

THE EFFECT OF LEADERSHIP ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: ANALYSIS OF THE MEDIATING AND MODERATING ROLE OF REWARD

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ABSTRACT

Employee performance is an important factor in achieving organizational goals, with transformational leadership shown to improve performance through its influence on organizational commitment. However, a decline in productivity in Indonesian private companies and gaps in reward effectiveness prompted this study to develop a new research model. This Research aims to examine the impact of transformational leadership on employee work performance with organizational commitment as a mediating variable and reward as a moderating variable. This research was conducted on employees of PT X in Jakarta using quantitative methods by distributing questionnaires via googleform with 161 respondents and analyzed using Smartpls-SEM. The results showed that transformational leadership offers a positive and significant effect on employee work performance. Organizational commitment is proven to mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and work performance, where employees who have high commitment tend to have better performance. However, extrinsic reward and perceived equitable reward did not moderate the relationship between transformational leadership and work performance. Although rewards are important in creating satisfaction and motivation, employees at PT X are more influenced by intrinsic motivation and support provided by their leaders compared to extrinsic factors such as bonuses or other rewards. This research explores the important role of leadership and motivational strategies in improving employee performance. This research highlights the importance of fairness in rewarding employees, which ultimately provides valuable insights for company management to improve employee performance and motivation.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Job Performance, Organizational Commitment, Extrinsic Reward, Perceived Equitable Reward.

1. INTRODUCTION

Performance plays an important role in achieving organizational goals in the competitive era (Noe, 2020). Leaders play a major role in managing reliable human resources and creating a conducive work environment (Mosadeghrad, 2003). Leadership style is one way to achieve this goal, in this case the transformational leadership style is a leadership system by changing and transforming individuals towards a better direction and research says that there is a significant influence between transformational leadership on employee performance. Other research says that there is an influence of organizational commitment on the relationship between transformational leadership and work performance (Robbins, 2006). Commitment to the organization can increase satisfaction at work and in theory job satisfaction has a relationship with job performance where employees with high levels of satisfaction have low turnover (Chen, 2006).

Many factors affect performance including leadership, in this case transformational leadership where leaders who are inspirational, intellectual, have consideration and influence influence employees to achieve high performance. However, research (Eliyana et al., 2019) found that

leadership may fail to significantly performance when intervened trough organizational commitment and has no direct impact on employee performance. From this statement the question arises what factors can improve employee work performance. Addressing this research gap, this theory adopts Maslow's esteem needs theory emphasizing the importance of recognition and rewards in improving performance (Taneva, 2023). Transformational leadership mediated by organizational commitment and moderated by extrinsic rewards and perceived equitable rewards is hypothesized to improve performance. Logically, employees who feel their contributions are valued will be more motivated so that performance increases (Lawler & Porter, 1967).

Based on data obtained from business websites, it shows the data financial performance of private company in Indonesia decreased by almost 20% in compare to the previous yeat and will continue until 2024 (Laras, 2023). Although it does not directly discuss the decline in employee performance, the decline in financial performance is associated with decreased productivity and operational efficiency, which emphasizes the need for performance improvement (Harter et al., 2002; Santos, 2020). The explanation above is supported by the statements of 27 respondents out of 30 respondents who the researcher interviewed stated that there was a decrease in performance due to salary and bonus factors and inappropriate workload, because of this the researcher developed a research model. The model developedment of a research model exploring the impact of transformational leadershi on emplooye performance mediated by organizational commitment and moderated by extrinsic rewards and perceived equitable rewards at company X.

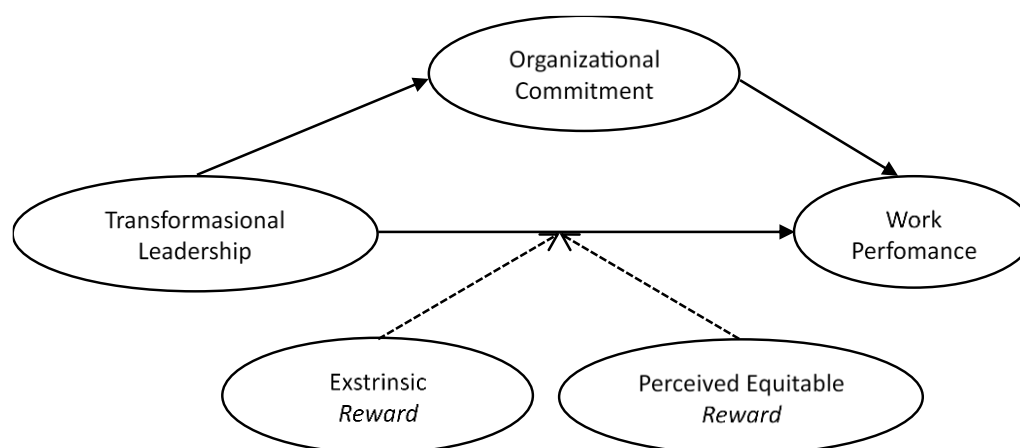


Figure 1. Research Model

Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Employee Performance

Need theory (Taneva, 2023) says that social needs (affection, belonging, and acceptance) play a role in improving employee performance through good relationships with coworkers, supervisors, and leaders, which encourage cooperation, open communication, and organizational commitment (Baumeister & Leary, 2017). Transformational leadership that supports cooperation and innovation has a positive and significant influence on individual performance which has an effect on improving company performance (Aryono & Tresani, 2022; Thao et al., 2024).

Based on the overarching theory and previous research findings, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H₁: Transformasional leadership has a positive and significant impact on work performance.

Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Organizational Commitment

Need theory (Taneva, 2023) says that social needs support employee performance through good relationships with managers and leaders, which encourages cooperation, open communication, and organizational commitment (Baumeister & Leary, 2017). Research shows that transformational leadership is positively correlated with commitment, where leaders who support, model, and encourage change increase employee loyalty and respect. This leadership also encourages innovative behavior that reflects organizational commitment (Klein, 2023). Based on the overarching theory and previous research findings, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H₂: Transformational leadership has a positive and significant impact on organizational commitment.

Organizational Commitment as a Mediator between Transformational Leadership and Work Performance

Maslow's need theory (Taneva, 2023) says that social needs support employee performance through good relationships with managers and leaders, which encourages cooperation, open communication, and organizational commitment (Baumeister & Leary, 2017). Research shows that full employee involvement increases commitment to the organization and individual performance (Harjadi et al., 2024). Organizational commitment has a beneficial impact on performance and employees who are deeply connected to the organization contribute to a healthy work culture, which encourages improved performance (Andardinata et al., 2024; Thao et al., 2024).

Based on the overarching theory and previous research findings, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H₃: Transformational leadership positively and significantly influences employee job performance through the mediation of organizational commitment.

Extrinsic Reward as a Moderating Variable on the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Employee Work Performance

From theory Maslow (Taneva, 2023) rewards from oneself and others increase self-esteem, motivation, and employee performance (Tanimoto et al., 2023). Research in Malaysia shows that extrinsic rewards can improve performance. A Nigerian study found that praise and support also boost productivity and another study confirmed that financial bonuses and support improve work performance (Idrus et al., 2023).

Based on the overarching theory and previous research findings, the following hypothesis can be suggested:

H₄: Extrinsic rewards serve as a moderator in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee work performance.

Perceived Equitable Reward acts as a moderating factor in the connection between Transformational Leadership and Employee Work Performance.

Rewards must be perceived as fair according to employee contributions (Adams, 1965). When employees feel fairly rewarded, motivation and productivity increase and conversely, an imbalance between responsibilities and rewards can reduce performance (Hussain et al., 2019; Weiß & Süß, 2016).

Based on the overarching theory and some of the research findings mentioned above, the following research hypothesis can be formulated:

H₅: Perceived equitable reward moderates the connection between transformational leadership and employee job performance.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The participants in this study were employees of PT X in Jakarta, due to time cost and distance constraints, a sample was taken to represent the population. When there are obstacles in research, it is possible to take a representative sample to facilitate the researcher (Saunders et al., 2019). The sampling method used is purposive sampling based on specific criteria that male and female employees who have worked for at least one year in the company, the researcher sets the criteria for respondents who meet these characteristics to answer research questions effectively (Makwana et al., 2023). The sample size used in the study according to the structural equation model (SEM) model was 161 respondents. The study used a Likert scale with a value range of 1-5.

This research test was conducted using the Structural Equation Model (SEM) with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach. According to Hair (2022), the PLS method consists of two components: the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model) (Hair et al., 2022). Testing the outer model involves assessing convergent validity, discriminant validity, the Cronbach alpha, and composite reliability. In contrast, the inner model evaluation focuses on examining the coefficient of determination (R²), effect size (F²), path coefficients, hypothesis testing, significance tests (F test), partial significance tests (T test), as well as mediation and moderation effects (Hair et al., 2022).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This research was conducted on employees who work at PT X in Jakarta. The distribution of respondents' answers to each statement given was carried out from August to September 2024. Based on the questionnaires that were successfully received, a description of the people involved in this study was 161 respondents consisting of male and female employees who have worked for more than one year.

Table 1. Avarage Variance Exctracted Result
 Source: Output SmartPLS (2024)

Variable	CR	AVE	Description
Transformasional Leaderhsip (X)	0,897	0,636	Valid
Work Perfomance (Y)	0,911	0,463	Accept (High CR)
Organizational Commitment (Z)	0,925	0,608	Valid
Ekstrinsic Reward (M ₁)	0,873	0,437	Accept (High CR)
Perceived Equitable Reward (M ₂)	0,864	0,477	Accept (High CR)

Based on Table 1, the Reliability of Composite Scores (CR) and Extracted Average Variance (AVE) results show that although Extrinsic Reward (M₁), Work Performance (Y), and Perceived Equitable Reward (M₂) have AVE values below 0.5 (0.437, 0.463, and 0.477), they are acceptable as their CR values exceed 0.7, indicating good internal consistency. According to Hair et al. (2014), AVE values slightly below 0.5 are valid if CR is high. Transformational Leadership (X) and Organizational Commitment (Z) meet convergent validity with AVE values above 0.5 (0.636 and 0.608). Thus, the model remains valid, supported by high CR.

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha Results
Source: Output SmartPLS (2024)

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Critical Value	Description
Kepemimpinan Transformasional (X)	0,856	> 0,6	High Reliability
Kinerja Karyawan (Y)	0,894	> 0,6	High Reliability
Komitmen Berorganisasi (Z)	0,908	> 0,6	High Reliability
Ekstrinsik Reward (M ₁)	0,843	> 0,6	High Reliability
Perceived Equitable Reward (M ₂)	0,816	> 0,6	High Reliability

Based on Table 2 all variables tested through Cronbach's Alpha reveals a value higher than 0.6. This shows that all variables in this study have good and valid reliability, so that the research instrument is able to provide stable and reliable results. This high reliability ensures that the data collected is consistent and able to reflect accurate measurements of the research variables.

The purpose of hypothesis testing in this study is to assess whether the proposes hypothesis can be accepted or rejected. This evaluation is based on the t-statistics and *p-values* obtained from the (path analysis) between variables, conducted through bootstrapping mode.

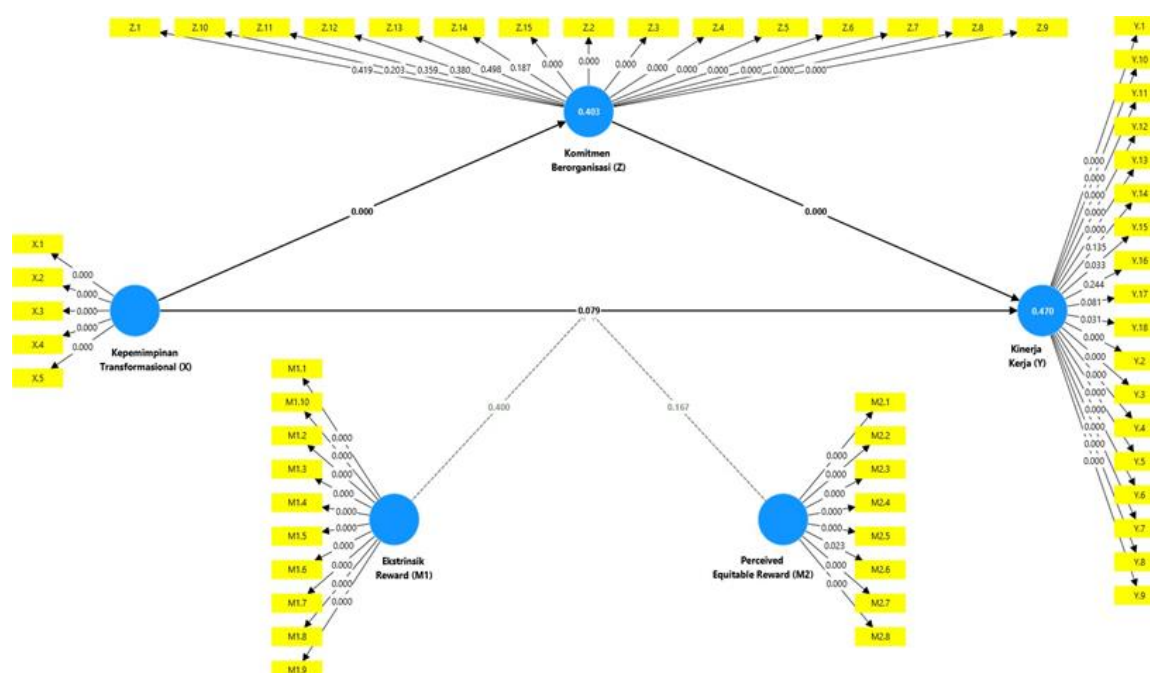


Figure 2. Bootstrapping Result

Tabel 3. Bootstrapping Result
Source: Output SmartPLS (2024)

Variable	t statistics	p values	Description
Transformasional Leadership (X) → Work Perfomance (Y)	1,417	0,079	Supported
Transformasional Leadership (X) → Organizational Commitment (Z)	11,582	0,000	Not Supported
Organizational Commitment (Z) → Work Perfomance (Y)	3,734	0,000	Supported
Exstrinsic reward (M1) → Work Perfomance (Y)	0,806	0,211	Not Supported
Perceived equitable reward (M2) → Work Perfomance (Y)	2,560	0,006	Supported
Exstrinsic reward (M1) x Transformasional Leadership (X) → Kinerja Kerja (Y)	0,253	0,400	Not Supported
Perceived equitable reward (M2) x Transformasional Leadership (X) → Work Perfomance (Y)	0,970	0,167	Not Supported

Tabel 4. Specific Indirect Testing (Mediation of Organizational Commitment)
Source: Output SmartPLS (2024)

Variable Relationship	P-values	Conclusion	Mediation Status
Direct Relationship: Transformasional Leadership (X) → Work Performance (Y)	0,079	Significant	
Indirect Relationship: Transformasional Leadership (X) → Organizational Commitment (Z) → Work Performance (Y)	0,000	Significant	Full Mediation

Based on Table 4, transformational leadership does not exert a significant direct influence on work performance, as indicated by the p-value of $0.079 > 0.05$, so hypothesis H1 is supported. However, indirectly, transformational has a notable impact on work performance through organizational commitment, with a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This indicates organizational commitment fully mediates the relationship between the two, supporting hypothesis H3. This mediation is called Full Mediation because the direct relationship is not significant, but the indirect relationship through the mediator is significant.

Tabel 5. Specific Indirect Testing (Extrinsic reward moderation)
Source: Output SmartPLS (2024)

Variable Relationship	P-values	Conclusion	Moderation Status
Direct Relationship: <i>Extrinsic Reward</i> (M1) → Work Performance (Y)	0,211	Significant	
Indirect Relationship: <i>Extrinsic Reward</i> (M1) x Transformasional Leadership (X) → Work Performance (Y)	0,400	Not Significant	Not Moderation

Based on Table 5, extrinsic reward does not have a significant direct impact on work performance, as the p-value is 0.211, which is greater than 0.05. Additionally, the moderation of extrinsic rewards in the relationship between transformational leadership and work performance is also not significant (p-value 0.400), thus supporting hypothesis H4. This suggests that extrinsic rewards do not act as a moderator in this relationship.

Tabel 6. Specific Indirect Testing (Mediation of Organizational Commitment)
Source: Output SmartPLS (2024)

Variable Relationship	P-values	Conclusion	Mediation Status
Direct Relationship: Transformasional Leadership (X) → Work Performance (Y)	0,079	Significant	
Indirect Relationship: Transformasional Leadership (X) → Organizational Commitment (Z) → Work Performance (Y)	0,000	Significant	Full Mediation

Based on Table 6, the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment is found to be significant, with a p-value of 0.000, confirming hypothesis H2, which posits that transformational leadership positively influences organizational commitment. Furthermore, organizational commitment plays a significant and complete mediating role in the relationship between transformational leadership and work performance thereby supporting hypothesis H3.

Tabel 7. Specific Indirect Testing (Perceived equitable reward moderation)
Source: Output SmartPLS (2024)

Variable Relationship	<i>p-values</i>	Conclusion	Moderation Status
Direct Relationship: <i>Perceived equitable reward</i> (M2) → Work Performance (Y)	0,006	Significant	
Indirect Relationship: <i>Perceived equitable reward</i> (M2) x Transformasional Leadership (X) → Work Performance (Y)	0,167	Not Significant	Not Moderation

Based on Table 7, perceived equitable reward has a significant direct effect on work performance, with a p-value of $0.006 < 0.05$, supporting the hypothesis that employee perceptions of fair rewards have a positive effect. However, the moderating role of perceived equitable reward in strengthening the relationship between transformational leadership and work performance is not significant, with a p-value of $0.167 > 0.05$, so hypothesis H5 is supported.

According to the findings from the second hypothesis test (H1), Transformational leadership has a positive, yet statistically insignificant, impact on employees performance PT X. Leaders who have an inspiring vision and provide clear direction can increase employee motivation in achieving organizational targets. This is in accordance with the explanation (Lee et al., 2023), which emphasizes that transformational leadership encourages employees to think critically and creatively, and generate innovative ideas. This supports the improvement of task performance which is a crucial element of work performance. However, transformational leadership in PT X employees does not have a significant effect, therefore there is a need for innovation in leadership for employees to achieve optimal work results (Aryono & Tresani, 2022).

The findings from the second hypothesis tests (H2) indicate that transformational leadership has a notable impact on organizational commitment at PT X. Leaders who can be motivate employees with a clear vision and strong goals will create a deep emotional connection between employees and the organization. This is in accordance with the statement that emphasizes that transformational leaders have an important role in increasing employee engagement with the organization. Transformational leaders at PT X support employees' personal development, which in turn increases their commitment to organizational goals and values (Jiatong et al., 2022).

The findings from the third hypothesis tests (H3) indicate that organizational commitment acts as mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee work performance at PT X. This is in accordance with the statement (Tanimoto et al., 2023). This is in accordance with the statement (Tanimoto et al., 2023) and the findings (Harjadi et al., 2024) which state that organizational commitment improves individual performance. At PT X, organizational commitment encourages employees to contribute optimally, show loyalty, and maintain high performance standards. This study also supports research that confirms the importance of organizational commitment in increasing employee productivity and efficiency (Thao et al., 2024).

The findings from the fourth hypothesis (H4) indicate that extrinsic rewards do not moderate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee work performance at PT X. Although the theory of theory states that extrinsic rewards can improve performance, at PT X, this factor was not strong enough to influence the relationship, possibly due to an inadequate

reward system or because employees are more motivated by intrinsic rewards. This result supports research findings that financial incentives do not always exert a considerable influence on enhancing performance, and that employees at PT X respond more to transformational leader support than financial incentives (Eneh et al., 2022).

The findings of the fifth hypothesis tests (H5) indicate that perceived equitable reward does not moderate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee work performance at PT X. Although a statement from Tanimoto (2023) states that perceived fairness in rewards can motivate performance, at PT X, this perception is not strong enough to moderate the relationship (Tanimoto et al., 2023). This may indicate that there are other factors that are more influential on performance, such as job commitment or good relationships with colleagues and superiors. This result supports the findings of Weiß & Süß (2016), who mentioned that an imbalance between responsibilities and rewards can affect performance (Weiß & Süß, 2016).

4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of the study “The Effect of Leadership on Work Performance: Commitment Mediation and Reward Moderation,” concludes that while transformational leadership has a positive but statistically insignificant effect on employee performance, it effectively enhances motivation and innovation at PT X. Transformational leadership significantly impacts organizational commitment by fostering employee loyalty and emotional bonds, which mediate the relationship between leadership and performance, leading to better results. However, extrinsic and perceived equitable rewards do not moderate the relationship between transformational leadership and performance, as intrinsic motivation and work commitment play a more crucial role in driving employee performance at PT X than external rewards.

Suggestions for Companies

Companies should enhance employee motivation by involving transformational leaders in programs like mentoring and providing rewards. Align rewards with employee contributions to boost satisfaction and motivation. Consistently offer rewards and bonuses to strengthen loyalty and performance, and implement a bonus program tied to measurable achievements to encourage higher targets.

Suggestions Based on Research Variables

Research shows that transformational leadership positively impacts employee performance, though the effect is statistically insignificant. Leaders who inspire and guide effectively boost motivation and innovation. Transformational leadership significantly enhances organizational commitment by fostering loyalty and emotional bonds, which mediate its influence on performance. However, at PT X, intrinsic motivation from leaders drives performance more than extrinsic rewards or perceived reward fairness.

Suggestions for Future Researchers

Future research should include a larger, more diverse population and expand the literature on leadership, commitment, and rewards. Add variables like job satisfaction and employee engagement, and use interviews and observations for better data. Longitudinal and cross-cultural studies are also recommended to explore long-term changes and cultural differences.

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