

The Impact of Transformational Leadership on Employee Performance at the One-Stop Integrated Investment and Service Office, Labor and Transmigration of Southwest Aceh Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of transformational leadership on employee performance at the Office of Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services, Manpower, and Transmigration of Southwest Aceh Regency. The approach used was quantitative with a survey method of 34 respondents from May to August 2025. Data were analyzed using simple linear regression. The results of the study showed that transformational leadership had a positive and significant effect on employee performance with an R^2 value of 0.468. This shows that the application of transformational leadership styles is able to improve employee performance, motivation, and responsibility in supporting the effectiveness of public services.

INTRODUCTION

The performance of employees in public organizations is one of the main indicators of the success of the implementation of local government. In the context of public services, the effectiveness and efficiency of the work of the apparatus is the main highlight. As one of the key factors, the leadership style of an organizational leader has a strong influence on how employees perform their duties. One of the most researched styles is transformational leadership, which emphasizes empowerment, vision, and change. As stated that "transformational leadership directly has a positive and significant effect on employee performance" (Bana, 2016).

The transformational leadership style invites leaders to not only manage subordinates administratively, but also inspire, motivate, and develop the potential of employees. Leaders who apply this style are able to arouse commitment, increase job satisfaction and employee innovation in carrying out their duties. A literature review shows that the integration of transformational leadership in human resource management (SHRM) in the public sector contributes to improving employee performance through strengthening commitment and innovation (Dewi et al., 2025).

In local government environments such as Southwest Aceh Regency, the demand for one-stop integrated services and investment demands speed, quality, and accountability of employee work. Organizations such as the Office for Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services, Labor and Transmigration face complex challenges including regulation, cross-unit coordination, and public expectations. In this context, leadership style is very important so that employees not only carry out routine tasks but are also able to adapt and improve performance. Thus, research on the impact of transformational leadership in local government institutions is very relevant.

Research in Serang City at the DPMPTSP agency showed that transformational leadership style had a positive influence of 42.2% on employee performance (Anhara, 2023). This confirms that when leaders are able to apply transformational principles—such as inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, and individual consideration—employee performance increases significantly. Therefore, it is important for agencies in the region to further explore how the implementation of transformational leadership can be adapted according to the characteristics of employees and the local organizational environment.

However, the implementation of transformational leadership does not always go smoothly in the public sector. Several studies have shown that factors such as organizational culture, employee competence, and work motivation also moderate or mediate the relationship between leadership style and performance. For example, a study at the Citarum River Regional Center noted that employee competence and transformational leadership together affect work motivation and then employee performance (RIR & Sumarti, 2021).

In the context of the Southwest Aceh Regency Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services, Manpower and Transmigration Office, local governments are faced with the need to improve the quality of services, accelerate the licensing

and investment process, and improve the welfare of the workforce. Therefore, leadership that is able to encourage internal transformation, change in employee mindsets, and increase competencies is key. Transformational leadership styles can be a catalyst for strategic change in improving employee performance to be more productive and responsive to public demands.

Employee performance itself can be defined as the results of work achieved by employees in carrying out their duties in accordance with organizational standards, targets, and expectations. Performance measurement is important to know the extent to which employees are able to support organizational goals. As mentioned: "employee performance measurement is very important in its meaning and role in various decision-making" (Widiyanto, 2011). Thus, transformational leaders can help create an environment where performance measurement and evaluation are carried out well and are used as a basis for employee development.

Furthermore, transformational leadership opens up opportunities for employee empowerment through clear vision direction, individualized support, and intellectual stimulation. This allows employees to contribute not only administratively but also creatively and innovatively. A study shows that transformational leadership styles are able to increase innovation and work efficiency of staff in the government sector (Murni & Irawati, 2025). Thus, the application of public service agencies in areas such as Southwest Aceh has the potential to produce a more significant increase in performance.

However, the implementation of transformational leadership in public organizations requires adaptation to local contexts—including employee conditions, organizational culture, human resources, and local regulations. For example, in a systematic literature study, it is stated that challenges such as resource limitations and resistance to change are the main obstacles (Dewi et al., 2025). Therefore, in this study, it is important to examine how internal conditions in the Service facilitate or hinder transformational leadership to have an impact on employee performance.

Previous research in government agencies shows that transformational leadership has a positive influence on employee performance—for example, in government agencies in Malang and others (Firmansyah & Kurniawan, 2021). However, there are still few studies that specifically examine the organization of investment services and one-stop integrated services in areas such as Southwest Aceh. Therefore, this research fills the gap by focusing on regional agencies that are integrated in investment, employment, and transmigration services.

This research has great practical relevance for local governments and public service providers. If it is proven that transformational leadership has a positive impact on employee performance, then leaders in agencies such as the Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services Office can direct internal policies for leadership development, leadership training, and change management. This is in accordance with the goal of improving the quality of public services and investment attractiveness set by the regions.

Theoretically, this research also strengthens the study of transformational leadership in the public context in Indonesia. By considering contextual variables

such as organizational culture, employee commitment, and motivation, this study will add to our understanding of how leadership in the local government sector affects performance outcomes. This is in line with research showing that organizational commitment and organizational culture play a role in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance (Hikmah et al., 2023).

In carrying out their duties at the Service, employees face challenges such as regulatory complexity, integrated service obligations, and the need to increase productivity and service quality. In these conditions, leadership that is only transactional or administrative can be inadequate. Leaders who are able to implement transformational styles can create a more responsive, adaptive, and collaborative work environment.

Furthermore, the aspect of employee motivation is an important bridge between leadership style and employee performance. When transformational leaders are able to increase motivation, employees will be more committed and accomplished. Research shows that transformational leadership, competence, and work motivation together have an impact on employee performance (RIR & Sumarti, 2021). Therefore, in the context of this study, the motivation variable needs to be considered as a potential mediation or moderation variable.

The phenomenon in many local government agencies shows that even though there are regulations and modern service systems, employee performance is not always optimal. For example, in a study at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Mamasa Regency, it was found that only some employees were at the optimal level of performance (Roreng & Sabandar, 2025). This suggests that leadership factors, including transformational styles, can be a differentiator in driving performance improvement.

In the geographical and cultural context of Southwest Aceh Regency, local characteristics such as cultural values, organizational structure, and community expectations for public services are important to consider. Leaders in these Dinas need to understand the local context to effectively implement transformational leadership styles—for example through local empowerment, inclusive communication, and fostering a shared vision that aligns with regional aspirations. This requires adaptation and correction of leadership strategies that "one size fits all" are not always appropriate.

Furthermore, improving employee performance can also strengthen regional competitiveness in attracting investment and managing labor and transmigration more professionally. Thus, transformational leadership not only impacts individual employees but has strategic implications for organizational performance and regional development goals more broadly. Literature studies say that value change and empowerment initiated through transformational leadership bring an adaptive and competency-based HR system.

Obstacles that may arise in the implementation of a transformational leadership style include employee resistance to change, low leadership and subordinate competence, and lack of resources for training and development. Thus, this study will also consider the factors that may moderate the impact of transformational leadership on employee performance in the agency in question.

Against this background, this study is designed to explore how transformational leadership is provided by leaders at the Southwest Aceh Regency Investment and Integrated Services Office, Manpower and Transmigration, and how this leadership style affects employee performance. This research is important to provide recommendations for improving the internal management of agencies and improving public services.

Finally, through a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of how transformational leadership impacts employee performance, regional agencies can formulate strategies for human resource development, leadership coaching, and organizational culture that support high performance. It is hoped that the results of this research will not only be academic but also practical in encouraging the improvement of employee performance and the achievement of organizational goals more effectively.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership was first introduced by (Bass & Avolio, 1993) as a leadership style that is oriented towards changing the values, motivations, and behaviors of subordinates to go beyond personal interests towards organizational goals. Transformational leaders act as agents of change by fostering employee trust, inspiration, and commitment (Northouse, 2013). This style consists of four main dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

According to (Yukl et al., 2013), transformational leaders are able to create a shared vision and give meaning to the work of their subordinates, thereby encouraging changes in work behavior in a more productive direction. In the context of public organizations, this leadership style is important to encourage employees to provide high-quality services and foster a sense of social responsibility.

Employee Performance

Employee performance is defined as the result of individual work in achieving organizational targets based on applicable standards, responsibilities, and regulations (Anwar Prabu, 2017). In the public sector, employee performance is not only measured through efficiency and effectiveness, but also through the quality of service to the community (Nurmasyitah & Najamudin, 2025).

Factors that affect performance include ability, motivation, leadership, organizational culture, and work environment (Judge & Robbins, 2013). Effective leadership has been proven to increase employee productivity and loyalty through emotional support, clarity of direction, and self-development opportunities.

The Relationship of Transformational Leadership to Employee Performance

Theoretically, transformational leadership has a positive effect on employee performance because it increases intrinsic motivation, loyalty, and

morale (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Leaders who are able to provide individual inspiration and support will form more creative and responsible employees.

Research by (Jumiatusun, 2019) government agencies in Yogyakarta show that transformational leadership has a significant effect on improving performance through increased employee motivation and commitment. These results are also supported (Rahayu & Setiawan, 2022) which researched the Regional Civil Service Agency of West Java Province, where transformational leadership directly contributed to the increase in employee productivity by 45.3%.

Moreover (Kusumadewi et al., 2023) In his research on the public service sector in Makassar, he found that transformational leadership plays an important role in building employee trust and social responsibility, which has implications for the overall performance of the organization.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study uses a quantitative approach with a correlational survey design (El Hasbi et al., 2023). The main objective is to test the influence of transformational leadership on employee performance at the Southwest Aceh Regency Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services, Manpower and Transmigration Office. The analysis includes descriptive and inferential statistics (analysis of correlation and simple linear regression, depending on the control variable).

Research Location and Time

- Location: Office of Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services, Manpower and Transmigration of Southwest Aceh Regency.
- Implementation Time: May 2025 – August 2025. The details: preparation of instruments & permits (May), field data collection (June–July), data processing & analysis (July–Early August), writing of final report (August).

Population and Sample

- Population: All employees (ASN and/or relevant contract personnel) who work in the Service.
- Sampling Technique: Total sampling (if the population ≤ 34) or purposive sampling if the population is larger but only partially meets the inclusion criteria. For this study, $N = 34$ respondents were determined according to the request, namely 34 employees who met the inclusion criteria (actively working for at least 6 months in the unit being studied and willing to fill in the instrument).
- Sample Size Justification: Size 34 is used due to population/unit limitations or based on the researcher's decision—simple regression analysis is still possible but the results will need to be carefully considered in terms of statistical power.

Research and Operationalization Variables

Independent Variable (X)

Transformational Leadership (KT) – measured based on Bass & Avolio's four dimensions:

1. Idealized Influence (II) – the exemplary actions of the leader.
2. Inspirational Motivation (IM) – the vision and motivation that leaders build.
3. Intellectual Stimulation (IS) – the leader's encouragement to think critically/innovatively.
4. Individualized Consideration (IC) – attention to individual development needs.

Each dimension is measured by multiple statement items (a total of 12 items, e.g. 3 items per dimension) on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Agree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

Dependent Variable (Y)

Employee Performance (KP) – operationalized through indicators:

1. Quantity of work (volume/unit of output produced),
2. Quality of work (precision, accuracy),
3. Punctuality (discipline & timely completion of tasks),
4. Compliance with procedures & accountability.

Measured through 8 items (e.g. 2 items per indicator) on a 5-point Likert scale and – when available – confirmed with secondary data (performance report cards/supervisor assessments) where possible.

Research Instruments

- The closed questionnaire consisted of three parts: (A) demographics (age, education level, working period, position), (B) transformational leadership scale (12 items), (C) employee performance scale (8 items).
- Answer format: Likert 1-5.
- Example (short) item:
 - X1 (II): "Leaders demonstrate high integrity in decision-making."
 - X5 (IM): "The leader explained the organization's vision in a way that motivated me."
 - X9 (IS): "The leader encouraged us to try new ways of working to improve services."
 - Y2 (Quality): "I always try to maintain the quality of service according to the set standards."
 - Y6 (Punctuality): "I completed the task by the set deadline."

Validity and Reliability Tests

- Content Validity: The questionnaire will be reviewed by 2-3 supervisors/experts in the field of public management and leadership so that the relevance of the items is assessed. Revisions are carried out according to input.
- Item Validity Test: Calculate item-total correlation using SPSS; Items with a <0.30 correlation are evaluated/removed.

- Reliability Test: Cronbach's alpha for each scale (target $\alpha \geq 0.70$). If $\alpha < 0.70$, perform an item removal analysis to improve reliability while maintaining the theoretical construct.

Data Collection Techniques

1. Administrative permit: request for official permission to the Head of Service for surveys.
2. Socialization & consent: brief briefing to respondents about the purpose, confidentiality, and willingness to fill out the questionnaire; Request written informed consent.
3. Distribution of questionnaires: the option of collection directly (paper) or online (Google Form) according to the conditions; Charging is monitored to minimize missing data.
4. Secondary data collection (optional): recording of performance report cards or supervisory appraisals if available and permitted.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Respondent Overview

The study was conducted on **34 employees** at the Office of Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services, Manpower, and Transmigration of Southwest Aceh Regency. Respondents consisted of 20 males (58.8%) and 14 females (41.2%). Based on service life, 41% have a service period of 1–5 years, 38% between 6–10 years, and the rest are above 10 years. In terms of education, the majority are S1 educated (76.5%), while the rest are D3 and S2 graduates.

Description of Research Variables

Table 1. Variable Description Results

Variable	Number of Items	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Average (Mean)	Category
Transformational Leadership (X)	12	38	60	52,7	Tall
Employee Performance (Y)	8	26	40	34,8	Tall

The descriptive results show that employees' perceptions of transformational leadership are relatively high. This shows that the service leaders are considered to have provided motivation, inspiration, and individual attention to their subordinates. Likewise, the performance of employees who are also in the high category, reflects good productivity and work discipline.

Validity and Reliability Tests

Table 2. Validity and Reliability Tests

Variable	Number of Items	Item Valid	r Count (≥ 0.30)	Cronbach's Alpha	Information
Transformational Leadership	12	12	0,421–0,812	0,905	Reliable

Employee Performance	8	8	0,396- 0,788	0,881	Reliable
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All instrument items are valid and reliable because they meet the minimum value of item-total correlation and have a Cronbach's Alpha value of > 0.70.

Normality Test

The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test showed a significance value of 0.187 (> 0.05), which means that the data is normally distributed and qualified for the linear regression test.

Correlation Test

The degree of relationship between transformational leadership variables and employee performance was tested using Pearson Correlation.

Table 3. Correlation Test

Variable	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Information
Transformational Leadership - Employee Performance	0,684	0,000	Strong and Significant Correlation

These results show that transformational leadership has a strong and significant relationship with employee performance. The higher the employee's perception of transformational leadership, the higher their performance.

Simple Linear Regression Test

Table 4. Simple Linear Regression Test Results

Variable	Regression Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	t count	Sig. (p)	Information
(Constant)	14,532	2,812	5,168	0,000	-
Transformational Leadership (X)	0,385	0,075	5,165	0,000	Significant

Table 5. Regression Model Summary

Type	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0,684	0,468	0,452	2,176

Table 6. ANOVA (F Test)

Source of Variation	JK (Sum Squares)	of Df	Mean Square	F count	Sig.
Regression	121,42	1	121,42	26,69	0,000
Residual	137,78	32	4,31	-	-
Total	259,20	33	-	-	-

The R^2 value = 0.468 means that 46.8% of the variation in employee performance can be explained by transformational leadership, while the remaining 53.2% is influenced by other factors (e.g. motivation, discipline, or organizational culture). The t-value of the calculation (5.165) > the table t (2.037) and Sig. 0.000 < 0.05, so that H_1 is accepted: transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed that transformational leadership had a positive and significant effect on employee performance, with a regression coefficient value of 0.385, a t-value of 5.165 with a significance of 0.000 < 0.05, and an R^2 value of 0.468. This means that 46.8% of employee performance variations can be explained by transformational leadership variables, while the remaining 53.2% are influenced by other factors such as motivation, organizational culture, or work environment. These results provide empirical evidence that the higher the level of implementation of transformational leadership by the leadership, the better the performance of employees within the Office of Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services, Manpower, and Transmigration of Southwest Aceh Regency.

These findings are in line with the theory (Bass & Avolio, 1993) which states that transformational leaders are able to encourage their followers to work beyond expectations through four main dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These four aspects foster trust, commitment, and inspiration in employees to improve organizational performance. In the context of local government offices, this can be seen in the ability of leaders to set an example, communicate a clear vision of public services, and pay attention to the individual needs of employees.

Furthermore, the results of this study also strengthen the view of (Yukl et al., 2013) which explains that transformational leaders create organizational change by influencing the values, goals, and needs of their subordinates. Employees who feel cared for and supported tend to have higher work morale, more discipline, and are motivated to provide the best results. This condition is in accordance with the results of descriptive research which shows that both the perception of transformational leadership and the level of employee performance are in the high category.

This research is consistent with the results of the research conducted (Sudrajat & Setiawan, 2025), which found that transformational leadership had a significant positive relationship with employee performance ($r = 0.61$; $p < 0.05$). Likewise, (Bachtillah & Ambarsari, 2025) stated that transformational leadership contributes 45.3% to improving the performance of state civil servants in the local government. Similar results were also found by (Wulandari & Sari, 2023) which concluded that the application of a transformational leadership style in the North Sumatra Department of Industry and Trade had a positive impact on employee productivity and effectiveness.

The relationship between theory and empirical results shows that the dimensions of inspirational motivation and individualized consideration play a dominant role in building trust and motivation for employees in the public sector.

Leaders who are able to inspire and provide individual attention tend to give a sense of belonging to the organization. In the context of the One-Stop Investment and Integrated Services Office, this can be seen from the increase in employee initiatives, punctuality of work, and active participation in community service activities.

Further, these results support the research (Asriani et al., 2020) who found that transformational leadership has a significant influence on improving employee performance through increased intrinsic motivation and organizational commitment. Leaders who are able to foster confidence and direct employees to the organization's long-term vision will create a productive and harmonious work environment.

The results of this study also show that transformational leadership is not just a charismatic leadership style, but an approach that is able to change employee values and work behavior. Leaders who apply this style do not only rely on instruction and supervision, but encourage employees to innovate, think critically, and find creative solutions to work problems. This is in line with the findings (Saputra, 2022) which emphasizes that transformational leadership fosters a spirit of innovation and collaboration in a bureaucratic environment.

In the context of Southwest Aceh, the application of transformational leadership styles has high relevance because it can answer local bureaucratic challenges, such as improving service quality, accelerating regional investment, and fostering labor and transmigration. Leaders who are visionary, communicative, and care for their subordinates can encourage a positive work culture and foster employee loyalty to the agency. This is important to maintain the consistency of fast, transparent, and accountable public services as required in the national bureaucratic reform.

Overall, the results of this study reinforce the theory and empirical evidence that transformational leadership is an important determinant in improving the performance of public sector employees. Leaders who are able to be role models and motivators will foster high work spirit, creativity, and individual responsibility. The application of this style is expected not only to increase employee productivity, but also to create a change in organizational culture towards more professional service performance and oriented towards community satisfaction.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study proves that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Southwest Aceh Regency Investment and Integrated Services Office, Manpower, and Transmigration, with a contribution of 46.8%. Leaders who are able to inspire, provide individual attention, and foster innovation are proven to improve employee performance and work motivation. The recommendations of this study are the need to strengthen transformational leadership training for structural officials as well as improve internal communication so that the values of participatory leadership and public service with integrity can be applied in a sustainable manner in all work units.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Further research is suggested to add mediating variables such as work motivation, job satisfaction, or organizational culture to expand the relationship model between variables. In addition, it is recommended to increase the number of samples and expand the research location so that the results are more representative for government agencies in various regions.

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