

The Role of Transformational Leadership in Improving Intrinsic Motivation and Employee Performance

Saepudin¹⁾ & Widodo²⁾

¹⁾Faculty of Economic, Universitas Islam Sultan Agung (UNISSULA) Semarang, Indonesia, E-mail: saepudin.std@unissula.ac.id

¹⁾Faculty of Economic, Universitas Islam Sultan Agung (UNISSULA) Semarang, Indonesia, E-mail: widodo@unissula.ac.id

Abstract. *This study was submitted to test the influence of transformational leadership on intrinsic motivation, to determine the influence of the work environment on intrinsic motivation, to determine the influence of transformational leadership on employee performance, to determine the influence of the work environment on employee performance, to determine the influence of intrinsic motivation on employee performance. The type of research to be conducted is explanatory research where this study aims to analyze the relationship between variables. The population in this study were all teachers of Madrasah Tsanawiyah (Mts) Negeri 20 East Jakarta. This study uses a quantitative method with primary data obtained from questionnaires. The selection of samples will use the non-probability sampling method, which is a sampling technique that not all populations can be sampled. The sample in this study was 50 teachers of Madrasah Tsanawiyah (Mts) Negeri 20 East Jakarta. Data analysis used the Partial Least Square (PLS) method with SmartPLS.*

Keywords: *Intrinsic; Leadership; Motivation; Transformational.*

1. Introduction

Performance can be influenced by how a leader carries out leadership activities within it. According to Kerlinger & Pedhazur (2003), leadership factors play a very important role in improving employee performance because effective leadership provides direction to the efforts of all workers in achieving organizational goals. The influence of leadership style on performance has been studied by Fahira & Yasin (2023), Prihasianto et al. (2023), Oktarini (2023), and Niken et al. (2022), who stated that leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Meanwhile, other researchers, such as Sirait et al. (2022), Soetirto et al. (2023), and Ahmadlyah et al. (2024), stated that leadership style does not have a significant effect on employee performance.

Transformational leadership has become a major focus in management and organizational studies, particularly in improving individual and group performance in the workplace. Since its development by Bass in 1985, the concept of transformational leadership has undergone

significant evolution and application across various sectors. In 2024, research on transformational leadership continued to expand, focusing on its impact on organizational culture, employee performance, and innovation.

Transformational leadership focuses on motivation and inspiration, leading to positive changes in employee behavior and attitudes. Recent studies have shown that this leadership style can increase job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and improve individual performance (Alharthi, 2024). Furthermore, transformational leaders are able to create an environment that supports innovation and collaboration, which are essential in facing rapidly evolving economic and social challenges (Smith & Tan, 2024). In the era of digitalization and evolving globalization, the role of transformational leadership is increasingly important in creating a flexible and adaptive work environment. Transformational leaders not only provide direction but also motivate and inspire teams to achieve common goals through clear communication and the development of each individual's potential (Nguyen, 2024). Transformational leadership also plays a crucial role in developing an inclusive organizational culture that is responsive to technological changes and rapidly changing markets (Jiang & Wu, 2024). Recent research has also highlighted the relationship between transformational leadership and improved performance in organizations implementing new technologies. Transformational leaders help build confidence and commitment among employees, which in turn increases productivity and efficiency in facing the challenges of digitalization (Johnson & Lee, 2024).

Thus, transformational leadership in 2024 will not only be key to improving performance but also to driving organizations in facing rapid and profound changes in various sectors. The results of studies on transformational leadership have a positive effect on employee performance according to Kurniawan, et al. (2025), As Zahra & Baskoro, (2024), and Nafisatul, (2024). Meanwhile, other studies have shown that transformational leadership has no effect on employee performance (Kurniawan, FP, Hadi, S., & Purnamarini, TR (2025), Jintar, C. (2022), Prayogi & Suhermin. (2024).

Intrinsic motivation plays a crucial role in improving employee performance and job satisfaction. Research shows that intrinsic motivation can boost employee morale, which in turn positively impacts their performance. Furthermore, intrinsic motivation also acts as a mediator between the work environment and employee performance, suggesting that a supportive work environment can enhance intrinsic motivation, which in turn improves employee performance (Pramesti & Arifiani, 2024).

However, it's important to note that a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can be more effective in improving work outcomes. Extrinsic motivation, such as rewards and incentives, can increase employees' intrinsic motivation, which in turn improves their performance. Furthermore, learning strategies that incorporate gamification elements can enhance students' intrinsic motivation, potentially improving their learning outcomes (Hanifah & Nugroho, 2024; Febriansah et al., 2024). By understanding the importance of

intrinsic motivation and how to enhance it, organizations can create a more productive and satisfying work environment for their employees (Kurniawan & Nurohmah, 2022).

Table Teacher Performance at MTs Negeri 20 East Jakarta (2022-2024)

Year	Performance Indicators	Ideal Performance (Target)	Actual Performance	Performance Gap	Factors Causing the Gap	Improvement Efforts Made	Improvement Indicator
2022	1. Teacher Presence	95%	85%	-10%	- Health problems - High workload	- Strengthening attendance policies - Full attendance incentives	- Increase teacher attendance rate to 95%.
	2. Teaching Quality (Student Assessment)	80% (Good)	72%	-8%	- Lack of training in the latest teaching methodologies - Less interactive teaching methods	- Training in active teaching methods - Technology-based learning	- Increase student assessment results to at least 80%.
2023	1. Use of Technology in Learning	85% (Very good)	78%	-7%	- Lack of technological devices - Limited technological training for teachers	- Improvement of technology devices - Training in learning technology	- Increase technology usage capability by up to 85%.
	2. Participation in Professional Training	100%	90%	-10%	- Limited training time - Limited teacher motivation and participation	- Flexible training scheduling - Increase training incentives	- Increase teacher participation in training to 100%.

2024	1. Performance in School Exams (Teacher Evaluation)	90%	82%	-8%	- Lack of preparation for exams - Limited time for guidance	- Intensive mentoring for teachers before the exam - Clearer evaluation system	- Improved performance in evaluation exams by up to 90%.
	2. Creativity in Teaching	80% (Very Creative)	75%	-5%	- Limited preparation time - Lack of creative teaching materials	- Providing more preparation time - Sharing best practices between teachers	- Increase teaching creativity by up to 80%.
	3. Student Satisfaction with Teaching	85% (Very Satisfied)	77%	-8%	- Lack of personal approach to students - Insufficient variety of teaching methods	- Improved personal approach and variety of teaching methods	- Increase student satisfaction up to 85%.

An analysis of the teacher performance gap at MTs Negeri 20 East Jakarta during the 2022–2024 period revealed several key aspects that still need improvement, such as teacher attendance, teaching quality, technology use, professional training participation, evaluation performance, teaching creativity, and student satisfaction. Each aspect showed a gap between targets and actual achievement, with the gap ranging from 5% to 10%. The main contributing factors include workload, limited facilities, lack of training, and a minimal personal approach to teaching. Recommended improvements include developing supportive policies, providing incentives, intensive training, providing technology, and increasing collaboration among teachers to encourage overall performance improvement.

2. Research Methods

This chapter will describe the direction and method of conducting research, including the type of research, population and sample, data sources and types, data collection methods, variables and indicators, and data analysis techniques. The research used an explanatory study, which provides evidence of the influence of innovative behavior through professional capabilities and employee experience. This research is an explanatory research. According to Sugiyono (2013), explanatory research is research that explains the position of the variables studied and the relationship between them through testing formulated hypotheses. The approach used in this research is a quantitative approach, namely a quantitative method

because the research data is in the form of numbers and the analysis uses statistics. The type of data used in this study is primary data. Primary data is data obtained from primary sources, either from individuals, such as questionnaires completed by researchers (Umar, 2005). In this study, the data source came from questionnaires administered to 100 respondents, and the resulting statements were then analyzed. The data collection method used was a questionnaire. A questionnaire is a method of collecting data by providing written questions to be answered by respondents, allowing researchers to obtain field/empirical data to solve research problems and test established hypotheses (Supardi, 2005). The data in this study are divided into two categories: descriptive and quantitative.

3. Results and Discussion

The respondents of this study were 49 teacher at State Islamic Junior High School (Mts) 20 East Jakarta. This research was conducted by providing questionnaires indirectly via Google Forms to teacher at State Islamic Junior High School (Mts) 20 East Jakarta. It took approximately one month to collect 100 percent of the questionnaires. Questionnaires were distributed to 49 respondents. All 49 (100 percent) of the questionnaires met the criteria, which allowed for further testing and analysis. The return rate for questionnaires, which could be further processed, is presented in Table.

Table Results of Primary Data Collection

Criteria	Amount	Presentation
Questionnaires distributed	49	
Number of questionnaires not returned	0	0%
Number of questionnaires that do not meet the criteria	0	0%
Number of questionnaires that meet the criteria	49	100%
Spread		
Questionnaire		
teacher at State Islamic Junior High School (Mts) 20 East Jakarta.	49	100%

Source : Processed primary data, 2025

Table shows that 49 questionnaires were distributed. All questionnaires met the criteria for respondents with a 100 percent return rate. The demographics of respondents in this study include: gender, age, length of service, group/position and last education distribution of the questionnaire. Demographic tabulation is presented in table.

Table. Respondent Demographics

Category	Information	Total	Percentage (%)
Number of Samples		49	100.0
Gender	Man	26	53.1
	Woman	23	46.9
Age	≤30 years	6	12.2
	31–40 years	4	8.2
	41–50 years	18	36.7

	Over 50 years old	21	42.9
Length of work	≤5 years	9	18.4
	6–10 years	3	6.1
	11–20 years	13	26.5
	21–30 years	19	38.8
	>30 years	3	6.1
Education	S1	29	59.2
	S2	9	18.4
	SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	7	14.3
	Vocational School	2	4.1
	D3	1	2.0
	JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	1	2.0

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

Based on the distribution of respondent data, the number of participants in this study was 49 people (100%). In terms of gender, respondents were dominated by men, with 26 people (53.1%), while women numbered 23 people (46.9%). This composition shows that the difference in the number of male and female respondents is relatively balanced, although there are slightly more men. Viewed from the age group, most respondents were in the age range above 50 years, namely 21 people (42.9%), and in the 41-50 years range, there were 18 people (36.7%). Meanwhile, respondents aged 31-40 years only numbered 4 people (8.2%), and those aged ≤30 years were 6 people (12.2%). This illustrates that the majority of respondents were in the mature to senior age, who generally have extensive work experience.

In terms of length of service, the 21–30 year category dominated with 19 people (38.8%), followed by 11–20 years of service with 13 people (26.5%). Nine people (18.4%) had a work period of ≤5 years, three people (6.1%) had a work period of 6–10 years, and three people (6.1%) had more than 30 years. This finding indicates that most respondents have long work periods and therefore have a good understanding of work culture and job demands. In terms of their last education, the majority of respondents had a Bachelor's degree (29 people (59.2%)), followed by a Master's degree (9 people (18.4%)), a High School (7 people (14.3%)), a Vocational High School (2 people (4.1%)), and a Diploma (D3) and Junior High School (1 person each) (2.0%). This condition indicates that the majority of respondents have a higher educational background that has the potential to support their performance in the workplace.

Overall, the profile of respondents in this study reflects a predominance of highly educated, mature, and long-tenured workers. This suggests that respondents' perceptions and answers are likely influenced by extensive work experience and a deep understanding of their duties and responsibilities.

According to Ferdinand (2009), to find out the number of question items for each variable, the frequency and intensity of the condition of each variable can be determined by multiplying the highest score and then dividing it by 5 categories.

1.00 – 2.29 = Low

2.30 – 3.59 = Moderate

3.60 – 5.00 = High

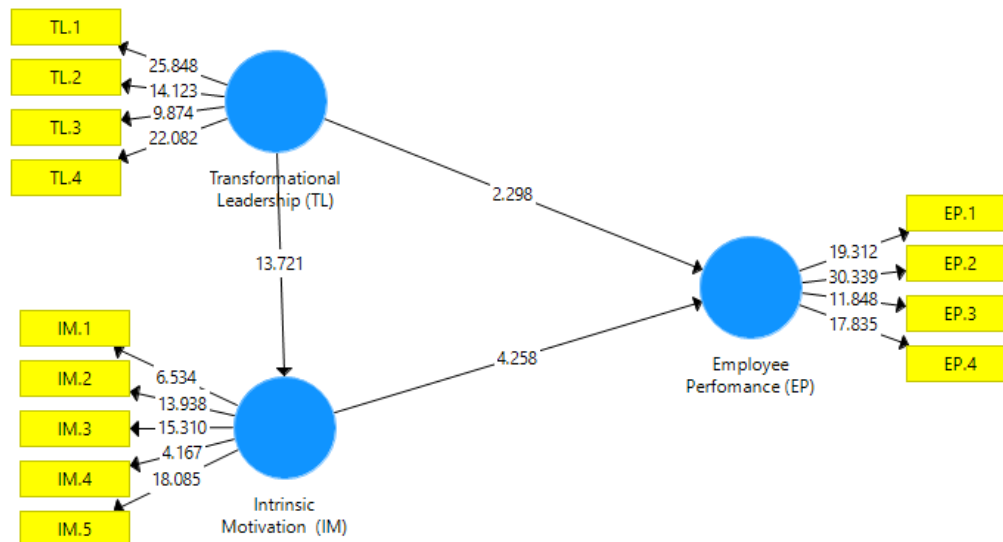


Figure Structural Model Testing

This study tested three hypotheses in the Inner Model. The causal relationships developed in the model were tested with the null hypothesis stating that the regression coefficients in each relationship were equal to zero using the t-test as in regression analysis. To determine whether a hypothesis is accepted or rejected, it is done by observing the positive value and significance between constructs, the t-value and the p-value. In this method, the measurement estimate and standard error are no longer calculated with statistical assumptions, but are based on empirical observation. Using the bootstrapping method in this study, the hypothesis is said to be accepted if the significance value of the t-value > 1.96 and p-value < 0.05, so it can be said that H_a is accepted and H_o is rejected and vice versa.

The following are the hypotheses proposed in this study:

1) H_o : There is no positive influence between transformational leadership and employee performance.

H_1 : There is a positive influence between transformational leadership and employee performance.

2) H_o : There is no positive influence between transformational leadership on intrinsic motivation

H_2 : There is a positive influence between transformational leadership on intrinsic motivation.

3) Ho: There is no positive influence between intrinsic motivation and employee performance.

H3: There is a positive influence between intrinsic motivation and employee performance.

Table Hypothesis Test Results

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Intrinsic Motivation (IM) -> Employee Performance (EP)	0.606	0.616	0.142	4,258	0,000
Transformational Leadership (TL) -> Employee Performance (EP)	0.345	0.324	0.150	2,298	0.022
Transformational Leadership (TL) -> Intrinsic Motivation (IM)	0.908	0.889	0.066	13,721	0,000

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

The results of the inner test in table show three significant relationship paths. $\alpha = 0.05$. Based on the signs on the coefficients and the formative relationship to the variables, it can be interpreted in the PLS model as follows:

Table Summary of Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis	Track	Hypothesis	Results	Conclusion
H1	Transformational leadership on employee performance	Significant positive	Significant positive	Accepted
H2	Transformational leadership towards intrinsic motivation	Significant positive	Significant positive	Accepted
H3	Intrinsic motivation on employee performance	Significant positive	Significant positive	Accepted

Source :Processed data, 2025

a. Hypothesis Test Results 1

The results of the hypothesis testing show that the transformational leadership variable has a significant positive effect on employee performance with a path coefficient (O) of 0.345 with a t-statistic value of 2.298 with a significance level of 0.022, which means it is smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore, H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted, thus concluding that transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. Therefore, the first hypothesis, which states that there is a positive influence between transformational leadership and employee performance, is accepted.

b. Hypothesis Test Results 2

The results of the hypothesis testing show that the transformational leadership variable has a significant positive effect on intrinsic motivation with a path coefficient (O) of 0.908 with a t-statistic value of 13.721 with a significance level of 0.000, which means it is smaller than $\alpha =$

0.05. Therefore, H0 is rejected and H2 is accepted, thus concluding that transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. Therefore, the second hypothesis, which states that there is a positive influence between transformational leadership and employee performance, is accepted.

c. Hypothesis Test Results 3

The results of the hypothesis testing show that the Intrinsic motivation variable has a significant positive effect on employee performance with a path coefficient (O) of 0.606 with a t-statistic value of 4.258 with a significance level of 0.000, which means it is smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore, H0 is rejected and H3 is accepted, thus concluding that intrinsic motivation has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. Therefore, the third hypothesis, which states that there is a positive influence between intrinsic motivation and employee performance, is accepted.

Discussion of Research Results:

1) *Transformational leadership* influence on Employee Performance

Based on the results of the first hypothesis testing in this study, transformational leadership has a positive influence on employee performance. This is reinforced by the fact that higher levels of transformational leadership will increase employee performance. This is evidenced by the positive and significant value of the path coefficient. This positive coefficient indicates that higher levels of transformational leadership will increase employee performance.

Transformational leadership focuses on developing individual potential and providing clear direction and inspiring motivation, which in turn can improve employee performance. According to research by Noor and Malik (2023), transformational leadership can improve employee performance by encouraging them to innovate and contribute maximally to achieving organizational goals.

Research by Lee and Han (2023) also supports that transformational leadership can create an atmosphere that motivates employees to achieve higher performance by clarifying organizational goals and providing the necessary support to overcome obstacles in their work. This shows that transformational leadership plays a significant role in driving improved employee performance. Transformational leadership style can influence employee performance by providing clear direction and supporting individual development. Research by Noor & Malik (2023) found that transformational leadership is positively related to improved employee performance, because it provides them with challenges and higher goals, which encourages them to work harder and more efficiently.

2) Influence *Transformational Leadership* towards Intrinsic Motivation

Based on the results of testing the second hypothesis in this study, transformational leadership has a positive influence on intrinsic motivation. This is reinforced by the fact that

higher levels of transformational leadership, increased intrinsic motivation. This is evidenced by the positive and significant value of the path coefficient. This positive coefficient indicates that higher levels of transformational leadership, increased intrinsic motivation.

According to Sutrisno et al. (2023), transformational leadership plays a role in increasing employee intrinsic motivation through various strategies, such as providing challenges, self-development, and recognition for achievements. Transformational leadership helps employees feel valued and internally motivated, which ultimately contributes to a higher sense of accomplishment and satisfaction in their work (Sutrisno et al., 2023). This is further supported by research by Chen et al. (2024), which found that transformational leaders can create a supportive psychological climate, which in turn increases employees' intrinsic motivation to contribute more to organizational goals.

3) Influence *Intrinsic Motivation* on employee performance

Based on the results of testing the third hypothesis in this study, intrinsic motivation has a positive influence on employee performance. This is reinforced by the fact that higher intrinsic motivation leads to higher employee performance. This is evidenced by the positive and significant value of the path coefficient. This positive coefficient indicates that higher intrinsic motivation leads to higher employee performance.

Research by Sari et al. (2023) shows that intrinsic motivation is directly related to performance, where employees who are motivated by personal satisfaction in their work will tend to produce better results (Sari et al., 2023).

Based on research by Chen and colleagues (2024), intrinsic motivation not only increases employee engagement but also improves the quality of their work results, because they are more focused on achieving tasks efficiently and effectively, without being too influenced by external rewards (Chen et al., 2024).

4. Conclusion

Transformational leadership significantly and positively impacts employee performance. Leaders who inspire, provide clear direction, and support individual development can improve employee motivation and performance. These findings are supported by several studies, such as Noor & Malik (2023) and Lee & Han (2023), which show that this leadership style encourages innovation and higher performance. Transformational leadership has also been shown to increase employee intrinsic motivation. Transformational leaders are able to create a work environment that supports personal growth and rewards achievement, ultimately increasing employees' internal drive to perform better (Sutrisno et al., 2023; Chen et al., 2024). Intrinsic motivation has a positive and significant impact on employee performance. When employees feel intrinsically motivated by a sense of satisfaction and pride in their work, they tend to work more effectively and efficiently (Sari et al., 2023; Chen et al., 2024). Based on the results of research regarding the influence of transformational leadership and intrinsic motivation on employee performance, the researchers provide the

following suggestions: It is hoped that transformational leadership styles will be consistently implemented, providing inspiration, clear direction, and support for individual development. This has been proven to increase intrinsic motivation and employee performance. Employees are advised to actively utilize support from leaders in developing their potential and maintaining work enthusiasm, so that internal motivation is maintained and has a positive impact on work performance. It is necessary to conduct regular transformational leadership training for managers or supervisors, as well as to develop a performance evaluation system that is not only based on results, but also takes into account aspects of motivation and work processes. It is recommended to expand the scope of variables such as adding other external variables (e.g. job satisfaction, organizational culture, or work engagement) to provide a more comprehensive picture of the factors that influence employee performance.

5. references

- Ahmad, M., & Husnain, M. (2024). The role of workplace environment in enhancing intrinsic motivation: A study on employees in manufacturing industries. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 45(2), 113-128.
- Alharthi, A. (2024). The impact of transformational leadership on organizational performance. *Journal of Business Leadership*, 35(4), 123-145.
- Armansyah, A., Safitri, R., Risnawati, R., dan Basyid, A. (2024). Pengaruh Lingkungan Kerja terhadap Kinerja Karyawan pada PT. Haleyora Power Area Tanjungpinang. *Journal of Innovation Research and Knowledge*, 3(8), 1595-1600.
- As Zahra, A., & Baskoro, H. (2024). Kepemimpinan Transformasional dan Budaya Organisasi Terhadap Kinerja Karyawan dengan Dimediasi Kepuasan Kerja. *Journal of Economics and Business UBS*, 13(1), 1–16.
- Asmike, M., & Sari, A. (2022). Kinerja dan pengaruhnya terhadap tujuan organisasi dalam konteks kepegawaian. *Jurnal Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia*, 12(3), 45-58.
- Aulia, A. A., Aju, I., & Damayanti, N. (2022). The Effect of Reward, Punishment, Internal Communication, and Work Environment on Employee Performance PT. Aira Mitra Media. *World Journal of Business Research and Project Management*, 2(2).
- Avolio, B. J., & Bass, B. M. (2024). Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (5th ed.). Mind Garden.
- Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (2024). Improving organizational effectiveness through transformational leadership. Sage Publications.
- Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (2024). Transformational Leadership and Organizational Culture. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 32(2), 55-70.
- Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2024). Transformational leadership (2nd ed.). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- De Lange, A. H., Taris, T. W., Kompier, M. A., & Houtman, I. L. (2024). *The Effects of Work Environment on Employee Well-Being and Performance*. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 29(1), 45-58.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2024). Self-determination theory: A macrotheory of human motivation, development, and health. *Canadian Psychology*, 65(3), 181-188.
- Enny, R. (2019). Penilaian kinerja pegawai sebagai dasar pemberian reward dan pengembangan karir. *Jurnal Administrasi Publik*, 8(2), 123-135.
- Esthi, R. B. (2021). Effect of compensation, work environment and communication on employee performance in UD. Djaya Listrik and Material. *Forum Ekonomi*, 23(1), 145-154.
- Febriansah, A., Syifa'ul Qolbi, M., Soepriyanto, Y., & Purnomo, P. (2024). Efek Motivasi Intrinsik dari Strategi Elemen Gamifikasi Pembelajaran. *EDUSAINTEK: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sains dan Teknologi*, 11(3).
- Fikri, M. A. A., Asbari, M., Hutagalung, D., Amri, L. H. A., & Novitasari, D. (2021). Quo Vadis Motivasi Intrinsik Pegawai: Peran Strategis Kepemimpinan Transformasional dan Kepuasan Kerja. *Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, 3(6), 4025-4040.
- Gagné, M., & Deci, E. L. (2024). Self-determination theory and work motivation. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 45(5), 642-660.
- Garg, P., & Singla, P. (2024). Impact of Work Environment on Employee Performance: A Review of Literature. *International Journal of Business Studies*, 20(4), 123-135.
- George, J. M., & Jones, G. R. (2024). *Understanding and Managing Organizational Behavior*. Pearson Education.
- Goleman, D. (2024). *Emotional Intelligence and the Workplace*. Harvard Business Review Press.
- Hanifah, R. A., & Nugroho, S. P. (2024). Peran Motivasi Intrinsik dan Keterlibatan Kerja yang Memediasi Lingkungan Kerja terhadap Kinerja Karyawan. *Jurnal Ekonomika: Manajemen, Akuntansi, dan Perbankan Syari'ah*, 13(2), 66-84.
- Heruwanto, E., Suryani, E., & Hidayati, N. (2020). Pengaruh Lingkungan Kerja, Kepuasan Kerja, dan Beban Kerja Terhadap Kinerja Pegawai. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik*, 24(1), 45-58.
- Jiang, Y., & Wu, L. (2024). The effect of transformational leadership on organizational culture and employee performance. *Journal of Management Studies*, 47(6), 209-225.
- Jintar, C. (2022). Pengaruh Kepemimpinan Transformasional, Transaksional dan Motivasi Kerja Terhadap Kinerja Karyawan. *Jurnal Inovasi Penelitian*, 3(1), 4727-4730.
- Johnson, P., & Lee, K. (2024). Digital transformation and the role of transformational leadership in achieving organizational goals. *Journal of Digital Business*, 29(3), 189-205.