

# Effects of Empowerment on Professionalism and Performance of Lecturers at Private Universities in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

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**Abstract-** This study aims to examine and analyze the effects of empowerment on the professionalism and the performance of lecturers at the private universities in Makassar, South Sulawesi. The method used to examine the above objective is by using explanatory research approach with the number of respondents collected at about 197 lecturers. These lecturers are those permanent lecturers of the private universities as well as lecturers assigned by the coordinating body of private university (DPK). The statistical method used to test the hypothesis is by using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The study found as follows. First, the empowerment has a partial significant effect on professionalism and performance of lecturers. Second, the professionalism of lecturers has a partial significant effect on lecturers' performance. However, the empowerment has no significant effect on lecturers' performance if it is mediated by professionalism. This study suggests that the private universities in the city of Makassar under study need to provide conducive environment to minimize workload, a sufficient equipment and give a high motivation to the lecturers to name a few in order to make the lectures and the private universities in this location to improve their competitiveness. Also, it is important for these private universities to reduce unnecessary intervention given by the universities' foundation that limit the performance, professionalism and the empowerment of their lecturers. In order words, a better management given by the private universities under surveyed is a must to make these universities are in a better shape in the near future.

**Index term-** Empowerment, Professionalism, and Lecturer Performance, structural equation model.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Higher education program is the main foundation in creating qualified graduates. In order to realize the above matter, universities are required to have human resources, infrastructures, curriculum, and good management systems. Of these four requirements, human resources, high quality of lecturers in particular play important role in making high caliber university's graduates. In fact, high quality of lecturers has been argued as the key to reach the success of a formal educational institution (Burki, 1999; Angrist, 2001; Misnawati, 2004). For that reason, lectures should perform professionally in doing their job in universities.

However, it was found that the performance of lecturers at private universities in Makassar has been argued to be far from the expectation (Alam, 2015). This was shown from their achievements in doing research and contribution to the community service at large as the part of University's Tri Dharma. As can be seen from Table 1, of the total number of 1258 lecturers at private universities in Makassar in 2014, only about 56 percent of them have done research activities. Whilst in terms of community service activities the proportion of lecturers who has done these activities were only 35 percent. These conditions almost remain the same in the year 2015.

Table 1.

The number and percentage of lecturers at private universities in Makassar who conducted research and community service activities, 2014-2015

Year	Number of lecturers	Number of research	Percent	Number of community service activities	Percent
2014	1.258	707	56.0	439	35.0

2015	1.264	724	57.0	480	38.0
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Source : Private Universities Coordinating Body (Kopertis), Region IX, Sulawesi (2016).

In terms of the number of private universities, it was recorded only about 26 percent of private universities in Sulawesi which have done research activities. The rest of 74 percent of private universities has not yet done research activities. These suggest that there are still many lecturers as well as private universities that have not yet done research activities as obliged by the government rules. These consequently make the private universities unable to compete at national, regional and global level. The graduates of these universities will certainly face difficulties in seeking jobs at the national, regional as well as global level.

Many studies advanced in the literature found that the performance of lecturers in universities can be increased by two things. The first is by empowering the lecturers of university (see, for instance, Lashley, 1999, Jarar, 2002; D'Anunzio et al., 1999; Setiawan, 2005 in Nongkeng et al., 2011). The second is by increasing the professionalism of the lectures (Hall, 1968, Miller et al., 1993; Adam and Miller, 2001; Hwang et al., 2009).

Empowerment means to enable or to allow or to permit through own initiative or that is triggered by others (Mulyadi, 2007). Whlist Robbins (2003) argues that empowerment is the placement of workers to be responsible for what they do. This means that by empowering individuals will be encouraged to become more involved in activity decisions that affect their work (Smith, 2000).

Professionalism, however, relates to two important aspects, namely, structural aspect and attitude aspect. Structural aspect is the part of the training, professional associations and codes of ethics, while attitude aspect relates to the formation of the professional aspect. The attributes of professionalism include education and skills, knowledge of theory, codes of ethics, professional organizations and services (Hall, 1968, Miller et al., 1993; Adam and Miller, 2001; Hwang et al., 2009).

The performance itself is defined a result of one's work in carrying out its duties with the basis of adequate ability in the field. This is accompanied by a strong motivation in doing a job (Whitmore, 1997), while Goltom and Simon (1994) view performance as the result of interaction or functioning of the elements of motivation, ability, and perception in a person.

Several studies have conducted studies of the effects of professionalism on performance. These studies found that there were positive results in that the increase in professionalism will give a significant effect on performance improvement (Kwon et al., 2010; Dali and Mas'ud, 2014). As there is no study examining the effects of empowerment and profesionalism of lecturers on lecturers' performance especially in private universities in Makassar, this study is therefore important to be undertaken. However, before the results of the study are discussed, the conceptual framework and hypothesis of this study is highlighted in section 2. This is then followed by research method in section 3. Results and discussion of this study are given in section 4. Finally, concluding remarks are drawn in section 5.

II. Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS

The conceptual framework of this study can be seen at the Figure 1 below. As can be seen that the performance of lecturers at private universities in Makassar City is determined by two variables. These two variables are the lecturers' empowerment and lecturers' professionalism.

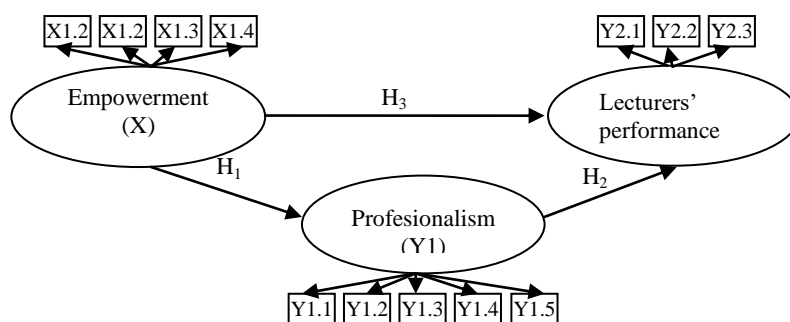


Figure 1. The conceptual Framework of the study

Base on the above conceptual framework, there are three hypothesis that are going to be tested as follows.

H1 : empowerment has a significant effect on professionalism of the lecturers at the private universities in Makassar.

H2 : Professionalism has a significant effect on the performance of lecturers' at the private universities in Makassar.

H3: Empowerment has a significant effect on the performance of lecturers mediated by lecturers' profesionalism in private universities in Makassar.

### III. RESEARCH METHOD

Population in this research is all permanent lecturers of Private Universities in Makassar city, the province of South Sulawesi. These lecturers consist of lecturers belongs to the university foundation and lecturers assigned by the private university coordinating body (Kopertis) in Makassar City. The reason for taking the population both from lecturers at the university foundation and lecturers assigned by private university coordinating body (DPK) is because both lecturers of university foundation and from DPK have been certified as professional lecturers by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Technology.

Also, it is because both lecturers of the university foundation and DPK Kopertis have the same workload and their activities should be reported to Kopertis Region IX. In addition, both lecturers have already received certification allowances as compensation for their works to these universities. The number of lecturers under these groups was about 1,567 lecturers (Kopertis Region IX, 2016). However, for the purpose of this study, the sample collected was only 319 lecturers. This sample is determined by using the Slovin formula (see Alam, 2015 for detail formula).

The research instrument used to collect the data was by using questionnaires. In addition, documentation in the form of written and unwritten documents relevant to this study were also collected. Likert scale was further used to measure any qualitative statement such as attitude, opinions and perceptions of respondents (see, Sekaran, 2003). Details of variables and indicators as the operational definitions of the study are given at Table 2.

Table 2. Variables and Indicators used in this study

No	Variables	Indicator	References	Measurement Scale
1	Empowerment (X1)	Opportunity to learn dan development in work management, support acceptance in decision making, information access and access towards work resources	Kanter (1990), Lischinger et al. (2011).	Interval
2	Profesionalism (Y1)	Organisation affiliation, belief in public service, belief in self regulation, Sense calling on field, Autonomy.	Dali et al., (2013), Boyt (2001)	Interval
3	Lecturers' Performance (Y2)	Academic teaching, research and public service (University plillar of Tri Dharma)	The Law No. 14 / 2005	Interval

The method used to analyse the data collected is by using statistical method called specifically Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) as suggested by Solimun (2002). This structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is considered as relevant and capable tool in analyzing the relationship between latent constructs and their indicators, latent constructs with each other, and measurement error directly (Yamin and Kurniawan, 2009: 3; Nature, 2015). Also, SEM allows for the analysis between several exogeneous and endogeneous variables directly. See, for instance Hair et al., (1995), Yamin and Kurniawan (2009) and Nature (2015) to name few references.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As mentioned at the outset that the respondents in this study are lecturers from the private universities located in the city of Makassar. These sample survey consist of female lecturers at about 54.8 percent and the age of the respondents were mostly above 55 years old. The majority employment status was lecturers belong to the foundation at about 76.6 percent and they have been working as lecturers in the universities for more than 10 years.

Using the Structural Equation model (SEM), it was found that the model structured met the criteria of the Goodness of fit indices (GFI). This model met 7 (seven) out of the 8 (eight) conformity criteria as shown at Table 3. This suggests that the model has met the principle of parsimony (Arbuckle and Wothke, 1999; in Solimun, 2004; 89).

Table 3. The Goodness of Fit indices and cut-off values

Criteria	Goodness of Fit Indices	Cut-off Value	Notes
Chi-square	104.958	small (<111.764)	Good
Probability	0,074	≥ 0,05	Good
RMSEA	0,012	≤ 0,08	Good
CMIN/DF	1,011	≤ 2,00	Good
GFI	0,942	≥ 0,90	Good
AGFI	0,887	≥ 0,90	Marginal
CFI	0,997	≥ 0,95	Good
TLI	0,993	≥ 0,95	Good

Source : estimated from the survey data.

Due to the above conditions, the structural relationships and hypothesis of this study are then analysed and tested. The results as shown in Figure 2 confirm that: (1) empowerment variable has significant effect on professionalism and (2) lecturers' professionalism have significant effect on lecturers' performance. Whilst empowerment has no significant effect on lecturer's performance.

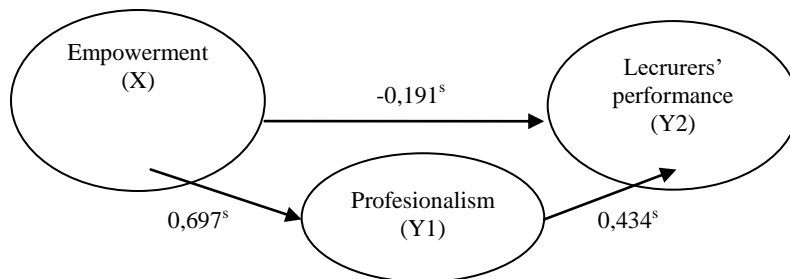


Figure 2: Path Diagram and Hypotesis Testing

In terms of the details of the values are given at Table 4. As shown at this Table that the first hypothesis that empowerment has direct and significant effect on professionalism of lecturer was accepted. This is shown from the critical ratio value (c.r) of 20,97 which is greater than 1.96 and the probability value is 0.000 which is less than 0,05. This means that the first hypothesis was accepted in that empowerment has a positive and significant effect on the professionalism of private universities' lecturers in Makassar. It can, therefore, be concluded that the better the empowerment of lecturers, it gives a significant influence on the improvement of lecturers professionalism. Note that, these estimation results support the previous findings of the study's conducted by Katzenmayer and Moller (2001) and Dee et. al. (2003), as they argued that empowerment can facilitate educational personnel to improve professionalism.

Table 4. Path coefficients of the direct effects and hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Direct Effects	Path coefficients	C.R (t-test)	Remarks
Partial	H1 Empowerment → Professionalism	0.697	20.97*	Significant Accepted
	H2 Profesionalism →	0.434	9.27*	Significant Accepted

		Performance				
	H3	Empowerment → Performance	-0.191	0.21*	Insignificant	Unaccepted

Notes: CR\* = Significant at  $\alpha = 0,05$

Source: Estimation results of the study

As shown at Table 4, the second hypothesis was also accepted in that the professionalism has a direct and significant effect on the performance of lecturers. This was shown from the critical ratio value (c.r) of 9.27 which is greater than 1.96 and the probability value of 0.012 that is greater than  $\alpha = 0.05$ . This suggests that the professionalism of lecturers has a positive and significant impact on the performance of private universities lecturers in Makassar. Thus, it can be concluded that the higher the professionalism of lecturers, it has a significant influence on the improvement of lecturer's performance.

The above findings are supported by several previous studies that shown the improvement of professionalism of employees will have a significant effect on performance of the employees (see, for instance, Kwon et al., 2010; Dali and Mas'ud, 2014). Similar studies also confirmed the result of this study in that the professionalism of a person consisting of academic degree, licensure or the lectures' certificate and long working experience has a significant and positive influence to students' attainment (see, Darling-Hammond, 2000; Ding and Sherman, 2006; Goldhaber and Anthony, 2007, Guarino et al., 2006; Jepsen, 2005; Kaplan and Ownings, 2001; Strunk and Robinson, 2006; Wayne and Youngs, 2003).

However, the effect of lectures' empowerment on lecturers' performance was found to be insignificant. This was shown from negative coefficient value of -0.191 and the t value of 0.21 which less than 1.96. This suggests that lectures' performance can be supported by lectures' professionalism as the empowerment alone cannot improve lecturers' performance directly.

### V. CONCLUDING NOTES

Based on the above results, it can be concluded as follows. First, the better the empowerment of lecturers, this will give a real impact to the increase of professionalism of lecturers. This is simply because lecturers who have adequate knowledge, they have sufficient opportunities to improve their abilities and professionalism. Second, lecturers who have professionalism, they will have positive effects on the improvement of lecturers' performance. This is not surprising as professionalism gives sufficient competence in carrying out education, teaching activities, and a good attitude toward the students' assessment.

This study suggests that the private universities in the city of Makassar under study need to provide conducive environment to minimize workload, a sufficient equipment and give a high motivation to the lecturers to name a few in order to make the lectures and the private universities in this loacation to improve their competitiveness. Also, it is important for these private universities to reduce unnecessary intervention given by the universities' foundation that limit the performance, professionalism and the empowerment of their lecturers. In order words, a better management given by the private universities under surveyed is a must to make these universities are in a better shape in the near future.

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