

# NEW CONCEPT OF EMPOWERING EXPLOITATIVE LEADERSHIP (EMPIRICAL RESEARCH IN ACEH PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES POST COVID-19)

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## Abstract

This study was aimed to investigate the influence of empowering exploitative leadership, lecturer engagement, and meeting application on lecturer achievements. Research novelty was a development variable empowering leadership with exploitative leadership. Therefore, it becomes a predictor of lecturer's engagement and lecturer achievements. The quantitative analysis was used with the unit of analysis of private universities in Aceh, and the samples are 240 lecturers taken using cluster sampling and quota sampling. The SEM analysis showed that the lecturer achievements of private universities in Aceh could be affected by empowering exploitative leadership, lecturer engagement, and meeting application as strengthens influence between empowering exploitative leadership and lecturer engagement to lecturer achievement of private universities in Aceh.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

As the spearhead in producing quality human resources, universities must continue to improve themselves. There are several strategies that higher education institutions can implement, namely: (1) improve the quality of education, (2) develop rate, practical and relevant curriculum and learning, and (3) increase the number and quality of the work of the tri dharma; (4) improve lecturers quality, competence, and qualifications.

It is essential to encourage lecturers by providing a conducive environment for teaching and research, such as e-libraries, access to limited published research content, and access to the internet to improve teaching and learning processes and lecturer performance. Regarding the performance of lecturers at Aceh's private universities, research involving 280 lecturers using the purposive sampling technique shows that the performance of private lecturers in Aceh is good and can directly affect organizational performance by meeting application, leadership, and employee engagement, Abidin et al., (2021). Then, confirming these findings based on data from the Directorate General of Higher Education Database in 2021, more serious efforts are still needed from private universities in Aceh to be able to improve lecturers' achievements through capacity building by recommending and supporting lecturers to continue their education to a higher level than before. DataSecretariat of the Directorate General of Higher Education (2020) showed that the level of education of lecturers in Aceh's private universities is not evenly distributed. Lecturer education is too large and accumulates up to 91% at the Masters/S2 level and 63% in functional positions of Expert Assistant. Referring to table 1.1, the opportunity to increase lecturer achievement at Aceh's private universities is tremendous. It can be one way to bind them to stay at the college where they

serve. Then, let us look at the performance of private universities on the island of Sumatra. It is based on the release of university data which group performance based on the achievement of study program accreditation. From data, the Secretariat of the Directorate General of Higher Education (2020) shows that private universities in Aceh can get 11% overall achievement of accreditation per study program, which is still better in general when compared to the province of Kepulauan Riau, Jambi, Bangka Belitung, Bengkulu and Lampung, which reached 5%, 4%, 1%, 3%, and 9%, respectively.

Therefore, it is interesting to raise the theme related to lecturers' achievements and engagement. In several surveys, including those conducted by the HBR (Services, 2013), employee engagement has become a top priority for senior executives. In this fast-paced economic cycle, entity or institution leaders know that having a high-performing workforce is essential to their growth. The survey revealed that while most leaders value engagement, senior executives seem much more about the level of employee engagement in their company. In most companies (16% in IT companies; 14% in financial institutions; 12% in manufacturing; 9% in energy companies; 8% in health and 8% in education; other sectors, 33% of the 588 respondents), today's leaders are acutely aware that there is much more to be done to ensure that they have a focused and engaged workforce. Linking engagement to business performance requires leadership and attention. Graphically (Services, 2013) shows the successful performance of employees who apply the concept of work engagement to their entities.

From the previous literature, Cai et al. (2018) suggest that further research related to empowering leadership should consider several potential limitations. The first limitation is that the data is collected from one source, leading to the potential for variance in the general method (i.e., the distribution of data is uneven than the variables studied). Strengthen the findings, and repeated studies should be conducted in different contexts. In particular, for future research, consider using a large study sample size because it will be relatively easier to detect a significant relationship,

Then research by Ali et al., (2018) recommends that further research uses the role of mediating variables other than thriving at work that connects empowering leadership and performance. Therefore, the main focus of this research is only on the use of the variables of Empowering-Exploitative Leadership (KKE), Lecturer Engagement (KD), Meeting Applications (AP), and Lecturer Achievement (CKD).

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The leadership theory is one of the oldest theories in human resource management related to leaders' and subordinates' behavior. Carlyle, in 1840 argued that great people are responsible for the course of history, while Burns, in 1978, is considered the father of modern leadership studies identifying attributes associated with leaders. Stogdill, in 1948 in a comprehensive study related to leadership traits over the period 1907-1947, identified five personal characteristics that influence leadership effectiveness, Allen, (2018).

Empowering leadership (EL) is related to leadership behavior whose main focus began in the 1950s, developed by Stogdill in 1951 and Kahn and Katz in 1966, then research related to followers by Fiedler in 1967, House 1971, Hersey and Blanchard in 1974, Bass in 1990. Then it was only in 1986 that researchers Burke and Burpitt and Bigoness, in 1997 linked leadership with empowering, Zhang & Gheibi, (2015). EL is related to and started based on social influence theory by Kelman in 1958 and then reintroduced by Bibb Latane in 1981, who assumes that a person will respond to social influence if there are three factors, namely: Conformity is when people seem to agree with others. Still, in reality, he kept his differences of opinion a secret. Identification is when individuals are influenced by someone they like and respect, and internalization is when people accept a belief or behavior and accept it publicly and privately accept.

Therefore, empowering leadership is defined as the behavior of leaders who can motivate and share their authority with their subordinates to achieve performance at the desired level. In addition to empowering leadership, exploitative leadership (EXL) will serve as an antecedent of performance and employee engagement. EXL is a leadership behavior that can exploit followers to achieve goals even though it is a personal goal with hospitality and an informal attitude towards followers. (Kiyani et al., 2021). This EXL behavior tends to be able to play with the emotions of its followers and is also able to present psychological pressure so that it can demand followers to work hard (Hasan & Tumah, 2019; Kiyani et al., 2021; Ellen A. Schmid et al., 2018; Ellen Anke Schmid et al., 2019).

This EXL stems from the COR Theory (conservation of resources), which Hubfoll introduced in 1989, is a stress theory that illustrates motivation as a driving force for humans to maintain the resources they currently have and to be able to reach new resources. These resources are different for each individual and are related to their personal experiences and situations. For example, time with family can be categorized as a valuable resource for each individual. In contrast, for other individuals, this condition may even be considered a threat to other resources due to something being sacrificed, (Guo et al., 2021).

Starting with empowering leadership as a form of leadership behavior with the ability to motivate and share authority with followers, and EXL is a form of leadership behavior that can exploit followers to achieve goals even if it is a personal goal, the combination of these two types of leadership behavior can be empowering-exploitative leadership (KKE). According to the KBBI (Big Indonesian Dictionary), empowerment itself comes from the word power, which means capable so that it can be concluded as the ability to act in accordance with the wishes (originating from within). Meanwhile, empowering, which comes from the word empowerment, means the degree of autonomy and self-determination or acting on one's authority (en.wikipedia.org, 2021).

Thus, Empowering Exploitative Leadership (KKE) is a leadership behavior that can motivate, share authority, exploit and act by his wishes to direct his followers in achieving the desired goals either on behalf of himself or his organization.

Reviewing the previous research conducted by (2017), concerning employee engagement, in American companies, research results show that employees who are not engaged usually cost companies up to \$350 billion per year. The exploration of employee engagement with their performance showed a significant effect.

Subsequent research conducted in Nigeria by Agbionu et al., (2018), using the Split Half Spearman method, involving 314 lecturers at universities there, shows the positive influence of lecturer engagement on performance and organization. However, the limitation of the research in this research is the poor response to the questionnaire distributed to respondents (7.64% did not respond), which may be due to the fact that some indicators do not reflect their true feelings. In addition, the scope of the study was limited to only three in Ebonyi State, which severely limits the generalizability of the results.

Other research in Egypt by Dajani (2015) to 245 bank employees with a success rate of 81.6% in returning the questionnaire, showing a significant effect of employee engagement on their performance. The flip side of this research also shows that employees remain the most potent contributors to any business. Therefore, the level of engagement needs to increase to meet the challenges of global competition today and in the future. The research also found that younger employees are more likely to leave their workplaces searching for better job opportunities. However, by improving HR policies and practices, employee retention and commitment can substantially increase employee engagement, which directly impacts their performance. Employees are a significant asset to any organization. If they are not given the suitable space and time to create the perfect mix of work and pleasure (absorption) in the workplace, a sense of disengagement will arise within employees. The concept of employee engagement should not be considered unimportant in improving performance. Organizations and employees depend on each other to achieve their goals and objectives. Therefore, employee engagement should not be understood as an exercise alone but should be integrated into the workplace culture and embedded in the policies and procedures within the organization. The concept of employee engagement should not be considered unimportant in improving performance. Organizations and employees depend on each other to achieve their goals and objectives. Therefore, employee engagement should not be understood as an exercise alone but should be integrated into the workplace culture and embedded in policies and procedures within the organization. The concept of employee engagement should not be considered unimportant in improving performance. Organizations and employees depend on each other to achieve their goals and objectives. Therefore, employee engagement should not be understood as an exercise alone but should be integrated into the workplace culture and embedded in policies and procedures within the organization.

In the last five years, McKinsey's study showed that the social media use and need have continued to increase, with the figure reaching 65% of all organizations adopting social media in their workplace (Radhakrishnan et al., 2018). Furthermore, a positive impact on employee performance (Albuflasa, 2019). Tajudeen et al., (2018) reported that social media has a positive impact on organizations and their employees. Study Albuflasa, (2019) conducted in the Kingdom of Bahrain, to be precise, at the telecommunications company Zain Bahrain with a

total of 65 respondents, showed that social media had a significant impact on the performance of employees there by 39%. Based on the limitations found in his research, it is recommended to evaluate the effect of other variables such as leadership on the performance of employees who use social networks or social media. Then, re-examine the influence of social media variables on employee performance in organizations other than telecommunications companies (with different organizational structures). Meanwhile, SYL and SW Lee, (2020) reported in their research that the use of media such as social networking sites and instant, in organizational life continues to spread, as needed growing of using social media at work. Their study examines how social media such as Facebook and KakaoTalk at work affects the performance of various companies and industries in South Korea 3873 respondents who are connected via Facebook and KakaoTalk. The results show that Facebook and KakaoTalk have a linear positive effect on individual performance. And these results have significant implications for companies that review their policies on using social media for their employees.

Jafar et al. (2019) reported that social media (SM) is a tool that provides facilities for social needs and even becomes commercial (Tajudeen et al., 2018) developed with the Web 2.0 technology platform (Habibi et al., 2016). Furthermore, it is reported from their research that the influence of social media sites such as WeChat, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube has become famous all over the world for sharing and obtaining information. (Berthon et al., 2012) can affect individual performance (Jafar et al., 2019). In addition, this study also places the SM role as a moderator.

Then the lecturer is also part of the organization or institution to which he devotes himself so that the totality of his performance must also be measured. In general, the performance itself, apart from what is described and stated in the guide Directorate of Research and Community Service Directorate General of Research and Development Strengthening Ministry of Research, Technology, (2018), according to Groen et al., (2017), Performance is the strength of an individual's effort to meet the requirements of his job or a certain level of achievement according to their leader or organization. Meanwhile, according to Radhakrishnan et al. (2018). The individual's performance relates to the activities the organization expects or derives from and how the individual performs or achieves them. Characteristics of high-performing employees will focus on achieving quality as their main priority in work. They will try to concentrate on improving their skills and always being at the forefront of making decisions (Pradhan & Jena, 2017).

Thus it can be concluded that the performance of lecturers is the result of the strength of their efforts as a result of an increase in skills in meeting the level of achievement of education and teaching, research, and community service obtained in a certain period. (Government of Republic of Indonesia 60/1999, 1999; Pradhan & Jena, 2017; Radhakrishnan et al., 2018).

Thus, it can be concluded that private universities in Aceh can take advantage of the potential use of meeting applications (AP) to influence and improve lecturers' achievement (CKD) effectively. And it is using the meeting application variable as a moderator that can strengthen the influence of lecturer engagement (KD), and the new empowering exploitative

leadership (KKE) variable, which acts as a predictor of increasing lecturer work achievement, is also interesting to be tested again in this study.

Based on an examination of part of the prior, the proposed hypothesis is as follows.

- H1: The significant effect of KKE on KD.
- H2: The Significant effect of KD on CKD.
- H3: The significant effect of KKE on CKD.
- H4: KKE indirectly affects CKD via KD
- H5: AP strengthens KD's influence on CKD.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a quantitative approach with methods and distributes questionnaires via online media. The number of respondents was 240 people taken using cluster sampling and quota sampling techniques. The minimum sample requirements were determined based on Hair et al., (2017) that the minimum number of samples is 5 to 10 the number of indicators. The analytical tool used in this research, namely AMOS, and in the next stage to analyze the CFA or test the validity of the loading factor and SEM, namely the structural equation of the research model.

### 4. RESULTS

The respondents' demographic analysis results showed that 72.1% were male, and 27.9% were female. The age group dominates respondents above 35 years (48.9%), and 96.8% are married. Furthermore, 92.5% have worked for 6-10 years, and all have a minimum education of S2.

Then, the next stage of analysis is to test the validity and reliability of the data before conducting an SEM test by running a CFA test, as shown in Figure 1.

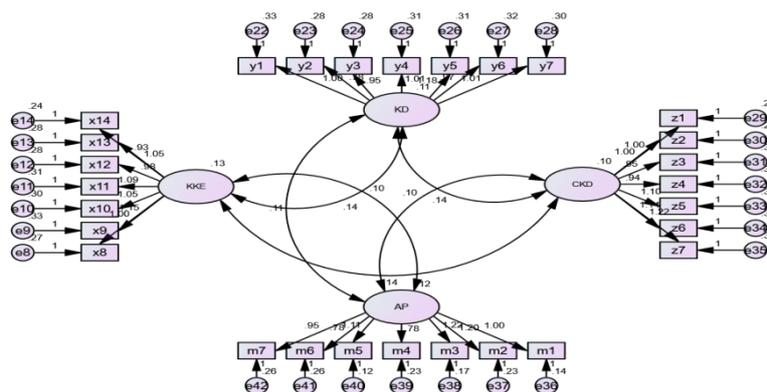


Figure 1. Measurement Model

The measurement model is carried out to confirm the construction of a construct based on the research model. The validity of the data can be known through the loading factor value, and the fair value is above 0.5, (Ghozali, 2018; Hair et al., 2017). The analysis results show that the value of the load has been greater than 0.5. Then for the value of construction reliability, there are indicated by the value of R2 or in the construction reliability test, the CR requirement is 0.6 or 0.7. Thus, the reliability of all the indicators of the model is good, and the analysis of the results shows that the reliability of the construct was greater than 0.6(J. Hair et al., 2017; JF Hair et al., 2014).

After validity and reliability are tested, the next step is to determine the normality of the data, outliers, and data multicollinearity. The results of the data normality test, based on the critical value criteria of Skewness and Kurtosis for the confidence level (P) = 0.5 are  $\pm 1.96$ , and the results show that there is no value outside  $\pm 1.96$ ,(J. Hair et al., 2017; JF Hair et al., 2014).

To further evaluate the model feasibility test research, it is analyzed using the test criteria adjustment with several index criteria and threshold values to make the search model suitable or appropriate. After all, indicators are valid and reliable. The results of testing the model with criteria can be viewed in the following table.

**Table1. The Goodness of Fit Indices**

GoF	Value	Cut of Value	Information
Chi-Square (df=194)	292,864	162,776	<b>Moderate Fit</b>
CMIN/DF	1,510	2.00	<b>Fit</b>
RMSEA	0.046	0.08	<b>Fit</b>
GFI	0.902	0.90	<b>Fit</b>
CFI	0.950	0.90	<b>Fit</b>
TLI	0.941	0.90	<b>Fit</b>

Source: data AMOS, (2022)

Based on the results of the feasibility test analysis of the model, for the next step, the structural test will be performed, and the magnitude of influence between variables independents and dependents will be analyzed. The following is the result of SEM analysis using AMOS.

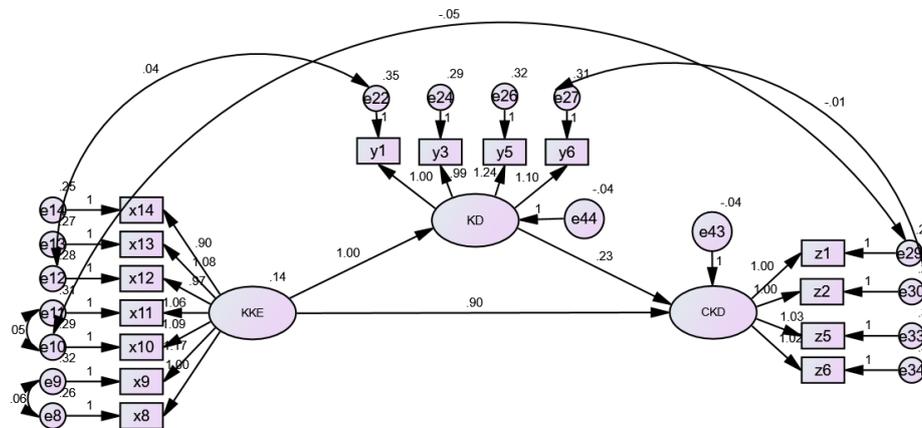


Figure 2. SEM test results

The image shows the results of tests of the magnitude between variables. KKE directly affects KD in Aceh's private universities positively and significantly; thus, H1, which states, "The significant effect of KKE on KD" can be accepted. Furthermore, KD can significantly affect CKD, so H2 states, "The Significant effect of KD on CKDis acceptable. Then the results of the analysis show that KKE affects CKD directly so that H3, which states that "Significant influence of KKE on CKD," accepted. The results tests can be seen in the following table.

Table 2. SEM . test results

			Estimate	P
KD	<---	KKE	,997	***
CKD	<---	KD	,226	,039
CKD	<---	KKE	,900	***

Note: \*\*\* shows P below 0.01

Source: data AMOS (2022)

Then for the mediation test, the indirect effect of the KKE variable on CKD through KD is 0.033, which means this result has a significant indirect effect on the endogenous variable through the mediating variable (results below 0.05), so H4, which states that "KKE indirectly affects CKD through KD" accepted. The results shown in Table 3.

Table 3. The results of the indirect effect significance test

Variable	KKE
CKD	,033

Source: data AMOS (2022)

Visually SEM, the results of the mediation test for KKE, KD, and CKD variables are as follows in Figure 3.

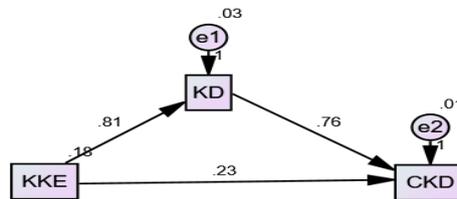


Figure 3. Mediating Variable Test Results

Then, the next step is to examine the AP variable's role that can strengthen-weak the influence of KD on CKD in Aceh's universities. The results are shown in figure 4.

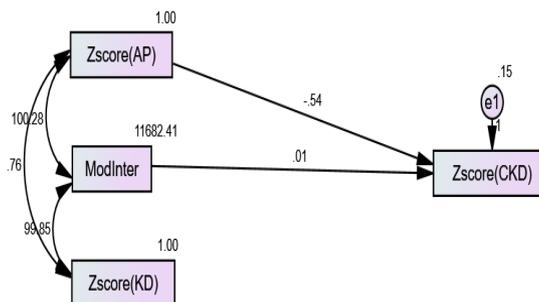


Figure 4. Test results of moderating variables

The test has shown the effect of the moderating variable on the relationship between the variables KD, AP, and CKD.

Table 4. Test Results of Moderating Variables

			Estimate	P
ZCKD	<---	Interaction Moderation (AP)	0.013	***

Note: \*\*\* shows P below 0.01

Source: data AMOS (2022)

Based on table 4, AP will significantly strengthen the influence of KD on CKD in Aceh's private universities. It is shown that KD can affect CKD in Aceh's private universities and will have a more decisive influence if the AP variable supports it, namely support in using

meeting applications such as zoom or others. Hence, H5, which states that "AP strengthens the influence of KD on CKD," was accepted.

These various tests have implications for related parties in Aceh private universities and previous research. This research has implications for increasing lecturer achievement (CKD) in private universities in Aceh through empowering exploitative leadership (KKE), lecturer engagement (KD) directly or indirectly, and strengthening factors for meeting applications (AP), which also has implications for theory development stress theory and Work-Family Border Concept which is integrated with the formation of new variables of work susceptibility and COR Theory (conservation of resources) and social influence theory for the process of synthesizing new variables of empowering exploitative leadership.

The previous research, Abidin et al., (2021) found a way to improve job performance in Aceh's private universities, the leadership had to increase the use of meeting applications, leadership, and lecturer engagement, even though in this study, no specific leadership behavior was used as in this study which uses the empowering exploitative leadership variable as a new variable (novelty).

The problem in Aceh Province, there are several Private Universities (PU), based on data from the LL Dikti Region XIII Aceh 2019, the PU in Aceh had 69% accreditation with a ranked C's score, the rest are B. There are institutions accredited for Study Program with A Score. Based on the data, the principles of governance are good university governance, which is oriented towards improving the quality of lecturers' work achievements, transparency, and accountability has not run as well (Burhanudin & Bansu, 2019). And based on data released Secretariat of the Directorate General of Higher Education (2020), at private universities in Aceh, the number of lecturers with post-graduate or master's education does dominate compared to the level of education above or below as many as 2889 people. Comparing the number of lecturers with Doctoral (S3), which is 122 people, and with Bachelor/Diploma education, as many as 999 people. If compared, the data in this study are in line with the data released by the Secretariat of the Directorate General of Higher Education (2020) that the education level of lecturers at Aceh's private universities swelled to the post-graduate or master (S2) level. So based on these conditions, the policies of the chief of private universities in Aceh should be able to focus on developing human resources for lecturers, especially to send them to a higher level of education, namely the doctoral education level (S3).

In 2021 as a form of support for the development of human resources for lecturers at private universities in Aceh, the government, through the authorized government institution, namely the Human Resources Development Agency of Aceh Province, provides a quota of 2,120 prospective scholarship recipients, one of whom is a lecturer at private universities in Aceh to continue their studies. Education at all levels of education, especially doctoral studies, both at home and abroad (BPSDM Aceh, 2021).

Because of the implications of using the variables developed in this study, namely leadership, exploitative empowerment, lecturer engagement, meeting applications and lecturers' achievement at private universities in Aceh, it will be implemented properly if all parties

involved in improving lecturer performance, such as the owner of the Foundation and the manager of the private university universities are more responsive to the development of lecturer resources (support for continuing education), pay attention to their welfare (pay attention to the needs and the amount of income that is adjusted to existing regulatory standards) and full support for facilities and internet networks for learning such as optimizing the use of meeting applications.

## 5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The research findings show that several main factors are needed that can influence CKD, namely, KKE variable showing that the role of the KKE variable is significant to KD, confirming and supporting the findings of Cai et al., (2018) ); Aryee et al., (2012); de Sousa & van Dierendonck, (2014); W. Zhu et al., (2009); Tuckey et al., (2013), Guo et al., (2021); Kiyani et al., (2021); and Ellen AnkeSchmid et al., (2019a) which further supports previous findings which show that KKE has a significant effect on CKD, Aryee et al., (2019); Abidin et al., (2021); Ali et al., (2018), Kundu et al., (2019); Wu et al., (2021); Kiyani et al., (2021); Ahearne et al., (2005); Ali et al., (2018); Harris et al., (2015); and Li et al., (2016).

Subsequent findings on KD which play a significant role in influencing the CKD of lecturers at Aceh private universities, support the results of previous research by Hammoud, (2017); Abidin et al., (2021); Agbionu et al., (2018); Dajani, (2015); Beacham et al., (2016); and Ibrahim et al., (2020).

Then the findings of further research on meeting application variables that have a significant influence on lecturer engagement and lecturer work performance at Aceh private universities as moderating variables support the previous findings by Jafar et al., (2019); Tajudeen et al., (2018); Habibi et al., (2016); Berthon et al., (2012); (Abidin et al., 2021); Parveen et al., (2015).

Then the common thread in the new variable of exploitative leadership is the adaptation of the development of the Resource Conservation Theory and social influence theory which is a combination of the negative impact of exploitative leadership and forms of exploitation behavior on all resources owned by university lecturers. The Private sector in Aceh is then positively balanced by the behavior of empowering leadership. The synthesis of these two variables becomes new antecedents for lecturer engagement, and the work performance of private university lecturers in Aceh can be appropriately implemented.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This research adapts and applies Resource Conservation Theory or COR Theory (conservation of resources) and social influence theory that can be well synthesized to suppress the negative impact of exploitative leadership and forms of exploitation behavior on all resources owned by private university lecturers in Aceh, which are then positively balanced by empowering leadership behavior so that the results of the synthesis of these two variables can become new determinants of lecturer engagement and work achievement of private university lecturers in Aceh. Then the concept of the novelty KKE variable has a significant direct effect on CKD and can indirectly affect CKD in private universities in Aceh through KD. Based on the

analysis results, it was also found that the role of the KD variable as a mediating variable is a fully mediating variable, so the positive impact of the KKE variable will be better if through the KD variable. Next research findings on the AP variable then the use of Zoom Meeting, Google Meeting, WhatsApp Group, Facebook, and Instagram used to strengthen social relations with colleagues and students at Aceh private universities must be supported by good network facilities and internet connections and can be accessed free of charge so that lecturers can maximize the use of meeting applications in the teaching and learning process at Aceh private universities.

## 7. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

In addition to confirming previous research findings, this research has limitations. This research cannot necessarily be generalized to institutions like higher education with characteristics, particularly in the public sector. Therefore, re-examine the variables KKE, KD, AP, and CKD by combining types or characteristics of organizations or institutions different from this research. Additionally, this search has limitations in the number of respondents, which only consists of lecturers from a limited number, so further research is recommended to vary the respondents' research with more varied professions

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