

TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP, MOTIVATION, AND COMPETENCE EFFECTS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

Despite advancements in public service reform, employee performance at the Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services Agency in Jember Regency remains inconsistent, marked by delayed service delivery, low initiative, and reduced task effectiveness. This study investigates the influence of transactional leadership, motivation, and competence on employee performance to identify key drivers of organizational efficiency. A quantitative associative method was employed, with data collected from 85 employees via structured questionnaires and analyzed using multiple linear regression. Results indicate that motivation and competence have a significant positive effect on performance ($p < 0.05$), underscoring their critical role in enhancing productivity and service quality. In contrast, transactional leadership does not show a significant impact, challenging its assumed centrality in bureaucratic settings. The model explains 56% of the variance in performance ($R^2 = 0.56$). The originality of this study lies in its empirical examination of leadership limitations in a developing-country public service context, where motivational and competency-based factors outweigh directive leadership in driving performance. It contributes to theory by refining the application of leadership models in local government institutions and offers practical guidance for reforming human resource strategies. Findings suggest that investing in employee development, intrinsic motivation, and skill enhancement is more effective than relying solely on hierarchical supervision.

DOI:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.31000/combis.v7i3.14689>

Article History:

Received: 07/08/2025

Reviewed: 15/08/2025

Revised: 17/08/2025

Accepted: 31/08/2025

Keywords: Competence; Employee Performance; Motivation; Public Sector; Transactional Leadership.



INTRODUCTION

Human Resources (HR) are a crucial component of organizations, both in the private and government sectors. Individuals who join an organization and participate in achieving its goals are referred to as HR. Their role extends beyond physical labor, encompassing the intellectual abilities, skills, attitudes, and values of each individual. Therefore, HR is viewed as a strategic asset that is a key determinant of operational success and the achievement of an organization's vision. Hasibuan (2022) states that HR is the primary driver of an organization, possessing functions, roles, and objectives that support the organization's overall success.

In modern management, human resource management extends beyond recruitment and selection processes, encompassing competency development, motivation, the creation of a conducive work environment, and the implementation of an objective performance appraisal system. Armstrong (2023) states that Human Resource Management (HRM) is a strategic approach to improving individual and organizational performance through the management of the people who work within it. Particularly in government agencies, HRM plays a crucial role in establishing an effective, efficient, and responsive bureaucracy.

One important indicator in assessing organizational success is employee performance. Performance reflects the extent to which an individual is able to optimally carry out their duties and responsibilities. According to Mangkunegara (2023), performance is the work results achieved by an employee in terms of both quality and quantity in carrying out assigned tasks. Therefore, improving employee performance is crucial to ensuring the continuity and effectiveness of an organization. Some of the main factors influencing performance include leadership style, work motivation, and employee competence.

Leadership style significantly influences employee behavior and work morale. One style widely applied in organizations is transactional leadership, which emphasizes rewarding or punishing employees based on performance. This style is considered effective in fostering discipline, role clarity, and accountability. Previous research has shown that transactional leadership is positively associated with improved employee performance, particularly in achieving structured work targets (Anindita & Kurniawan, 2021; Prasetyo & Wulandari, 2023).

Besides leadership, work motivation is also a crucial factor in driving optimal performance. High motivation encourages employees to be more active, productive, and enthusiastic in their work. Robbins and Judge (2020) define motivation as an internal or external force that drives individuals to behave in ways that achieve specific goals. Based on Maslow's theory of needs, work motivation is influenced by the fulfillment of five levels of basic human needs, from physiological needs to self-actualization. Research by Safitri and Pramono (2021) and Wijaya and Sari (2022) shows that the higher an employee's work motivation, the higher the quality and productivity of their work.

Another influential factor is employee competency, which encompasses knowledge, skills, and attitudes relevant to job demands. Adequate competency enables employees to complete tasks professionally and efficiently, while adapting to changes in the work environment. Spencer (2020) stated that high competency significantly contributes to work effectiveness, especially in stressful and challenging situations. Previous research by Sari and Nugroho (2021) and Lestari and Prasetyo (2022) reinforces the finding that motivation and competency significantly influence employee performance, both individually and in the organization as a whole.

The phenomenon occurring at the Jember Regency Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services Agency (DPMPTSP) indicates that employee performance is still suboptimal. Based on internal data, various problems were found, such as low accuracy, neatness, attendance rates, and lack of punctuality in completing tasks. Furthermore, there is a tendency for some employees to neglect office duties, lack work initiative, and prioritize personal interests. Data also shows that 70% of employees have low attendance rates and 60% do not complete work on time. This phenomenon indicates a serious challenge in human resource management, which has a direct impact on the quality of public services and investor confidence as DPMPTSP's main stakeholders.

Low motivation, lack of competence, and suboptimal leadership styles are suspected to be the main causes of declining employee performance. Leaders tend to use one-way communication and provide little space for subordinate participation, resulting in a decline in employee morale and confidence. Furthermore, a lack of training or career development also makes it difficult for many employees to complete tasks independently and innovatively.

Based on these conditions, this study aims to analyze the influence of transactional leadership style, work motivation, and competence on employee performance within the Jember Regional Human Resources Development Agency (DPMPTSP). This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to enrich the literature on the influence of these three variables on performance, as well as provide practical input for DPMPTSP Jember management in developing more effective and efficient HR development strategies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous research serves as an important reference in developing a theoretical framework and understanding variables relevant to the research topic. Several previous studies have discussed the relationship between transactional leadership style, work motivation, competence, and employee performance in various organizational contexts.

In his research on the influence of transformational leadership, work motivation, and organizational culture on job satisfaction and its impact on employee performance, Lukita (2017) found that, both partially and simultaneously, these three variables had a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. Furthermore, job satisfaction also significantly influenced employee performance at an English language course institution in the Ciayumajakuning area. These results demonstrate the importance of leadership style and work motivation in improving employee performance through increased job satisfaction.

Meanwhile, research by Insan (2017) highlighted the relationship between transactional leadership, intrinsic motivation, and work engagement on employee performance. The results showed that transactional leadership had no significant effect on performance or intrinsic motivation, but did influence work engagement. Conversely, intrinsic motivation was shown to have a significant influence on employee performance and work engagement. This indicates that internal factors within the individual are more dominant than the influence of leadership style in certain contexts.

Research conducted by Pasaribu et al. (2019) concluded that transactional and motivational leadership styles both significantly influence employee performance at PT Trans Retail Indonesia Serang. This research supports the assumption that employee performance can

be improved through a combination of appropriate leadership styles and adequate work motivation.

Furthermore, Agung and Mas'ud (2021) added compensation and organizational commitment as intervening variables in their research. They found that transactional leadership style and compensation had a positive and significant effect on both organizational commitment and employee performance. Furthermore, organizational commitment was also shown to mediate the relationship between transactional leadership style and compensation on employee performance. These findings suggest that building strong organizational commitment can strengthen the impact of leadership style on performance.

Finally, Aqsa (2021) examined the influence of transformational, transactional, and age leadership on teachers' Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) at SMPS YPPI Tualang Perawang. The results showed that all three variables simultaneously had a significant effect on OCB. This finding confirms that leadership and individual personal characteristics (such as age) can influence positive employee behavior outside of their formal duties.

Overall, these previous studies reinforce the theoretical basis that leadership style, work motivation, and competence are important variables that can influence individual performance within an organization. This study then seeks to further examine the influence of these three variables in the context of a government agency, namely the Jember Regency Investment and One-Stop Integrated Service Office (DPMPTSP), which faces various challenges in improving employee performance.

Theory

A research hypothesis is a tentative answer to the research problem formulated in the study, the validity of which must be proven through data collection and empirical analysis. In this study, the hypothesis is formulated based on the theoretical foundation, previous research findings, and the conceptual framework outlined in the previous subchapter. The hypothesis serves as a guideline for testing the relationship between variables to determine whether the researcher's assumed influence actually occurs.

The Influence of Transactional Leadership on Employee Performance.

Transactional leadership is a leadership style that focuses on reward-and-punishment-based work relationships to encourage employee efficiency and productivity. Transactional leaders provide clear instructions and rewards based on target achievement, thereby creating structure and control within the organization. Within the framework of social systems theory, this leadership style serves to maintain stability and efficiency through targeted supervision and communication. Research by Pasaribu et al. (2019) and Permatasari (2023) shows that transactional leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

H1: Transactional leadership has a significant influence on employee performance in the one-stop integrated investment service environment.

The Influence of Motivation on Employee Performance.

Motivation is an internal and external drive that influences employee morale. Both intrinsic motivation, such as pride and job satisfaction, and extrinsic motivation, such as financial rewards, contribute to improved performance. From a social perspective, particularly Talcott Parsons' Functional Structure theory, motivation is viewed as a crucial element in an interdependent organizational system aimed at achieving common goals. Organizations as social systems emphasize the importance of interpersonal relationships in shaping motivation

and influencing performance. Research by Misnawati (2021) shows that motivation and transactional leadership styles significantly influence employee performance. Therefore, managing employee motivation is a crucial aspect of human resource management to achieve organizational effectiveness and growth.

H2: Motivation has a significant influence on employee performance in the one-stop integrated investment service environment.

The influence of competence on employee performance

Competence encompasses the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to complete work effectively. Competent employees tend to be more efficient, adaptable to change, and capable of producing high-quality performance. From the perspective of Talcott Parsons' Functional Structure theory, competence is a crucial element in an interdependent organizational system to achieve common goals. Competence also increases employee confidence and motivation in decision-making. Research by Putri et al. (2021) shows that performance evaluation and competency development have a significant impact on improving employee performance, underscoring the importance of HR development strategies within organizations.

H3: Competence has a significant influence on employee performance in the one-stop integrated investment service environment .

METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with a correlational research type, which focuses on identifying the relationship between various variables studied without any manipulation of these variables. Correlational research aims to reveal the extent of the relationship or relationship between two or more variables in the context of this study, namely transactional leadership, motivation, competence, and employee performance. With this approach, researchers can identify and analyze the influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable, namely employee performance, without any direct intervention on these variables (Sugiyono, 2019a) . This study uses two main types of data, namely primary data and secondary data (Adlini, 2022) . The population in this study includes all employees working at the Investment and One-Stop Integrated Service Office (DPMPTSP) of Jember Regency. The sample in this study was all employees working at the Investment and One-Stop Integrated Service Office (DPMPTSP) of Jember Regency, with a total of approximately 40 people. The sampling technique used in this research is saturated or census sampling, where all members of the population will be used as research samples.

RESULTS

Validity Test

Based on the validity test results, all items in the Transactional Leadership, Motivation, and Employee Performance variables have a calculated r value $> r$ table (0.316) and a significance value < 0.05 . This indicates that each statement item in the three variables is statistically capable of measuring the intended construct or concept accurately and validly. Instrument validity is an important requirement in quantitative research to ensure that the data collected truly represents the variables being studied. Thus, it can be concluded that all statement items in this research questionnaire are declared valid and suitable for use in the next

analysis stage, including in testing classical assumptions, multiple linear regression, and interpretation of the research results as a whole.

Reliability Test

Based on the results of the reliability test shown in Table 4.5, it is known that the Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.737 with a total of 20 statement items. This value indicates that all items in the instrument have good internal consistency, because they are above the minimum threshold value of 0.60. Thus, this research instrument meets the reliability criteria and is declared reliable, so it is suitable for use in the data collection process in this study.

Classical Assumption Test

Normality Test

A normality test was conducted to determine whether the research data were normally distributed. Based on the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, all variables in this study showed a significance value greater than 0.05. The Transactional Leadership variable had a significance value of 0.112 (KS) and 0.172 (SW), the Motivation variable 0.085 (KS) and 0.137 (SW), the Competence variable 0.071 (KS) and 0.110 (SW), and the Performance variable 0.099 (KS) and 0.144 (SW). Based on these results, it can be concluded that all variables were normally distributed and met the requirements for multiple linear regression analysis.

Multicollinearity Test

Based on the results of the multicollinearity test shown through *the Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor* (VIF) values, it can be concluded that there are no symptoms of multicollinearity in this regression model. All independent variables, namely Transactional Leadership (X1), Motivation (X2), and Competence (X3), have a Tolerance value above 0.10 and a VIF value below 10. These values indicate that there is no high correlation between the independent variables, so that each variable can provide a unique contribution to the dependent variable, namely Performance (Y). Thus, the regression model is suitable for use in further testing.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

From the regression equation, it can be explained that:

- a. The constant of 11.596 indicates that if all independent variables are zero, the estimated Performance value is 11.596.
- b. The coefficient of X1 (Transactional Leadership) of 0.176 indicates that every one unit increase in Transactional Leadership will increase Performance by 0.176 units, assuming other variables remain constant.
- c. The X2 (Motivation) coefficient of -0.191 indicates that every one unit increase in motivation will actually decrease performance by 0.191 units.
- d. The X3 (Competence) coefficient of 0.529 indicates that every one unit increase in competence will increase performance by 0.529 units.

Hypothesis Testing

t-test

The t-test is used to determine the partial influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable in the regression model.

- a. Transactional Leadership Variable (X1): The calculated t value is $0.686 < t \text{ table } 2.028$ and the significance value is $0.497 > 0.05$. This indicates that transactional leadership does not have a significant effect on performance. Therefore, hypothesis H_1 is rejected.
- b. Motivation Variable (X2): The calculated t value is $4.879 > t \text{ table } 2.028$ and the significance value is $0.000 < 0.05$. This means that motivation has a significant effect on performance. Therefore, hypothesis H_1 is accepted.
- c. Competence Variable (X3): The calculated t value is $2.068 > t \text{ table } 2.028$ and the significance value is $0.046 < 0.05$. Thus, competence also has a significant effect on performance. Therefore, hypothesis H_1 is accepted.

Overall, the results of the t-test show that of the three independent variables, only the transactional leadership variable does not have a significant influence on performance, while motivation and competence show a positive and significant influence.

Coefficient of Determination Test

Based on above, the R Square value is 0.716, which means that 71.6% of the variation in Performance (Y) can be explained by the variables Transactional Leadership (X1), Motivation (X2), and Competence (X3) together. Meanwhile, the remaining 28.4% is influenced by other variables outside this research model. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.691 indicates that after adjusting for the number of independent variables in the model, the model's ability to explain the dependent variable remains high. Thus, this regression model is considered quite good and suitable for use in this study.

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Transactional Leadership on Performance

The t-test results show that the Transactional Leadership variable (X1) does not have a significant effect on Employee Performance, with a significance value of $0.497 > 0.05$, so the hypothesis is rejected. This means that the provision of rewards or punishments that are characteristics of transactional leadership are not enough to motivate improved employee performance at DPMPTSP Jember.

Leadership indicators such as rewards, performance monitoring, and task clarification have not been implemented optimally and consistently, resulting in no real impact on employee performance. This finding aligns with research by Wuryaningrat et al. (2024), which found that transactional leadership styles often fail to generate long-term motivation in public sector organizations.

From the perspective of social systems theory, an organization is a system consisting of interacting subsystems such as individuals, work groups, formal structures, and communication processes. In this context, transactional leadership is one of the driving mechanisms within the managerial subsystem responsible for maintaining organizational balance. When this mechanism is not functioning optimally, the system as a whole cannot function efficiently, ultimately impacting employee performance (Parsons, in Prasetyo & Wahyuni, 2022).

Although the hypothesis was rejected, strengthening transactional leadership indicators can still be considered as a managerial strategy, especially when integrated with other approaches. Adriansyah et al. (2020) suggested that the combination of transactional leadership and supportive communication can have an indirect impact on performance. Furthermore,

Lishandy & Al Musadieq (2023) revealed that motivation's role as a mediator can bridge the relationship between transactional leadership and employee performance.

Therefore, DPMPTSP Jember can start to improve the implementation of transactional leadership indicators through a performance-based reward system and feedback-based supervision, while developing transformative leadership to increase employee engagement more comprehensively.

The Influence of Motivation on Performance

The results of the study indicate that the second hypothesis, namely that *motivation has a significant effect on employee performance*, is accepted. This is evidenced by a significance value of 0.000, which is much smaller than the significance limit of 0.05, and a *t-value* of 4.879, which indicates a positive and strong influence. Thus, it can be concluded that motivation plays a very important role in improving employee performance within the Investment and One-Stop Integrated Service Office.

Theoretically, these results align with Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, which states that people are motivated to behave productively when their needs—from the most basic to self-actualization—are met. In an organizational context, these needs can be met in the form of appreciation, security, recognition, and opportunities for self-development. If these needs are met appropriately by the organization, employees will be motivated to perform better and contribute more effectively.

Furthermore, from the perspective of Talcott Parsons' Social Systems Theory, motivation can be considered part of the adaptation mechanism within an organizational system. Motivated individuals are better able to adapt to tasks and responsibilities and contribute to organizational stability and productivity.

These results also align with previous research by Saputra and Raharjo (2021), which stated that work motivation has a direct and significant influence on performance, particularly in public sector organizations. Similarly, Robbins and Judge (2020) confirmed that motivation is a key factor in driving improved work quality, loyalty, and job satisfaction. Handoko (2022) also stated that without strong motivation, employees tend to work merely to fulfill obligations, rather than to achieve optimal performance.

In the context of practical implementation at the Investment Office, acceptance of this hypothesis means that the agency needs to actively address and improve employee motivation strategies. This can be achieved by providing fair rewards, creating a supportive work environment, providing career development opportunities, providing training, and strengthening communication between superiors and subordinates. If these motivation-boosting strategies are consistently implemented, it is expected that employee performance will improve across the board, including service quality, punctuality, and daily work productivity.

Thus, these findings reinforce the importance of motivation as a key element in driving organizational performance achievement, as well as providing concrete input for the Investment Office to design more effective human resource development policies and programs that are oriented towards employee satisfaction and empowerment.

The Influence of Competence on Performance

The third hypothesis in this study states that competence significantly influences employee performance within the Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services Agency. Based on the *t-test results* shown in Table 4.9, the significance value of the competency variable is

0.046 (less than 0.05), with a *t-value* of 2.068. This confirms that competence does indeed have a significant influence on performance, thus the third hypothesis is accepted.

Conceptually, competency encompasses the combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors required to perform a job. The higher a person's competency, the greater their ability to complete tasks efficiently, make informed decisions, and adapt to changes or challenges in the work environment. In this regard, competency encompasses not only technical abilities but also cognitive and affective aspects that are essential for job success.

This finding aligns with Talcott Parsons' Social Systems Theory, which posits that individuals within an organization are part of a system that influences each other. Employee competence directly contributes to the stability and effectiveness of the organizational system. Competent individuals strengthen the organizational structure by optimally performing their functions to support the achievement of the institution's goals.

This research is also supported by previous studies, such as those conducted by Ginting and Prasetyo (2021), which showed that competence positively impacts performance, particularly in the government sector. Wibowo (2020) also emphasized that high competence is associated with increased productivity, work accuracy, and quality of service to the public.

With this hypothesis accepted, the Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services Agency needs to take various strategic steps to continuously improve the competency of its employees. These efforts include needs-based training, professional development programs, mentoring, and regular competency evaluations. Furthermore, it is crucial to create a talent management system capable of identifying employee strengths and weaknesses for continuous optimization.

Thus, improving employee competency is a crucial factor that not only impacts individual performance, but also supports the achievement of overall organizational goals, especially in providing quality and accountable public services.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the results of research on the influence of transactional leadership, motivation, and competence on employee performance, it can be concluded that motivation and competence have a significant influence on performance. Employees who are highly motivated, both intrinsically and extrinsically, tend to demonstrate high work ethic, tenacity, and enthusiasm in completing tasks. Meanwhile, competence, which includes knowledge, skills, and good work attitudes, is an important foundation in supporting work effectiveness and efficiency, as well as the ability to adapt to organizational dynamics. Although transactional leadership shows a significant influence in driving performance through a structured reward and supervision system, in the context of the Investment and One-Stop Integrated Service Office (DPMPTSP) of Jember Regency, this approach does not show optimal results. Therefore, it is recommended that management focus more attention on improving motivation and competence through training, providing incentives, and creating a supportive work environment. In addition, an evaluation of the applied leadership style is needed, considering a more participatory or transformational approach to address the increasingly complex demands of public service. This study also recognizes the limitations of the scope of the object which only covers one agency, so for further research it is recommended to expand the object to various other government agencies and add new variables, such as job satisfaction, work

environment, or other leadership styles in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding regarding improving employee performance.

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