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THE INFLUENCE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS WITH ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AS A MEDIATING VARIABLE

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of transformational leadership on employee performance in a correctional institution, the Class II Bandung Juvenile Correctional Institution (LPKA Class II Bandung), which is characterized by high levels of discipline, adherence to standard operating procedures, and high work risks. Transformational leadership, which emphasizes inspiration, motivation, and individual attention, is considered relevant in shaping employee attitudes and behavior. In addition, organizational commitment acts as a mediating variable that strengthens emotional attachment, loyalty, and employee involvement in achieving organizational goals, which ultimately impacts performance improvement. This study used the Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach with 33 respondents. The results showed that transformational leadership did not have a direct, significant effect on employee performance. However, transformational leadership had a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment, and organizational commitment had a significant effect on employee performance. In addition, organizational commitment was proven to fully mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. These findings indicate that the effectiveness of transformational leadership in improving employee performance is indirect and highly dependent on its ability to build organizational commitment.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Organizational Commitment, Employee Performance, PLS-SEM

INTRODUCTION

Correctional Institutions (Lapas) are public sector organizations characterized by high-risk work, strict disciplinary demands, and adherence to standard operating procedures (SOP). Prison staff are not only responsible for security but also carry out coaching, administrative services, and rehabilitation of inmates. In the modern correctional context, organizational orientation has shifted from a repressive approach to a rehabilitative one, making the quality of employee performance a crucial factor in achieving these goals (Rihendry & Subroto, 2022). Therefore, effective human resource management is key to organizational success, particularly in the face of high work pressure and the complexity of diverse tasks. One important factor influencing employee performance is leadership. In high-risk organizations like prisons, the role of leaders goes beyond directing but also must be able to inspire, motivate, and build a conducive work environment. Transformational leadership is one approach considered relevant in this context, emphasizing the leader's ability to provide vision, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individual attention to subordinates. Various studies have shown that transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence

on employee performance through increased work engagement, extra-role behavior, and work quality (Qalati et al., 2022). Empirically, the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance has been widely demonstrated in various studies. The results of a meta-analysis conducted by Lowe, Kroeck, and Sivasubramaniam (1996), as well as research by Bass et al. (2003), indicate a positive relationship between transformational leadership and individual and organizational performance. However, several studies also indicate that this relationship is not always direct, but is influenced by certain mediating variables. Jung and Avolio (2000) found that the influence of transformational leadership on performance can be strengthened through psychological variables that develop within employees. One variable that plays an important role as a mediator is organizational commitment. Organizational commitment reflects the level of emotional attachment, loyalty, and employee desire to remain part of the organization. Employees with high commitment tend to demonstrate better performance, discipline at work, and compliance with organizational rules. Eliyana et al. (2019) stated that transformational leadership has a significant influence on organizational commitment, which ultimately impacts employee performance improvement. Furthermore, Bass and Riggio (2006) also explained that transformational leadership has a strong relationship with affective commitment compared to other leadership styles. Furthermore, several studies have also highlighted the importance of trust within an organization as a basis for forming strong commitment. Ozag (2006) and Farndale et al. (2011) found that organizational trust has a significant influence on increasing employee commitment. This indicates that the relationship between leadership, organizational commitment, and employee performance is an interrelated and inseparable mechanism. Although various studies have examined the relationship between transformational leadership, organizational commitment, and employee performance, studies specifically examining the context of correctional institutions are still relatively limited. In fact, the stressful and risky work environment in correctional institutions requires an appropriate leadership approach to encourage optimal employee performance. Therefore, this study is important to conduct to empirically examine the influence of transformational leadership on prison employee performance, with organizational commitment as a mediating variable. Thus, this research is expected to provide contributions both theoretically and practically, particularly in the development of human resource management in the public sector, as well as being a basis for formulating effective leadership strategies in improving employee performance in the Correctional Institution environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION

Transformational Leadership and Employee Performance

Transformational leadership is a leadership style that emphasizes the leader's ability to inspire, motivate, and transform the values and behaviors of subordinates to achieve performance that exceeds organizational standards (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1990). Transformational leaders not only focus on achieving short-term targets, but also build a long-term vision, increase employee awareness of organizational goals, and encourage the development of individual potential. Bass and Avolio (1994) suggest that transformational leadership consists of four main dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Through these dimensions, leaders are able to create relationships based on trust, respect, and high commitment from subordinates. Yukl (2002) emphasized that transformational leadership can increase employee intrinsic motivation, thus impacting performance improvement. Various empirical studies have shown a positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. A meta-analysis conducted by Lowe et al. (1996) and research by Bass et al. (2003) found that transformational leadership has a significant influence on improving individual and organizational performance. In addition, Qalati et al. (2022) explained that transformational leadership can improve employee performance by increasing employee

engagement and volunteer work behavior (organizational citizenship behavior). In the context of correctional institutions (Lapas), transformational leadership is highly relevant because the stressful and risky work environment requires leaders who can provide motivation, direction, and psychological support to employees. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be formulated: H1: Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

Transformational Leadership and Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is the level of psychological attachment of employees to the organization, reflected through loyalty, identification, and the desire to remain part of the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Organizational commitment consists of three main dimensions: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Transformational leadership plays a crucial role in building organizational commitment because it creates a strong emotional connection between leaders and subordinates. Burns (1978) stated that transformational leaders encourage subordinates to set aside personal interests for the benefit of the organization. This is supported by Bass (1990), who stated that transformational leadership can increase awareness and acceptance of organizational goals. Research by Eliyana et al. (2019) shows that transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence on organizational commitment. Furthermore, Bass and Riggio (2006) also found that transformational leadership has a stronger relationship with affective commitment compared to other leadership styles. In the prison environment, organizational commitment is a crucial factor because employees are required to have loyalty, integrity, and high compliance with rules and SOP. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be formulated: H2: Transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence on organizational commitment.

Organizational Commitment and Employee Performance

Organizational commitment is a key determinant of employee performance. Highly committed employees tend to demonstrate better performance, lower absenteeism, and a willingness to work beyond expectations (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Affective commitment, a form of emotional attachment to the organization, plays a key role in motivating employees to contribute maximally. Normative commitment, on the other hand, encourages employees to remain because of a sense of moral obligation, while continuance commitment is related to the cost of leaving the organization (Becker, 1960). Previous research has shown that organizational commitment significantly impacts employee performance. Employees with high levels of commitment tend to be more disciplined, adhere to standard operating procedures (SOPs), and take greater responsibility for their work. In the context of prisons, this is crucial given the high demands on security and service. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be formulated: H3: Organizational commitment has a positive and significant impact on employee performance.

The Mediating Role of Organizational Commitment

The relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance is not always direct but can be mediated by other variables, one of which is organizational commitment. Jung and Avolio (2000) found that the influence of transformational leadership on employee performance can be strengthened through psychological mediation variables. Transformational leadership can increase organizational commitment by creating a shared vision, empowering employees, and building trust-based relationships. Furthermore, organizational commitment will encourage employees to work more optimally, thus impacting performance improvement. Thus, organizational commitment acts as a bridging mechanism between the influence of transformational leadership on employee performance. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be formulated: H4: Organizational commitment mediates the influence of transformational leadership on employee performance.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses an exploratory quantitative approach with the SEM-PLS method, because the research model involves direct and mediation relationships simultaneously (Hair et al., 2022). This method is widely used in research on trust, leadership, and POS based on SmartPLS. The study population consisted of all staff of the Class II Bandung Juvenile Correctional Institution LPKA Class II Bandung, totaling 66 respondents consisting of: Registration staff, training staff, personnel staff, finance staff, and guidance staff. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling. Data were collected using a 1-5 Likert scale questionnaire. The analysis carried out using SmartPLS 3 includes: External model, Convergent validity, Discriminant validity, Composite reliability, Bootstrapping, Specific indirect effects of mediation effects. The questionnaire was distributed using a simple random sampling technique. The results of the questionnaire returned were 33 samples.

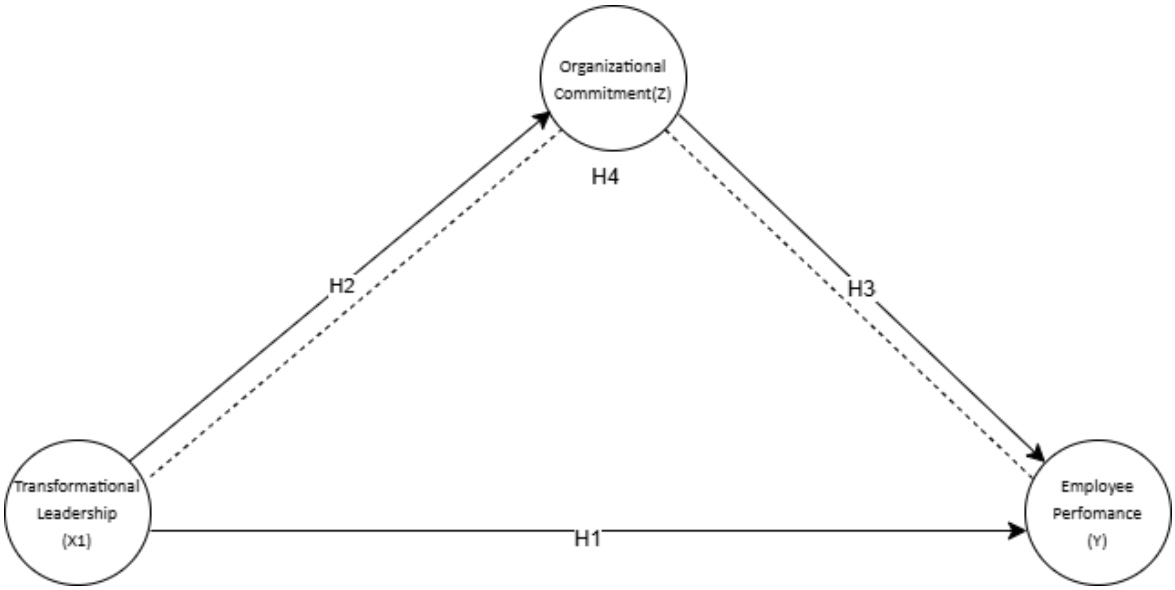


Figure 1. Research Model

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study used a Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach to analyze the relationship between transformational leadership, organizational commitment, and employee performance. The number of respondents in this study was 33 people, which is considered to meet the minimum criteria for PLS analysis because this method is relatively robust to small sample sizes.

Results of Validity and Reliability Test of Research Indicators

The measurement model testing phase includes convergent validity and discriminant validity. Meanwhile, construct reliability is tested using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. PLS analysis results can be used to test research hypotheses if all indicators in the PLS model meet the requirements for convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability.

Convergent Validity Testing

Convergent validity testing was conducted by examining the loading factor values of each indicator against its construct. In most references, a factor weight of 0.5 or more is considered to have sufficient validation to explain the latent construct (Chin, 1998; Ghozali, 2014; Hair et al., 2010). In this study, the minimum acceptable loading factor value was 0.5, provided that the AVE

value for each construct was >0.5 (Ghozali, 2014). After SmartPLS 3 processing, several indicators or items needed to be removed from the model, namely: KT 1.3. Furthermore, all indicators had loading factor values above 0.5, provided that the AVE value was above 0.5. The fit or valid model of this study can be seen in Figure 2. Thus, the convergent validity of this research model has met the requirements. Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and AVE for each construct can be seen in full in Table 2 below:

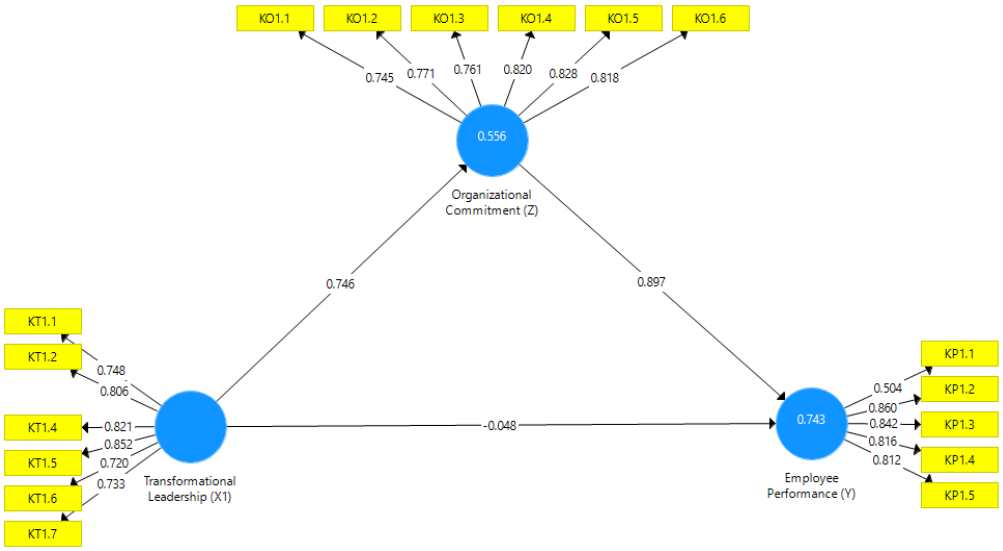


Figure 2. Valid Research Model

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha,rho_A, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	AVE
Transformational Leadership (X1)	0.874	0.886	0.904	0.611
Organizational Commitment (Z)	0.881	0.886	0.909	0.626
Employee Performance (Y)	0.826	0,843	0.882	0.606

Source: Processed internal data (2026)

Construct Reliability Testing

Construct reliability can be assessed from the Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values of each construct. The recommended composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values are greater than 0.7 (Ghozali, 2014). The reliability test results in Table 2 above show that all constructs have composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values greater than 0.7 (>0.7). In conclusion, all constructs have met the required reliability.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity

Varables	EP (Y)	OC (Z)	TL (X1)

Employee Performance (Y)	0.778		
Organizational Commitment (Z)	0.862	0.791	
Transformational Leadership (X1)	0.621	0,746	0.782

Source: Processed internal data (2026)

Table 4. Collinearity Statistics (VIF)

Varables	Employee Performance (Y)	Organizational Commitment (Z)
Organizational Commitment (Z)	2.251	
Transformational Leadership (X1)	2.251	1.000

Source: Processed internal data (2026)

Discriminant Validity Testing

Discriminant validity is conducted to ensure that each concept of each latent variable is different from other latent variables. The model has good discriminant validity if the squared value of AVE of each exogenous construct (value on the diagonal) exceeds the correlation between the construct and other constructs (values below the diagonal) (Ghozali, 2014). The results of the discriminant validity test are by using the squared value of AVE, namely by looking at the Fornell-Larcker Criterion Value obtained as shown in Table 3. The results of the discriminant validity test in Table 3 above show that all constructs have a squared value of AVE above the correlation value with other latent constructs (through the Fornell-Larcker criterion). Likewise, the cross-loading value of all items from an indicator is greater than the other indicator items as mentioned in Table 4, so it can be concluded that the model has met discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Furthermore, a collinearity evaluation is conducted to determine whether there is collinearity in the model. To detect collinearity, the VIF of each construct is calculated. If the VIF score is greater than 5, the model has collinearity (Hair et al., 2014). As shown in Table 4, all VIF scores are less than 5, indicating that the model does not have collinearity.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing in PLS is also called inner model testing. This test includes testing the significance of direct and indirect influences and measuring the magnitude of the influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables. To determine the effect of transformational leadership on employee performance through Organizational Commitment to Change as a mediating variable, direct and indirect influence tests are needed. The influence test was conducted using a t-statistic test in a partial least squares (PLS) analysis model with the help of SmartPLS 3

software. Using the bootstrapping technique, the R Square value and significance test value were obtained as in Table 5 and Table 6 below:

Table 5. R Square Value

Varables	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Organizational Commitment (Z)	0.556	0.542
Employee Performance (Y)	0.743	0.726

Source: Processed internal data (2026)

Based on Table 5 above, the R Square value of Organizational Commitment is 0.556, which means that the Organizational Commitment variable can be explained by the transformational leadership (TL) variable by 55.6%, while the remaining 44.4% is explained by other variables not discussed in this study. The R Square value of Employee Performance (EP) is 0.743, which means that the Employee Performance (EP) variable can be explained by the transformational leadership (TL) and Organizational Commitment variables by 74.3%, while the remaining 25.7% is explained by other variables not discussed in this study.

Table 6. Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	Relationship	Beta	SE	T Statistics	P-Values	Decision
H1	TL -> EP	-0.039	0.241	0.198	0.843	Not Supported
H2	TL -> OC	0.767	0.064	11.735	0.000	Supported
H3	OC -> EP	0.898	0.190	4.730	0.000	Supported
H4	TL -> OC -> EP	0.693	0.176	3.810	0.000	Supported

Source: Processed internal data (2026)

Hypothesis testing in this study was conducted using the bootstrapping method in the PLS-SEM approach. Based on the analysis results, the path coefficient (beta), t-statistic, and p-value were obtained, which were used to determine the significance of the relationship between variables. The test results showed that transformational leadership did not have a significant effect on employee performance. This was indicated by a coefficient value of -0.039 with a t-statistic of 0.198 and a p-value of 0.843 ($p > 0.05$), so the first hypothesis (H1) was rejected. This finding indicates that transformational leadership is not directly able to improve employee performance. Furthermore, transformational leadership was proven to have a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment with a coefficient value of 0.767, a t-statistic of 11.735, and a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). Thus, the second hypothesis (H2) was accepted. This indicates that the better the implementation of transformational leadership, the higher the level of employee commitment to the organization. The test results also show that organizational commitment has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, with a coefficient value of 0.898, a t-statistic of 4.730, and a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the third hypothesis (H3) is accepted. This finding indicates that organizational commitment is an important factor in improving employee performance. Furthermore, the results of the mediation test show that organizational commitment

is able to mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. This is evidenced by a coefficient value of 0.693, a t-statistic of 3.810, and a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), so that the fourth hypothesis (H4) is accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that the effect of transformational leadership on employee performance occurs indirectly through increased organizational commitment. These results indicate that although transformational leadership does not have a direct effect on employee performance, it has an important indirect role through organizational commitment as a mediating variable.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that transformational leadership does not have a significant direct effect on employee performance. This finding differs from most previous studies that suggest that transformational leadership has a strong direct influence on employee performance (e.g., studies by Bass & Avolio; Robbins & Judge). This difference indicates that the influence of transformational leadership on performance is not always direct, but rather depends heavily on the organizational context and respondent characteristics. In organizations that tend to be bureaucratic or procedure-based, employee performance is more influenced by work systems, formal rules, and operational standards than by leadership style alone. Nevertheless, the results of this study remain consistent with the literature stating that transformational leadership has a significant effect on organizational commitment. This finding aligns with research by Meyer and Allen (1991) and various recent empirical studies that demonstrate that transformational leaders can enhance employee emotional attachment through vision, inspiration, and individual attention. Thus, despite its lack of a direct impact on performance, transformational leadership still plays a strategic role in shaping employee attitudes and loyalty toward the organization. Furthermore, the results of this study reinforce previous findings that organizational commitment has a significant effect on employee performance. This research supports the view that organizational commitment is an important determinant in improving performance, as explained in organizational behavior theory. Highly committed employees tend to exhibit higher levels of engagement, responsibility, and work motivation, thus positively impacting their performance. The most important finding of this study is that organizational commitment acts as a full mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. This finding aligns with several recent studies that suggest that the influence of leadership on performance is often indirect through psychological variables or work attitudes, such as commitment, job satisfaction, or motivation. However, this finding also provides a novel contribution by demonstrating that without organizational commitment, transformational leadership is not strong enough to directly improve performance. The difference in these results compared to previous research can be explained by several factors. First, respondent characteristics and the work environment can influence leadership effectiveness. Second, the relatively small sample size (33 respondents) may limit data variation. Third, the presence of other variables not included in the model, such as organizational culture or reward systems, may have a direct influence on performance. This study adds to the literature by demonstrating that the effectiveness of transformational leadership in improving employee performance is highly dependent on its ability to build organizational commitment. Therefore, organizations need to not only develop an inspirational leadership style but also create conditions that strengthen employee commitment as a key factor in improving performance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis results using the PLS-SEM method with 33 respondents, it can be concluded that transformational leadership does not have a significant direct effect on employee performance. This finding indicates that improving employee performance cannot be achieved solely through transformational leadership without other supporting factors. However,

transformational leadership has been shown to have a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment, indicating that leaders are able to increase employee emotional attachment and loyalty to the organization. Furthermore, organizational commitment has been shown to have a positive and significant effect on employee performance, thus becoming an important factor in improving performance. Furthermore, this study found that organizational commitment acts as a full mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. This means that the influence of transformational leadership on employee performance occurs indirectly through increased organizational commitment. Thus, it can be concluded that the effectiveness of transformational leadership in improving employee performance is highly dependent on its ability to build organizational commitment. Therefore, organizations need to focus not only on developing leadership styles but also on strategic efforts to strengthen employee commitment as a key factor in improving performance.

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