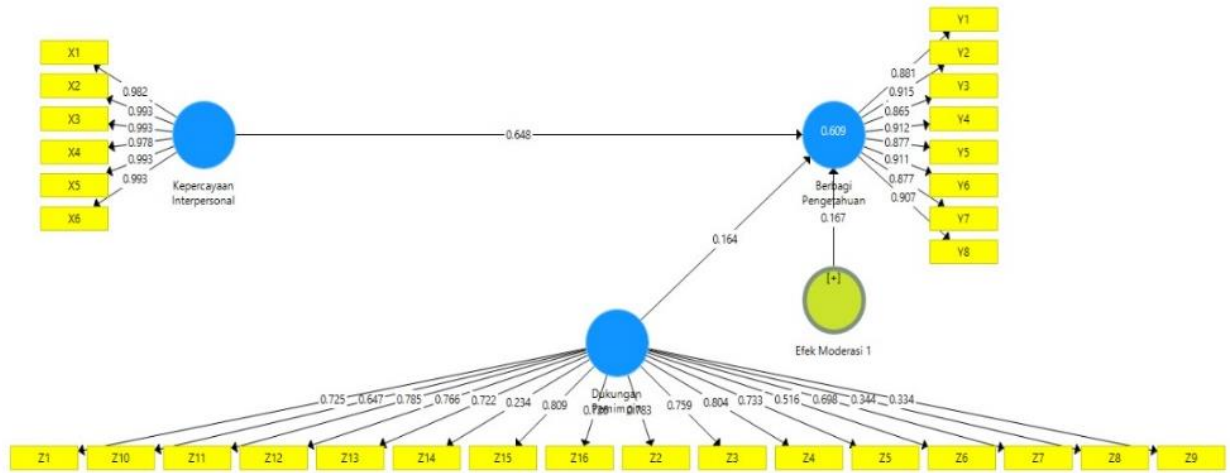


Figure 2. Outer Model

Figure 2 shows the initial form of the model between variables. In the initial model of the relationship between variables, it can be seen that the indicator is not valid because there are still indicators that have a loading factor value below 0.5 or do not have good convergent validity. Therefore, it is necessary to re-estimate the initial construct model by lowering the indicator as many as 3 question items that have a value below the loading factor of 0.5. So the final result of SmartPLS 3.0 looks as follows:

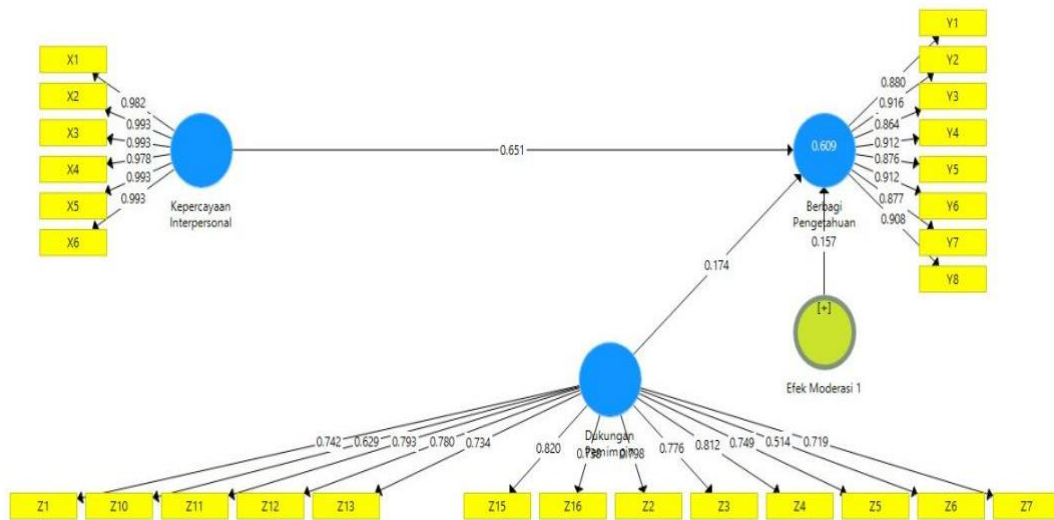


Figure 3. The Last Outer Model

From the results of the final outer loading which can be seen in Figure 3, it can be concluded that the indicators of each variable provide a high convergent validity value, because all indicators have a loading factor above 0.5. Likewise with the cross loading value which shows good discriminant validity, namely when comparing the correlation of variable indicators it has a higher value than the correlation of other variable indicators.

The construct is said to be valid if it has an AVE value > 0.5.

Table 1. Result of Analysis of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability

	AVE	Composite Reliability
Knowledge Sharing	0,798	0,969
Interpersonal Trust	0,978	0,996
Leadership Support	0,552	0,941

Table 1 shows that the construct has a validity above 0.5. This means that the construct has a good level of validity.

Reliability Test

Reliability shows the accuracy, consistency and accuracy of a measuring instrument in making measurements (Hartono, 2008). Table 1 shows the results of the composite reliability value above 0.7, which means that the construct in the model is estimated to be reliable.

Inner Model

Testing of the structural model or the inner model is carried out to see the relationship between the variables, the significance value and the R-Square of the research model (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2013). Figure 4 shows a structural model that relates latent variables.

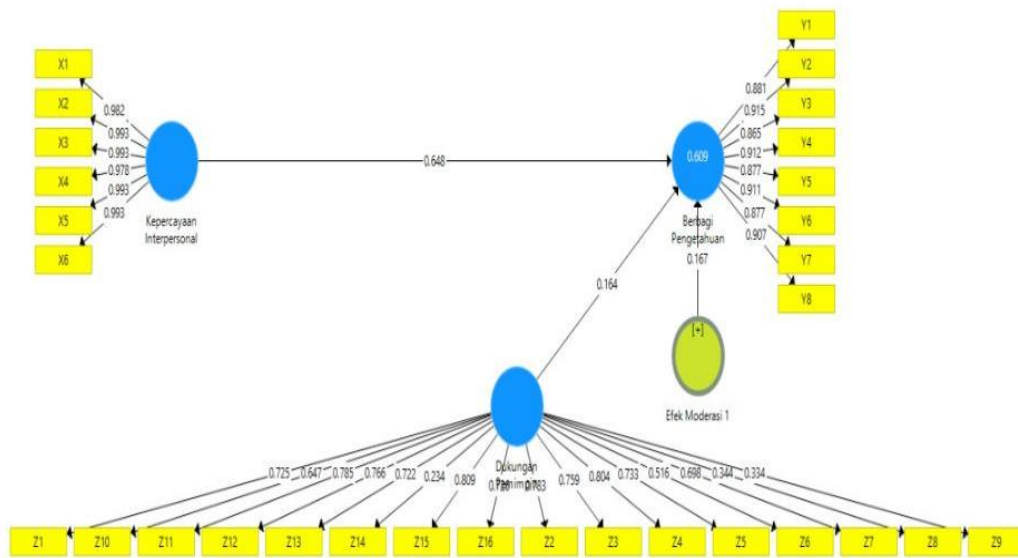


Figure 4. Inner Model

In assessing the model with PLS, it begins by looking at the R-Square for each dependent latent variable. The R-Square value of the knowledge sharing variable was obtained at 0.609. These results indicate that the ability of the variable interpersonal trust and leader support in explaining the variable knowledge sharing is 60.9%. Based on the results of this inner model, this research has a good goodness of fit.

Hypothesis Test

This test is carried out in the SmartPLS 3.0 program by operating bootstrapping

Table 2. The Total Effect of Interpersonal Trust (X), Knowledge Sharing (Y), Leadership Support (Z)

No	Variable Effect	Path Coefficient				Total
		Direct	t-statistic	Moderating	t-statistic	
	<i>Interpersonal Trust > Knowledge Sharing</i>	0.651	8.626	0.157	2.115	0.808

Direct Effect

Interpersonal Trust has a positive effect on Knowledge Sharing

Testing the first hypothesis shows that the interpersonal trust variable with knowledge sharing shows a path coefficient value of 0.651 with a t-statistic value of 8.626. Which means it is greater than the value of t table (1.96). These results indicate that there is a significant positive effect between interpersonal trust and knowledge sharing at Telkom Access West Sumatra. This means that if the perceived interpersonal trust increases, then the sharing of knowledge increases.

Moderating Effect

Interpersonal Trust has a positive influence on Knowledge Sharing through Leader Support as a Moderating variable

Based on the results of the calculation of the direct variable coefficient, the t-statistic value of the direct influence of interpersonal trust on knowledge sharing through leader support is $2.115 > 1.96$ with a path coefficient value of 0.157, it can be concluded that the leader's support variable is able to strengthen the influence of interpersonal trust on knowledge sharing and has an effect positive moderation. High interpersonal trust in Telkom Access West Sumatra can have a direct influence on knowledge sharing, but it would be better if the interpersonal trust that exists in employees is also associated with moderate support from leaders.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis and discussion in the previous section, it can be concluded that there is a direct and significant and positive influence between interpersonal trust and knowledge sharing at Telkom Access West Sumatra. This means that if an employee is able to trust or trust other employees, both verbally and non-verbally, employees will share their knowledge with trustworthy individuals which will increase knowledge sharing. There is a moderating and significant and positive effect between interpersonal trust and knowledge sharing through the support of leaders at Telkom Access West Sumatra employees. This illustrates that the leader's support has the power to influence the relationship between interpersonal trust and knowledge sharing, so when the leader's support in the company is good, interpersonal trust will increase significantly and will also increase knowledge sharing with Telkom Access West Sumatra employees.

Suggestions that the author can give in this study are based on descriptive analysis of the variables in this study, namely interpersonal trust, knowledge sharing, and leader support in the quite optimal category. So this needs to be improved by the company. To increase support from leaders and share knowledge with employees, it is better to create relationships and a sense of trust in leaders and employees and encourage employees to share knowledge capital with other employees.

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