



## The Role of Transformational Leadership in Enhancing Employee Creativity and Performance: A Social Cognitive Theory Perspective

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### Abstract:

The competitiveness of domestic technology is currently very high over time, which makes companies competitive with each other in increasing digitalization in the organization. Transformational leadership is crucial for companies to enhance employee creativity, especially for state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in the electric energy sector. The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of (1) Transformational leadership on employee creativity, (2) Transformational leadership on employee performance, and (3) Employee creativity on employee performance. The sampling technique used Proportional Random Sampling. The sample used was permanent employees of a state-owned enterprise in the electric energy sector located in Malang City, Indonesia, with 89 employees. Data were obtained from questionnaires. Data analysis techniques using descriptive statistical analysis and Structural Equation Modeling using the SmartPLS. The results showed that there was a significant effect of transformational leadership on employee creativity while transformational leadership on employee performance showed no significant effect. Besides that, employee creativity on employee performance showed a significant effect.

**Keywords:** Employee Creativity; Employee Performance; Transformational Leadership

### 1. Introduction

Human Resource Management (HRM) is critical in enhancing employee performance, particularly within state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in the electric energy sector. Effective HRM practices ensure that employees are well-trained, motivated, and aligned with organizational goals, thereby boosting overall performance. According to Albrecht et al. (2015), HRM practices that prioritize employee engagement and development significantly contribute to organizational success by fostering a conducive environment for employee creativity and productivity. Similarly, strategic HRM approaches, such as comprehensive training programs and performance management systems, have been shown to enhance employees' job satisfaction and commitment, leading to improved performance outcomes (Ferdousi & Abedin, 2023). By integrating these HRM practices, SOEs in the electric energy sector can navigate the challenges of a competitive landscape and achieve sustainable growth.

In the context of increasing digitalization, companies face the challenge of aligning employee tasks with technological advancements to foster creativity and innovation. While research highlights the necessity for a digitally skilled workforce, it often overlooks the importance of creativity in achieving organizational success (Kim, 2019). Creativity enables organizations to devise new work methods inspired by digital transitions (Hurlock, 1978). It involves the ability to generate novel ideas and solutions, crucial for maintaining organizational growth and addressing technological changes. Therefore, fostering an environment that supports employee creativity is vital for state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in the electric energy sector, where human resources play a pivotal role in service quality and innovation.

Transformational leadership, which focuses on inspiring and motivating team members to achieve long-term goals, is essential for nurturing employee creativity (Carlson & Perrewé, 1995). This leadership style emphasizes the development of individual potential and the creation of positive change. Transformational leaders also inspire followers to exceed personal interests for a greater organizational vision, enhancing creativity and motivation (Harsoyo & Alim, 2022). However, studies present mixed results regarding the impact of transformational leadership on creativity and performance, highlighting a research gap (Sari, 2019; Afza et al., 2022).

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This study aims to address this gap by investigating the influence of transformational leadership on employee creativity and performance. By focusing on these variables, the research seeks to provide insights and recommendations for fostering creativity and improving performance within the organization. The novelty of this study lies in its emphasis on individual-level creativity within the organizational context, a relatively unexplored area in existing literature. This research intends to offer practical implications for enhancing transformational leadership practices to support creativity and performance in the workplace.

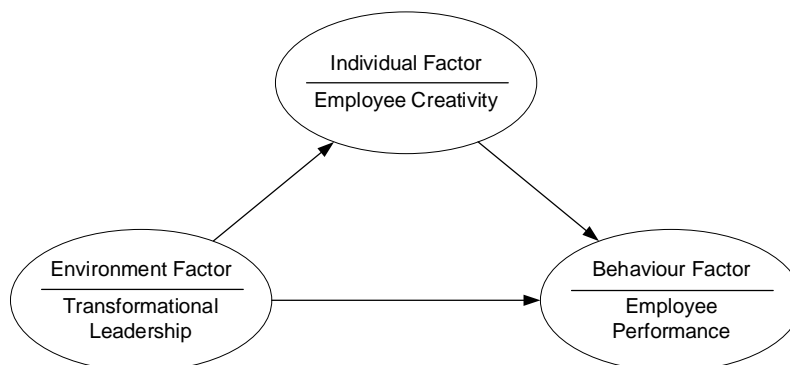
## 2. Literature Review

### Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)

Bandura (1986) posited that Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) asserts that learning occurs within a social context through dynamic and reciprocal interactions among individuals, their environment, and their behaviour. This theory emphasizes social influences and both external and internal social reinforcement. It considers how individuals acquire and maintain behaviour while taking into account the social environment in which these behaviours are performed. The social cognitive theory aims to explain how people regulate their behaviour through control and reinforcement to achieve goal-directed behaviour that can be sustained over time.

Based on the SCT perspective, human behaviour is seen as a component that interacts with environmental situational factors and personal factors, including individual affect or emotion and cognition (Abdullah, 2019). In this study, transformational leadership is considered an environmental factor, while employee creativity is viewed as an individual factor, and employee performance is regarded as a behavioural factor. The research model based on social cognitive theory is illustrated in Figure 1. The arrows in the figure are unidirectional, as this study does not examine reciprocal aspects but instead employs a cross-sectional approach.

**Figure 1. Research Model Based on Social Cognitive Theory**



### Employee Performance

According to Gibson et al. (2006), performance theory, known as Action Theory, focuses on the interaction between individuals and their environment within the context of performance. This theory posits that performance results from an individual's perception of the tasks to be performed and the environment in which these tasks are carried out. An individual's perception of both the task and the environment significantly influences how they act and achieve effective performance. The analysis includes several factors affecting individual behaviour and performance, namely individual factors, psychological factors, and organizational factors. Each individual's performance contributes to the overall performance of the organization. Therefore, a key concern for future organizations is the extent to which they can enhance individual performance to cumulatively stimulate organizational performance.

Bernardin & Joyce (1998) define employee performance as "the record of outcomes produced on a specified job function or activity during a specified period," meaning that employee performance is the result of their work over a certain period. The outcomes of the work refer to the tasks and responsibilities assigned to each employee. In the context of this study, employee performance is conceptualized as the outcomes generated by individuals within specified job functions over a designated period, influenced by their perception of tasks and the environment. Enhancing individual performance can lead to cumulative improvements in organizational performance by positively shaping these perceptions and fostering a conducive environment for effective task execution.

### **Transformational Leadership**

Bass et al. (2003) state that transformational leadership involves leaders transforming their followers from lower levels of need to higher levels within the hierarchy of needs. Transformational leadership, according to Yukl (1999), is characterized by followers feeling trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect for their leader, which motivates them to perform beyond their initial expectations. This is achieved through leaders who (1) make followers aware of the importance of task outcomes; (2) persuade them to prioritize team or organizational interests over their own; and (3) elevate their needs to higher levels. In contrast, transactional leadership is less likely to inspire enthusiasm and commitment toward task goals.

Lo et al. (2020) describe transformational leaders as those who aspire to change ideas, techniques, and goals to achieve better results and foster greater employee interest within the organization. Transformational leadership is considered a managerial approach to fulfilling the vision and mission of change, aiming to meet or exceed the needs and expectations of the organization. Shin & Zhou (2003) argue that transformational leadership significantly influences employee creativity and is effective in identifying new opportunities and developing competencies within the organization. Transformational leadership is a dynamic leadership approach where leaders elevate their followers from basic needs to higher aspirations within the hierarchy of needs, fostering an environment of trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect. By making followers aware of the significance of their tasks, persuading them to prioritize collective goals, and addressing their higher-order needs, transformational leaders inspire exceptional performance, drive innovation, and align employee efforts with the organization's vision and mission.

The above discussion is supported by Bushra & Usman (2011), who state that transformational leadership can enhance employees' self-confidence and values, thereby increasing their creativity beyond expectations. Shafi et al. (2019) argue that through individualized consideration, leaders attend to the needs of each employee. Based on this, the following hypothesis is formed:

H1: Transformational leadership has a significant impact on employee creativity.

According to Harms & Crede (as cited in Lo et al., 2020), a successful transformational leader "acts as a mentor to subordinates by encouraging learning, achievement, and individual development." Transformational leaders typically focus on cooperation and building relationships. The success of transformational leadership is a significant factor influencing employee performance. This theoretical foundation is supported by Lo et al. (2020), who state that transformational leadership has been proven effective in creating a positive environment, which ultimately enhances employee commitment and performance. It can be assumed that employee performance depends on leaders who decide, direct, and supervise their subordinates. Thus, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H2: Transformational Leadership has a significant impact on Employee Performance.

### **Employee Creativity**

According to Hassan et al. (2013), employee creativity is a personal characteristic where creative processes and responses can manifest as products, ideas, or procedures that meet two criteria: (1) they must be novel or original, and (2) they must be potentially relevant or useful to the organization. Guilford (1984) defines employee creativity as the production of diverse group ideas. Employee creativity involves the process of generating new and beneficial ideas and perspectives by individuals or groups working together to address work-related problems in line with organizational goals and vision. Employee creativity is the generation of new ideas to enhance performance and improve efficiency and effectiveness (Gong et al., 2009). Organizations that demonstrate creativity can achieve a competitive advantage and better performance. Creativity significantly impacts employee performance, as organizations need creative competition, especially in fostering innovation.

As in this study, employee creativity is defined as the ability to generate novel and original ideas, products, or procedures that are beneficial and relevant to the organization. It encompasses the production of diverse ideas by individuals or groups, aiming to solve work-related problems and align with the organization's goals and vision. Creativity is crucial for enhancing performance, efficiency, and effectiveness, providing organizations with a competitive edge and fostering innovation to drive overall performance improvement.

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Lee & Tan (2012) argue that psychological factors significantly contribute to employee creativity and performance. Additionally, organizational support and an innovative climate influence employee creativity and performance. In conclusion, high employee performance positively affects employee well-being. Employee well-being can mediate the relationship between high performance and employee creativity. Thus, the following hypothesis is formed:

H3: Employee Creativity has a significant impact on Employee Performance.

**3. Research Method**

**Data Collection**

The research was conducted at A state-owned enterprise operating in the electric energy sector in Malang City, Indonesia. This location was chosen because as a state-owned enterprise, the company operates in a highly dynamic environment and has experienced a decline in revenue during the pandemic, necessitating innovation to restore performance levels. The company has a total of 115 permanent employees. Using the Slovin formula, the sample size for this study was determined to be 89 employees. The sampling technique employed in this research is Proportional Random Sampling. Data was collected using a research questionnaire and subsequently analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

**Measurement**

Transformational Leadership refers to the organizational condition where learning is applied to address changes by providing facilities related to the success of those changes. The measurement of the Transformational Leadership variable is structured with indicators such as Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration (Lo et al., 2020). Meanwhile, the Employee Creativity variable is defined as the effort to create something new and useful, measured using indicators such as Fluency, Flexibility, Originality, and Elaboration (Sosik et al., 1998). The Employee Performance variable, defined as the ability of employees to fulfill the tasks assigned by the company, is measured using two indicators: the fulfillment of performance requirements and responsibilities and the completion of tasks (Williams & Anderson, 1991).

**4. Results and Discussion**

**Respondent Demography**

Based on the collected questionnaires, it was found that male respondents slightly outnumbered female respondents, with 47 respondents or 52.8%. Furthermore, the respondents were predominantly aged between 21 and 30 years, totaling 41 respondents or 45.8%. This indicates that most employees are at a productive age, enabling them to perform their tasks effectively and efficiently. Regarding their highest level of education, the majority of respondents held a bachelor's degree (S1), accounting for 82% or 73 respondents. This shows that the employees possess the necessary competencies to fulfill the tasks and responsibilities assigned by the company.

**Table 1. Respondent Demography**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	47	52,8%
Female	42	47,2%
<b>Age</b>		
<20 Years	3	3,3%
21-30 Years	41	45,8%
31-50 Years	37	42,1%
>50 Years	8	8,8%
<b>Degree</b>		
Diploma	15	16,9%
Bachelor	73	82%
Master	1	1,1%

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

**Measurement Model**

In assessing the measurement model, researchers can investigate the relationships between latent variables and their respective indicators, as Hair et al. (2010) described. The assessment of the Outer Model, utilizing SmartPLS for data analysis, adheres to four essential criteria: Outer Loading, Average Variance Extracted, Cronbach's Alpha, and Composite Reliability. The subsequent table presents the results of the Outer Model evaluation, emphasizing Convergent Validity, Construct Validity, Cronbach's Alpha, and Composite Reliability. The model is considered valid if it has an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) > 0.50, and it is considered reliable if it has Composite Reliability > 0.70 and Cronbach's Alpha > 0.60 (Hair & Alamer, 2022).

**Measurement (Outer) Model**

In assessing the measurement model, researchers can investigate the relationships between latent variables and their respective indicators, as Hair et al. (2010) described. The assessment of the Outer Model, utilizing SmartPLS for data analysis, adheres to two essential criteria: Outer Loading and Cronbach's Alpha. The subsequent table presents the results of the Outer Model evaluation, emphasizing Convergent Validity and Cronbach's Alpha. The model is considered valid if it has a Correlation > 0.30, and it is considered reliable if it has Cronbach's Alpha > 0.60 (Hair & Alamer, 2022).

**Table 2. Outer Model Results**

Variabel	Indikator	Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha	
Transformational Leadership	Idealized Influence	0.874	0.956	
		0.856		
		0.844		
	Inspirational Motivation	0.808		
		0.867		
	Intellectual Stimulation	0.846		
		0.846		
		0.653		
Individualized Consideration		0.815		
		0.853		
		0.764		
Employee Creativity	Fluency	0.823	0.905	
		0.715		
	Flexibility	0.758		
		0.738		
		0.748		
	Originality	0.708		
		0.695		
	Elaboration			0.640
0.733				
0.784				
Employee Performance	Fulfillment of performance and responsibility requirements	0.817	0.936	
		0.865		
		0.873		
	Task completion			0.832
				0.887
				0.762
				0.849
				0.844

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

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Based on the table, all items used are deemed valid as they have a correlation value of 0.3 or higher. Additionally, the Cronbach's alpha values for each variable exceed 0.6, indicating reliability. Therefore, the model is considered valid and reliable for repeated testing.

**Structural (Inner) Model**

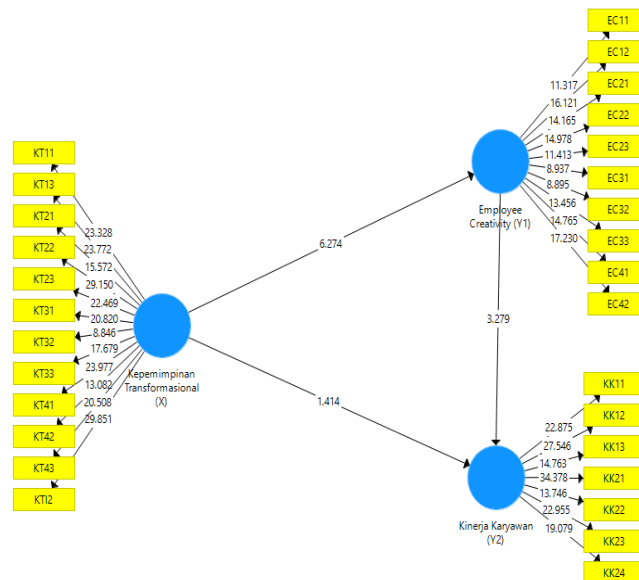
Based on the data analysis technique used, namely Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Partial Least Square (PLS) approach, this study tests the structural model using the bootstrapping procedure. In this research, bootstrapping is utilized for analysis through SmartPLS software. The results of the hypothesis testing can be seen in Table 3 and Figure 2.

**Table 3.** Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Direct Effect		Path Coefficient	P Value	Decision	
H1	Transformational Leadership	→	Employee Creativity	0.590	<0.001	Supported
H2	Transformational Leadership	→	Employee Performance	0.188	0.148	Not Supported
H3	Employee Creativity	→	Employee Performance	0.443	<0.001	Supported

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

**Figure 2.** Structural Model



Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

Based on Table 3, the results of the hypothesis testing in this study are explained as follows:

**H1: Transformational Leadership has a significant effect on Employee Creativity.**

According to the test results, the variable for H1 shows an Original Sample value of 0.590, a P-value of 0.000, and a T-statistic of 6.199. These results indicate that the P-values are less than 0.05 and the T-statistic is greater than 1.96. Therefore, the first hypothesis is accepted, meaning that the transformational leadership variable has a significant effect on employee creativity.

**H2: Transformational Leadership does not have a significant effect on Employee Performance.**

Based on the test results, it is found that the variable for H2 has an Original Sample value of 0.188, P Values of 0.148, and a T statistic of 1.447. These results indicate that the P Values are greater than 0.05 and the T statistic



is less than 1.96. Therefore, the second hypothesis cannot be accepted, meaning that the transformational leadership variable has an effect, but it is not significant on employee performance.

### **H3: Employee Creativity Significantly has a significant effect on Employee Performance.**

Based on the test results, it is found that the variable for H3 has an Original Sample value of 0.443, P Values of 0.001, and a T statistic of 3.399. These results indicate that the P Values are less than 0.05 and the T statistic is greater than 1.96. Therefore, the third hypothesis is accepted, meaning that the employee creativity variable has a significant effect on employee performance.

## **Discussion**

This study aims to examine the influence of transformational leadership on employee creativity and performance. The results indicate that transformational leadership has a significantly positive effect on employee creativity. However, while transformational leadership has a positive effect on employee performance, it is not statistically significant. On the other hand, employee creativity has a significantly positive impact on employee performance. The analysis of these results is presented below.

The analysis reveals a significant positive influence of transformational leadership on employee creativity at this company. This implies that higher levels of transformational leadership correlate with higher employee creativity. Thus, transformational leadership remains a crucial factor in fostering employee creativity, aiding the organization in continuous innovation and development.

This finding aligns with the research conducted by Teymournejad & Elghaei (2017), which indicates that transformational leadership has a significantly positive impact on employee creativity. Similarly, Shafi et al. (2019) found that transformational leadership significantly enhances employee creativity. The indicators used in this study to measure transformational leadership can serve as a reference for the company in assessing transformational leadership within the company. According to Patrick Lo et al. (2020), transformational leadership embodies many valuable characteristics necessary for transforming the work environment from the individual level to the organizational level. Overall, transformational leadership motivates and empowers employees to develop ideas and make significant contributions to the company's success.

Subsequently, the analysis results indicate that there is a positive but not significant influence of transformational leadership on employee performance at this office. This finding suggests that transformational leadership within the company does not significantly enhance the performance of the employees. This is consistent with the study by Insani et al., which found that while transformational leadership was rated as moderate, it did not significantly impact employee performance. The reason is attributed to the leaders' low efficacy in conveying the company's vision and mission and their lack of trust in their followers. Similarly, Novitasari & Asbari (2020) concluded that transformational leadership does not significantly influence employee performance.

These findings contrast with those of Afza et al. (2022), who found that transformational leaders could motivate subordinates to perform better by instilling trust and confidence, thereby improving employee performance. Additionally, Rivai (2020) noted that transformational leadership has a significantly positive impact on employee performance. Although this study shows that transformational leadership does not significantly influence employee performance, it suggests that transformational leadership can impact performance through employee creativity. Leaders who exhibit idealism, and provide inspiring motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration can enhance employee creativity, which in turn can improve performance.

The final findings show a significantly positive influence of employee creativity on the performance of this company. This indicates that the higher the employee creativity, the higher their performance. Thus, employee creativity remains a critical factor in performance as it can offer solutions or generate new ideas for the company. This aligns with the research by Sudjijana et al. (2020) and Ismail et al. (2019), both of which concluded that employee creativity significantly and positively impacts performance, suggesting that the higher the employee creativity, the better their performance.

## **4. Conclusion and Suggestion**

The study conducted at a state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in the electric energy sector confirms the significant influence of one key variable on another, thereby contributing to our understanding of organizational dynamics. Specifically,

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the findings support the assertion that certain aspects of leadership positively affect employee creativity. However, another hypothesized relationship regarding the influence of the same leadership aspect on employee performance did not demonstrate statistical significance. Additionally, the study revealed that employee creativity significantly impacts employee performance. These insights underscore the nuanced relationships within organizational settings, highlighting the importance of fostering creative environments to enhance overall workforce effectiveness.

Future research endeavours should explore additional factors that could potentially moderate or mediate the relationships observed in this study. Investigating contextual variables such as organizational culture, industry type, or specific leadership behaviours could offer deeper insights into the dynamics between leadership, creativity, and employee performance. Moreover, longitudinal studies could provide a clearer picture of how these relationships evolve within dynamic organizational contexts. Furthermore, incorporating qualitative methods alongside quantitative analyses may offer richer explanations and interpretations of the observed statistical relationships, thus enhancing the robustness and applicability of findings in practical organizational settings.

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