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The Effect of Transformational Leadership and Servant Leadership on Employee Performance Through Organizational Commitment as an Intervening Variable in The Government of The Riau Islands Province

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Abstract: Employee performance is an important element that affects how effective and successful an organization is, especially in the government sector. This study emphasizes the significance of leadership in enhancing employee performance with organizational commitment as a factor influencing this relationship. Effective leadership may establish a clear goal, foster trust, and enhance staff morale. Respondents in this quantitative study were ASN in the Riau Islands Provincial Government, with data processing using Smart PLS. Filling out questionnaires sent via Google Form is the main method of primary data collection in this study. The results of the study indicate that Transformational Leadership and Servant Leadership have a positive and significant effect on Organizational Commitment, Organizational Commitment and Transformational Leadership have a positive and significant effect on employee performance, while Servant Leadership does not affect Employee Performance. The relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance, as well as between servant leadership and employee performance, is significantly mediated by organizational commitment.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Servant Leadership, Organizational Commitment, Employee Performance

INTRODUCTION

The performance of individuals within an organization or company plays a major role in determining its overall success. According to Abubakar et al. (2019) performance is linked to work and its outcomes, as well as what to do and how to do it. Mon et al. (2023) states employee performance reflects the work results produced, not just the completion of tasks that have been set. For business management, employee performance is always the most crucial factor to consider (Sentoso & Sang Putra, 2021). Therefore, organisations will strive to improve the performance of their employees so that the objectives that have been set can be achieved. In recent years, employee performance has become an issue that is seen as complicated and

continues to develop, because it adjusts the characteristics and dynamics in the organization itself (Y. Chen et al., 2018).

Employee performance issues are still a serious problem for many countries, especially in the government sector. Not optimal employee performance also occurs in the government sector in Indonesia. The Acting Head of the State Civil Service Agency said that the ability or performance of human resources working as government employees in Indonesia is considered quite low. The performance of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) is currently in the deadwood category, meaning that the ASN performance is low and even poor with a percentage of 35 percent of the total ASN (kompas.com).

Performance problems are often influenced by several factors as expressed by Hassel (2007) which states that the factors that affect performance are motivation, organizational culture, compensation, leadership, job satisfaction, discipline, environment and organizational commitment.

Leadership plays an important role in developing organizations and individual job performance (Jiatong et al., 2022). Modern leadership differs from leadership in the past; leaders today must be able to adapt to situations that are always changing. Leadership style is a determinant of success in an organization (Fiedler, 1996). Leaders have the ability to motivate individuals or groups to accomplish objectives and enhance employee engagement within the organization. Thus, leadership style is considered a major factor in motivating improved employee performance. Individual goals that align with organizational goals lead to what is known as organizational commitment, which motivates employee productivity and loyalty (Qalati et al., 2022).

There are various leadership models currently applied by companies including transactional leadership, transformational leadership, servant leadership, but the problem is that each leadership model has its own advantages and disadvantages. Leadership theories such as transformational, authentic, ethical, servant, spiritual, and inclusive play an important role in developing morals for managing people and organizations (Srimulyani et al., 2023). Transformational leadership and servant leadership have been widely applied in various fields, both in educational and corporate organizations. Transformational leadership and servant leadership are leadership styles that are relevant and in accordance with the development of leadership styles (Irwan et al., 2020).

Transformational leadership effectively motivates and inspires employees to reach higher performance levels by offering a clear vision, encouraging critical thinking, and giving personal attention. Transformational leadership is essential for motivating employees through the clear communication of values and visions, concentrating on the future, and implementing concrete actions to enhance organizational performance and innovation (Musana & Setyawan, 2023). Meanwhile, servant leadership emphasizes service to employees, supporting their growth and well-being, which in turn can improve organizational performance. B. Chen et al. (2022) revealed that leaders who have servant leadership type will listen and be one with their respective employees so that it will facilitate communication between leaders and employees. Employees will therefore seek out methods to enhance their performance when they appreciate their leaders. Servant leadership has a positive relationship with job satisfaction, which in the long run is an indicator of employee commitment and employee dedication to achieving work goals (Tanuwijaya et al., 2023).

The organization or company where the employee or staff member works is another factor that can influence employee performance, as previously mentioned. Compared to employees with low organizational commitment, those with high organizational commitment have distinct attitudes. Highly committed employees will have high productivity (Luthans, 2002). In contrast, low employee commitment can have a negative influence on the organization.

The Government Agency Performance Accountability System, referred to as SAKIP, is constructed and developed to achieve good governance and a clean government structure by

enhancing the performance organization of government agencies and ensuring transparency of accountability. This system is delineated in Government Regulation Number 8 of 2006 regarding Financial Reporting and Performance of Government Agencies, Presidential Regulation Number 29 of 2014 pertaining to SAKIP, and Regulation of the Minister of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform Number 53 of 2014 concerning Technical Instructions for Performance Reporting and Procedures for Reviewing Government Agency Performance Reports.

The results of the 2023 Government Agency Performance Accountability evaluation, released on November 27, 2023 by the Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform of the Republic of Indonesia with Number B/282/AA.05/2023, Riau Islands Province received an evaluation score of 76.14 with a performance accountability level of BB aka very good. This was caused by several external and internal factors so that the Riau Islands Provincial Government could not get a score in the A (Satisfactory) category. These external and internal factors include the acceleration of basic infrastructure development related to the non-achievement of slum area reduction and the lack of commitment from leaders and employees to implement performance accountability principles. Weak commitment also has an impact on the lack of policies, budget allocations, and incentives that support employee performance improvement.

Based on the above description, employee performance in the public sector is one of the main elements that influence the quality of public services received by the community. There are still challenges in optimizing employee performance, one of which is caused by leadership and organizational commitment factors. Given the importance of transformational leadership, servant leadership, and organisational commitment, discussing these three aspects can provide more comprehensive insights into efforts to optimally improve employee performance in the public sector, especially Riau Islands Province, which is characterized by an archipelago and has geographical challenges such as cultural heterogeneity, limited inter-island mobility, and disparities in service access. This research aims to provide a foundation for creating strategies that enhance public service quality by reinforcing leadership and organizational commitment.

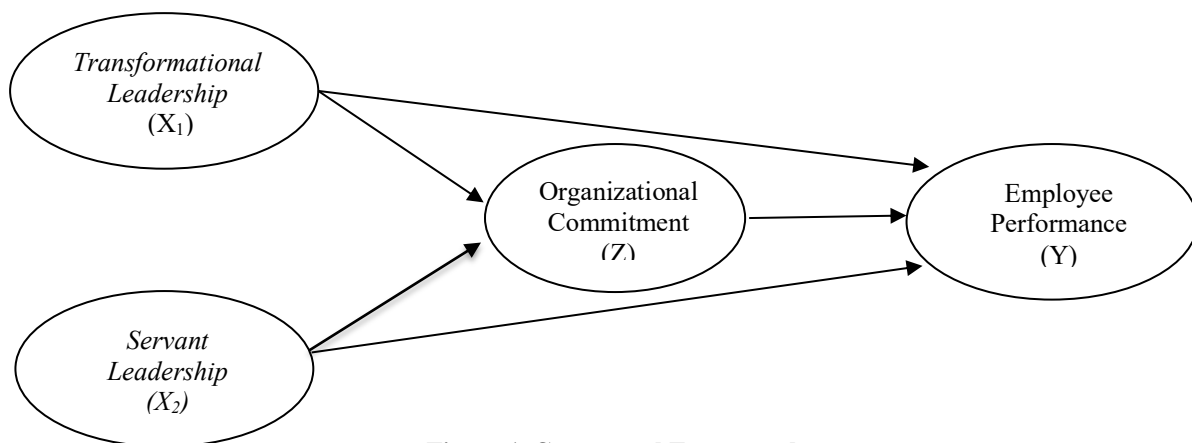


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHOD

This study was designed with a descriptive quantitative method. Data collection was conducted through a survey with a questionnaire, using a Likert scale of 1-5, where 1 indicates "Strongly Disagree" and 5 "Strongly Agree". The population in this study were ASN in the Riau Islands Provincial Government which amounted to 2,236 people. The study determined a sample size of 343 using the Slovin formula. The sample that is the focus of this research is ASN, both male and female, aged between 20 and over 50 years old, has an education level from high school to doctoral programs, and current positions from implementers to

administrator officials. This study utilised primary data obtained through questionnaires compiled in Google forms and completed by respondents. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with a Partial Least Square (PLS) method and Smart PLS software version 4.0 were used in data analysis. PLS is an alternative SEM method known for its effectiveness in handling complex variables (Hair et al., 2019). PLS employs structural and measurement analysis to model the connections between variables by detecting significant correlation patterns. This approach enables researchers to explore and clarify the relationships within the research model more thoroughly and precisely.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

The data analysis results are described for each variable collected. The characteristics of the respondents are categorized based on gender, age, highest education level, and current job position. Regarding respondent characteristics by gender, males constitute the majority at 57.73%, while females make up the remaining 42.27%. For age category characteristics, 41-45 years old is dominated by 36.44%, 36-40 years old by 21.87%, 46-50 years old by 15.45%, 31-35 years old by 11.95%, >50 years old by 8.75%, 26-30 years old by 4.96% and the smallest proportion is in the 20-25 years age group, accounting for 0.58%. Regarding education level, the majority of respondents hold an undergraduate degree (S1), comprising 62.10%, Masters (S2) by 20.11%, Diploma by 10.50%, SMA/K by 7% and the lowest is doctoral education background (S3) by 0.29%. Based on the characteristics of the current position, it is dominated by executors at 50.44%, functional officials at 37.32%, supervisory officials at 7.58% and the lowest is administrator officials at 4.66%.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

| Profile | Criteria | Percentage |
|------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Gender | Male | 57,73% |
| | Female | 42,27% |
| Age | 20 – 25 | 0,58% |
| | 26 - 30 | 4,96% |
| | 31 - 35 | 11,95% |
| | 36 - 40 | 21,87% |
| | 41 - 45 | 36,44% |
| | 46 - 50 | 15,45% |
| | > 50 | 8,75% |
| Last Education | SMA/K | 7,00% |
| | Diploma | 10,50% |
| | Bachelor | 62,10% |
| | Master | 20,11% |
| | Doctorate | 0,29% |
| Current Position | Administrator Officials | 4,66% |
| | Supervisory Officer | 7,58% |
| | Functional Officials | 37,32% |
| | Executors | 50,44% |

Source: Research data (2024)

Outer Model Testing

This study conducted an outer model test by evaluating convergent validity, discriminant validity, and internal consistency reliability outcomes. In the outer model test using data from 343 respondents with PLS Algorithm Max.

Convergent Validity

The criteria for convergent validity are Average Variance Extracted (AVE) must be greater than 0.5 and the loading factor value of all items must be greater than 0.7 for confirmatory research and between 0.6 - 0.7 for exploratory research (Khan et al., 2022).

Table 2. Outer Loading Results

| Variables | Indicator | Outer Loading |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------|
| Employee Performance (Y) | EP1 | .873 |
| | EP2 | .874 |
| | EP3 | .805 |
| | EP4 | .843 |
| | EP5 | .810 |
| Organizational Commitment (Z) | OC1 | .826 |
| | OC2 | .774 |
| | OC3 | .825 |
| | OC4 | .851 |
| Servant Leadership (X ₂) | SL1 | .708 |
| | SL2 | .788 |
| | SL4 | .720 |
| | SL5 | .814 |
| | SL6 | .656 |
| | Transformational Leadership (X ₁) | TL2 |
| TL3 | | .884 |
| TL4 | | .772 |
| TL6 | | .748 |
| TL7 | | .788 |
| TL1 | | .794 |

Source: Research data (2024)

The outer loading value can be said to be valid if the indicator reaches a value of 0.6 or more than 0.6 (Hair et al., 2019). Based on the test results, four indicators SL3, SL7, TL5, and TL8 did not reach the threshold value of 0.6 and therefore had to be removed from further analysis. After excluding these invalid indicators, a recalculation was performed, which showed that all remaining indicators are valid and satisfy the convergent validity criteria. Consequently, data testing and analysis could proceed. The final test results are presented in Table 2 above.

Table 3. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

| Variables | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Employee Performance (Y) | 0,708 |
| Organizational Commitment (Z) | 0,672 |
| Servant Leadership (X ₂) | 0,547 |
| Transformational Leadership (X ₁) | 0,660 |

Source: Research data (2024)

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are 0.708 for Employee Performance, 0.672 for Organizational Commitment, 0.547 for Servant Leadership, and 0.660 for Transformational Leadership. All composite reliability scores for these variables exceed 0.5, indicating that they are valid as they meet the minimum validity criteria, as shown in the reliability test results in Table 3.

Discriminant Validity

In discriminant validity testing, indicators from different constructs should not show stronger correlations with each other than with their original constructs.

Table 4. Cross Loading

| | Employee Performance | Organizational Commitment | Servant Leadership | Transformational Leadership |
|-----|----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| EP1 | 0,873 | 0,506 | 0,416 | 0,493 |
| EP2 | 0,874 | 0,540 | 0,433 | 0,487 |
| EP3 | 0,805 | 0,359 | 0,362 | 0,456 |
| EP4 | 0,843 | 0,430 | 0,317 | 0,379 |
| EP5 | 0,810 | 0,442 | 0,438 | 0,472 |
| OC1 | 0,469 | 0,826 | 0,566 | 0,488 |
| OC2 | 0,352 | 0,774 | 0,411 | 0,384 |
| OC3 | 0,535 | 0,825 | 0,516 | 0,512 |
| OC4 | 0,412 | 0,851 | 0,547 | 0,469 |
| SL1 | 0,359 | 0,470 | 0,708 | 0,558 |
| SL2 | 0,380 | 0,455 | 0,788 | 0,653 |
| SL4 | 0,289 | 0,420 | 0,720 | 0,536 |
| SL5 | 0,420 | 0,512 | 0,814 | 0,652 |
| SL6 | 0,271 | 0,460 | 0,656 | 0,357 |
| TL2 | 0,484 | 0,463 | 0,572 | 0,876 |
| TL3 | 0,486 | 0,502 | 0,627 | 0,884 |
| TL4 | 0,382 | 0,394 | 0,594 | 0,772 |
| TL6 | 0,390 | 0,445 | 0,652 | 0,748 |
| TL7 | 0,391 | 0,453 | 0,676 | 0,788 |
| TL1 | 0,504 | 0,507 | 0,566 | 0,794 |

Source: Research data (2024)

According to the test results, all indicators have surpassed the validity threshold of > 0.6, as presented in table 4 above.

Reliability Test

The objective of this test is to examine the variables that function as construct indicators derived from questionnaire responses. This study assessed reliability by Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability methods. The standard criterion for composite dependability is more than 0.6.

Table 5. Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability

| | Cronbach's Alpha | Composite Reliability |
|---|------------------|-----------------------|
| Employee Performance (Y) | 0,896 | 0,923 |
| Organizational Commitment (Z) | 0,836 | 0,890 |
| Servant Leadership (X ₂) | 0,788 | 0,855 |
| Transformational Leadership (X ₁) | 0,894 | 0,919 |

Source: Research data (2024)

The composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha calculation results indicate that all constructs have values exceeding 0.7. Cronbach's alpha values below 0.60 are considered unreliable, while those above 0.60 are considered reliable. Since the composite reliability values for all variables exceed 0.6, it confirms that all variables are reliable, as indicated by the reliability test results in table 5.

Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

The structural model (inner model) describes the relationships and the strength of estimates between latent variables or constructs that are formulated based on theoretical principles. Inner model is a structural model to predict the causality relationship between latent variables(Latan & Ghozali, 2015)

R Square Test (R²)

R square is a measurement of how much dependent variables are influenced by independent factors. According to Chin (1998), the R-Square value is categorized as strong if it is more than 0.67, moderate if it is more than 0.33 but lower than 0.67, and weak if it is more than 0.19 but lower than 0.33.

Table 6. Coefficient Determination (R²)

| Variables | R Square (R ²) | R Square Adjusted |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Employee Performance (Y) | 0,381 | 0,375 |
| Organizational Commitment (Z) | 0,417 | 0,413 |

Source: Research data (2024)

This study examines two dependent variables: Employee Performance is influenced by Transformational Leadership and Servant Leadership, while Organizational Commitment is affected by Transformational Leadership, Servant Leadership, and Employee Performance. Table 6 indicates that the Adjusted R-square value for Employee Performance is 0.375, but for Organizational Commitment it is 0.413. The findings indicate that 37.5% of the variance in Employee Performance is attributed to Transformational Leadership and Servant Leadership, while 41.3% of the variance in Organizational Commitment is accounted for by Transformational Leadership, Servant Leadership, and Employee Performance, both reflecting a moderate degree of influence.

Path Coefficient

The path coefficient between variables is considered statistically significant if the t statistic for the link between latent variables is positive and meets or surpasses the t table value (t-statistic ≥ t-table). The degrees of freedom (df) are calculated as n - k, where n represents the number of respondents and k represents the number of variables, to derive the t-table value. Given a 5% significance level and df = 343 - 4 = 339, the t-table value in this instance is 1.96.

Table 7. Path Coefficient

| | Original sample | Sample mean | Standard deviation | T statistics (O/STDEV) | P values |
|--|-----------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| Transformational Leadership (X ₁) -> Organizational Commitment (Z) | 0,225 | 0,231 | 0,093 | 2,418 | 0,016 |
| Servant Leadership (X ₂) -> Organizational Commitment (Z) | 0,459 | 0,456 | 0,082 | 5,614 | 0,000 |
| Organizational Commitment (Z) -> Employee Performance (Y) | 0,356 | 0,353 | 0,066 | 5,392 | 0,000 |
| Transformational Leadership (X ₁) -> Employee Performance (Y) | 0,362 | 0,366 | 0,080 | 4,541 | 0,000 |
| Servant Leadership (X ₂) -> Employee Performance (Y) | -0,026 | -0,027 | 0,081 | 0,320 | 0,749 |

Source: Research data (2024)

The path coefficient is obtained through the bootstrapping technique for hypothesis testing, so as to assess the overall results of the research hypothesis. In accordance with the recommendations given in this study, If the T-statistic exceeds 1.96 or the P-value is less than 0.05, the data is deemed statistically significant. Based on the path coefficient results presented in table 7, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Transformational leadership significantly affects organizational commitment, as indicated by a T-statistic of 2.418 and a P-value of 0.016.
- Servant leadership clearly impacts organizational commitment, as indicated by a T-statistic of 5.614 and a P-value of 0.000.
- Organizational commitment has a significant impact on employee performance, as shown by a T-statistic of 5.392 and a P-value of 0.000.
- Transformational leadership significantly impacts employee performance, evidenced by a T-statistic of 4.541 and a P-value of 0.000.
- Servant leadership has no effect on employee performance, as evidenced by the T-statistic of 0.320 and the P-value of 0.749.

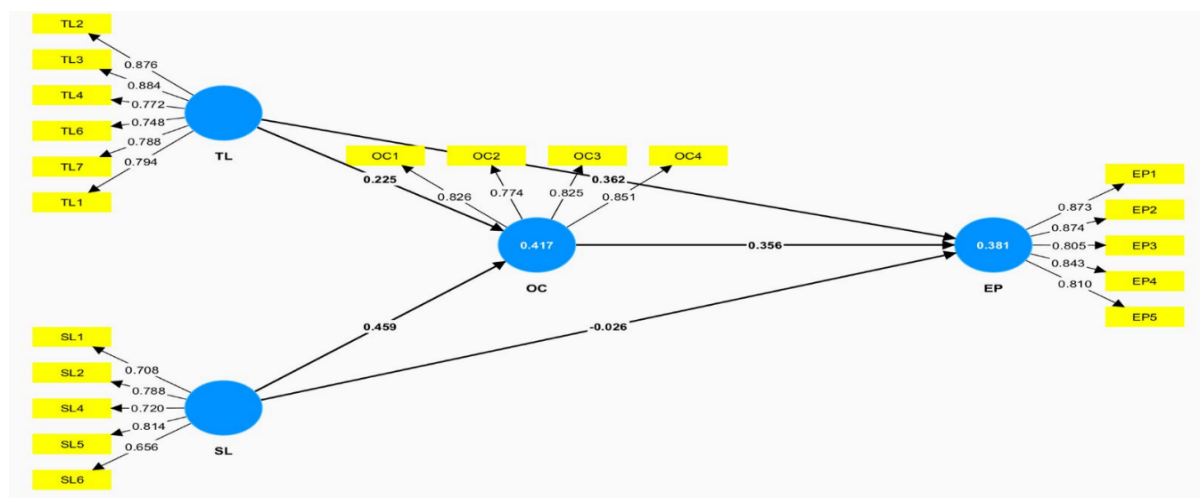


Figure 2. Structural Equation Modeling

Specific Indirect Effect

The indirect effect test is used to determine the amount to which an independent variable effects the dependent variable via a mediating or intervening variable. This test is conducted using the Bootstrapping approach. When the t-statistic surpasses 1.96 and the P-value falls below 0.05, the indirect effect is considered significant.

Table 8. Indirect Effect

| | Original sample (O) | Sample mean (M) | Standard deviation (STDEV) | T statistics (O/STDEV) | P values |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| Transformational Leadership (X ₁) -> Organizational Commitment (Z) -> Employee Performance (Y) | 0,163 | 0,162 | 0,047 | 3,441 | 0,001 |
| Servant Leadership (X ₂) -> Organizational Commitment (Z) -> Employee Performance (Y) | 0,080 | 0,080 | 0,033 | 2,443 | 0,015 |

Source: Research data (2024)

The study tested both direct effects and indirect effects. Testing for indirect effects helps in showing the role of intermediary variables in the study. Based on the established criteria,

the T-statistic value must be below 1.96 and the P-value must exceed 0.05. The results of testing the indirect effects above lead to conclusions, as shown in Table 8 as follows:

- a. Transformational leadership significantly influences employee performance through organizational commitment, evidenced by a T-statistic of 3.441 and a P-value of 0.001;
- b. Servant leadership and employee performance exhibit a significant mediating influence on organizational commitment, as evidenced by a T-statistic of 2.443 and a P-value of 0.015.

Hypothesis Testing

Based on the results of testing and analysis in this study, conclusions can be drawn in accordance with the hypothesis that has been formulated in the study:

- a. Organizational commitment is strongly influenced by transformational leadership, the results of this study support several previous empirical studies which essentially emphasize that good transformational leadership practices can be positively and significantly related to organizational commitment (Eliyana et al., 2019 ; Hermanto et al., 2024 ; Ariyanti et al., 2024). Transformational leadership can be realized through transformational leadership characteristics such as the influence of leaders on subordinates who make the level of loyalty of subordinates increase towards work and towards the organization and emotionally have strong emotional ties to the organization. A leader who has the influence idealized by his subordinates can be seen from the influence caused to the subordinates he leads, like a leader who is highly respected and his subordinates make the leader a source of motivation. The leader then acts as a coach and advisor to help followers achieve their goals (Omar, 2017). Transformational leadership is the responsibility of a leader to communicate, construct, and exemplify a shared vision to employees in order to positively influence their loyalty to the organization. This is considered appropriate and mandatory for employees in organisations that have supported the fulfilment of their needs.
- b. Servant leadership and organizational commitment have a big impact on each other, the results of this study are in line with the results of previous studies which state that servant leadership has a significant effect on organizational commitment, this indicates that the higher the value of servant leadership, the higher the value of organizational commitment (Harwiki, 2016 ; Fitri, 2023 ; Ekhsan & Aziz, 2021).
- c. There is a strong correlation between organizational commitment and employee performance, this is relevant to previous research conducted by Rahim & Jam'an (2018) , Paramita et al. (2020) , Thao et al. (2024) and Hosen et al. (2024).
- d. There is a significant influence between transformational leadership and employee performance, this result is also found in research conducted by Buil et al. (2019) , Qalati et al. (2022) and Kawana (2024).
- e. Employee performance is not much influenced by servant leadership; The results of this study are consistent with previous research that has demonstrated that this type of leadership does not have any impact on employee performance (Kamanjaya et al., 2017 ; Sihombing et al., 2018 ; Pala'langan, (2021) ; A.A. Sihombing et al. (2024). These findings suggest that employees generally prefer not to receive direct attention and assistance from their supervisors. The servant leadership style, which emphasises service to subordinates, appears to be inappropriate or unsuitable for application in the current work environment.
- f. The mediating role between organizational commitment and transformational leadership has a significant impact on employee performance, this conclusion is in accordance with studies conducted by Donkor et al. (2022) and Wang (2022) which shows that organizational commitment mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. Through organizational commitment, the beneficial relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance is effectively mediated. The enhancement of performance is influenced by the perception of transformational leadership held by employees. This leadership style encourages

subordinates to participate more fully in their tasks and value their contributions, which strengthens their commitment to the organization and ultimately leads to better employee performance.

- g. Servant leadership has a significant impact on mediation between organizational commitment and employee performance, the results of this study indicate that servant leadership has relevance to organizational commitment and employee performance (Setyaningrum et al., 2017). Servant leadership when mediated by organizational commitment the results show a positive and significant effect on employee performance (Pakpahan et al., 2021)

CONCLUSION

Transformational leadership and servant leadership, together with organizational commitment as a mediator, form a comprehensive method for improving public sector employee performance. Transformational leadership acts as a direct driver, while servant leadership serves as a foundation to build long-term commitment. Transformational leadership is a direct driver of performance, while servant leadership requires mediation of organizational commitment to influence performance. Organizing commitment is a substantial mediator between the two leadership styles and performance, particularly within the intricate environment of the public sector. The findings support social exchange theory, where commitment arises in response to leader support and is then reciprocated through optimal performance. The findings also confirm that performance improvement depends not only on leadership style, but also on the organization's ability to create an environment that fosters emotional attachment and employee morale.

Further research should explore in greater depth the reasons why servant leadership does not directly affect performance. Is it due to organizational culture factors, employee characteristics, or limitations of the measurement method. Furthermore, longitudinal studies are necessary to examine the durability of organizational commitment's mediating role, particularly amid policy shifts or internal organizational changes. Including variables like job satisfaction, organizational culture, or peer support could also help explore more complex interactions.

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