



ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR AND EMPLOYEE CREATIVITY AT THE OFFICE OF COOPERATIVES AND SMES, SOUTHEAST SULAWESI PROVINCE

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<p>Info Article</p> <p>Received : 10 Februari 2025</p> <p>Revised : 21 Maret 2025</p> <p>Accepted : 09 April 2025</p> <p>Publication : 30 April 2025</p> <hr/> <p>Keywords: <i>Transformational Leadership Behavior and Employee Creativity</i></p> <p>Kata Kunci: Perilaku Kepemimpinan Transformasional Dan Kreativitas Pegawai</p> <hr/> <p><i>Licensed Under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License</i></p> 	<p>Abstract: <i>This study aims to determine and analyze the relationship between transformational leadership behavior and employee creativity at the Department of Cooperatives and SMEs in Southeast Sulawesi Province. The population in this study were employees at the Department of Cooperatives and SMEs of Southeast Sulawesi Province. The research sample was 61 employees at the Department of Cooperatives and SMEs of Southeast Sulawesi Province. This study uses simple linear regression analysis. The results showed that transformational leadership behavior had a positive and significant relationship with the creativity of employees at the Department of Cooperatives and SMEs in Southeast Sulawesi Province. Changes in increasing transformational leadership behavior are positive and real towards increasing employee creativity at the Department of Cooperatives and SMEs in Southeast Sulawesi Province. This fact shows that good transformational leadership behavior has a contribution in increasing the creativity of employees at the Cooperatives and UMKM Office of Southeast Sulawesi Province.</i></p> <p>Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui dan menganalisis hubungan perilaku kepemimpinan transformasional dengan kreativitas pegawai pada Dinas Koperasi Dan UMKM Provinsi Sulawesi Tenggara. Populasi dalam penelitian ini adalah pegawai pada Dinas Koperasi Dan UMKM Provinsi Sulawesi Tenggara. Sampel penelitian sebanyak 61 pegawai pada Dinas Koperasi Dan UMKM Provinsi Sulawesi Tenggara. Penelitian ini menggunakan analisis regresi linear sederhana. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perilaku kepemimpinan transformasional memiliki hubungan yang positif dan signifikan dengan kreativitas pegawai pada Dinas Koperasi dan UMKM Provinsi Sulawesi Tenggara. Perubahan peningkatan perilaku kepemimpinan transformasional searah positif dan nyata terhadap peningkatan kreativitas pegawai pada Dinas Koperasi dan UMKM Provinsi Sulawesi Tenggara. Fakta ini menunjukkan perilaku kepemimpinan transformasional yang baik memiliki kontribusi dalam peningkatan kreativitas pegawai pada Dinas Koperasi dan UMKM Provinsi Sulawesi Tenggara.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

Human resource management in the organizational context is a key factor in determining an organization's success. Of all the resources available in an organization, whether public or private, human resources are the most important and decisive. Human resources are the only resource that possesses intellect, feelings, desires, skills, abilities, knowledge, motives, energy, and initiative. All these potentials have a significant influence on the organization's efforts to achieve its goals. Essentially, human resource management is a movement that recognizes the importance of the human element as a potential resource that must be developed in such a way that it can make the maximum contribution to the organization and its development.

The human resources of an organization encompass all the people who carry out its activities. Within an organization, there must be leaders who manage these human resources to achieve organizational goals. Mathis and Jackson (2006) define human resource management as the design of formal systems in an organization to ensure the effective and efficient use of human talent to achieve organizational goals. The task of human resource management is to properly manage human factors to achieve a workforce that is satisfied with its work.

In various fields, especially in organizational life, the human factor is the main issue in all activities that take place there. An organization is a consciously coordinated social unit with clearly defined boundaries that continuously works to achieve goals. In the life of a nation, every action taken in any activity is initiated and decided by people who work as employees.

Creativity refers to the ability that characterizes the traits of a creative person. Furthermore, Guilford proposed two ways of thinking: convergent and divergent thinking. Convergent thinking refers to an individual's way of thinking that assumes there is only one correct answer. Meanwhile, divergent thinking is the individual's ability to find various alternative answers to a problem. In relation to creativity, Guilford emphasized that creative people tend to have more divergent thinking styles than convergent ones.

Solso, Maclin & Maclin (2017: 444) define creativity as a cognitive activity that produces a new perspective on a problem and is not limited to pragmatic results (it is not always viewed according to its use). Torrance (in Ali & Asrori, 2016: 41) defines creativity as a process of the ability to identify gaps or obstacles in life, formulate new

hypotheses, communicate the results, and, as much as possible, modify and test the hypotheses that have been formulated. Munandar (2012: 95) defines creativity as a process reflected in fluency, flexibility, and originality in thinking.

According to Musbikin (2016: 6), creativity is the ability to initiate ideas, see new or unexpected relationships, formulate concepts beyond mere memorization, create new answers to existing questions, and generate new questions that need to be answered. Meanwhile, according to Munandar (2014: 25), creativity is essentially a general ability to create something new, to provide new ideas that can be applied in problem-solving, or to see new relationships between elements that previously existed.

One factor that influences employee creativity is transformational leadership. A leader's success depends, among other things, on the leadership techniques used to create situations where the people being led realize what they aspire to. In other words, a leader's effectiveness depends on their ability to manage and apply a leadership model according to the situation and condition of the organization.

Leadership style is the way leaders influence their subordinates, expressed through behavior or personality patterns. There are several leadership styles that are suitable for leading an organization, one of which is transformational leadership.

Transformational leadership is an aspect that influences performance. According to Kreitner and Kinicki in Adrianty (2011: 3), this leadership can be defined as "a social influence process in which the leader seeks voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organizational goals." Aynul in Kurniawan (2019) explains that "leadership is a relationship within a leader that influences others to consciously work in task relationships to achieve desired goals."

Furthermore, according to Burns in Adrianty (2011: 5), transformational leadership essentially emphasizes that a leader must motivate subordinates to fulfill their responsibilities beyond what is expected of them. A transformational leader must be able to define, communicate, and articulate the organization's vision, and subordinates must accept and recognize the leader.

The Office of Cooperatives and SMEs of Southeast Sulawesi Province is an organization that applies transformational leadership. Based on initial information, such as the existence of special authority from the management for employees—where initially, some employees never had the privilege of having power, but when management began in 2018, employees changed their mindset, were empowered,

educated, and trained to have special strengths. However, there are still gaps that need to be improved so that transformational leadership can be further enhanced. Based on initial observations, it was found that a lack of firmness by leaders in disciplining undisciplined employees has led to many employees leaving their jobs, which has impacted the quality, quantity, and performance indicators for achieving organizational goals. Evidence of this is the acknowledgment of several employees who often feel uncomfortable and uneasy when they are expected to be guided and accompanied by their leaders at work. Leadership that is unwilling to discipline misbehaving employees has also caused resentment among other employees who feel jealous of their misbehaving colleagues who do not receive severe punishment from their leaders. This has led other employees to feel dissatisfied and choose to resign for unspecified reasons.

This study aims to examine and analyze the relationship between transformational leadership behavior and employee creativity at the Office of Cooperatives and SMEs of Southeast Sulawesi Province.

METHOD

This research was conducted at the Office of Cooperatives and SMEs of Southeast Sulawesi Province, with the research object focusing on transformational leadership and employee creativity within the institution. The population of this study consisted of all employees working at the Office of Cooperatives and SMEs of Southeast Sulawesi Province, totaling 61 people. The entire population was used as the sample, applying a saturated sampling technique or census involving all 61 employees. The types of data collected in this study included both qualitative and quantitative data, sourced from primary and secondary data. Data were gathered using questionnaires, observation, and documentation. Measurement of the data related to both the independent and dependent variables was carried out using a Likert scale, which, according to Supranto (1997:52), is treated as interval data when processed.

Validity refers to an index indicating the extent to which an instrument truly measures what it is supposed to measure. The validity test employed the product moment correlation coefficient, with the criterion that an instrument is considered valid if the correlation value is equal to or greater than 0.30, as stated by Sugiyono (2010:77). The results of the instrument validity test are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Instrument Validity Test Results at $\alpha = 0.05$

Indicator Item	R Value	Status	Indicator Item	R Value	Status
X _{1.1.1}	,934**	Valid	X _{1.4.2}	,925**	Valid
X _{1.1.2}	,925**	Valid	Y _{1.1.1}	,912**	Valid
X _{1.2.1}	,960**	Valid	Y _{1.1.2}	,903**	Valid
X _{1.2.2}	,929**	Valid	Y _{1.2.1}	,904**	Valid
X _{1.3.1}	,941**	Valid	Y _{1.2.2}	,854**	Valid
X _{1.3.2}	,919**	Valid	Y _{1.3.1}	,868**	Valid
X _{1.4.1}	,941**	Valid	Y _{1.3.2}	,817**	Valid

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that all indicator items measuring each variable produced validity coefficients greater than 0.30 ($r > 0.30$). Therefore, it can be concluded that the data collection instruments used in this study were valid. The reliability test was conducted on the statement items used in this study with the Cronbach’s Alpha method. The acceptable cut-off value for Cronbach’s Alpha is ≥ 0.60 , as stated by Uma Sekaran (2003:103), although this is not considered an absolute standard. The results of the reliability test are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Instrument Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
<i>Transformational Leadership Behavior</i>	0,803	Reliable
<i>Work Creativity</i>	0,811	Reliable

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

Based on Table 2, it can be concluded that all indicator items used to measure each variable produced coefficient values greater than 0.60. Therefore, the instruments used for data collection can be declared reliable at a 95% confidence level or $\alpha = 0.05$. The data analysis methods applied in this study included descriptive statistical analysis and simple linear regression analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Respondent Characteristics

The respondents analyzed in this study numbered 61 people. The research was conducted by distributing research instruments in the form of questionnaires to obtain respondent characteristics grouped by age, gender, education level, and length of service. Based on the results, the percentage of respondents is presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Respondent Characteristics

No	Respondent Characteristics	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Age		
	26–34	28	45.90
	35–42	33	54.10
	Total	61	100.00
2	Gender		
	Male	35	57.38
	Female	26	42.62
	Total	61	100.00
3	Education Level		
	High School	26	42.62
	Diploma	11	18.03
	Bachelor's Degree (S1)	19	31.03
	Master's Degree (S2)	5	8.20
	Total	61	100.00
4	Length of Service		
	1–3 years	11	18.03
	4–6 years	15	24.59
	7–9 years	22	36.07
	10–12 years	13	21.31
	Total	61	100.00

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

Based on Table 3, it can be seen that most employees are aged 35–42 years, totaling 33 people or 54.10%, followed by those aged 26–34 years with 28 people or 45.90% of the 61 employees at the Office of Cooperatives and SMEs of Southeast Sulawesi Province. Referring to the age identification above, it can be concluded that the majority of employees are in the early adulthood category. According to the Ministry of Health (Depkes, 2009), the age range of 26–35 years is considered early adulthood.

The distribution of respondents by gender shows that 35 people or 57.38% are male, while 26 people or 42.62% are female. Thus, the employees are dominated by men, which implies that interpersonal relationships within the organization tend to be more rational, which is a typical characteristic of male-dominated groups.

Regarding education level, it was found that 26 people or 42.62% have a high school education, 19 people or 31.15% hold a Bachelor's degree, 11 people or 18.03% hold a Diploma, and 5 people or 8.20% have a Master's degree. This indicates that, on average, employees have at least a moderate to high level of education, which influences their ability to complete work tasks.

Regarding length of service, 22 employees or 36.07% have worked for 7–9 years, 15 people or 24.59% for 4–6 years, 13 people or 21.31% for 10–12 years, and 11 people

or 18.03% for 1–3 years. This suggests that most employees have substantial tenure, which is expected to contribute positively to their work creativity.

Descriptive Results of Research Variables

Transformational Leadership Variable

Based on the results obtained through the questionnaire, the actual condition for the transformational leadership behavior variable in this study was measured using four indicator items: (1) idealized influence/charisma, (2) individualized consideration, (3) inspirational motivation, and (4) intellectual stimulation. The measurement results for each item are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Respondent Response Distribution on Transformational Leadership Behavior Variable

Item	Frequency of Respondent Answers (F) and Percentage (%)										Average
	SS (5)		S (4)		N (3)		TS (2)		STS (1)		
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
X _{1.1.1}	31	50,82	18	29,51	4	6,56	6	9,84	2	3,28	4,15
X _{1.1.2}	29	47,54	20	32,79	4	6,56	6	9,84	2	3,28	4,11
Average for Idealized Influence											4,13
X _{1.2.1}	31	50,82	18	29,51	4	6,56	6	9,84	2	3,28	4,15
X _{1.2.2}	34	55,74	15	24,59	4	6,56	4	6,56	4	6,56	4,16
Average for Individualized Consideration											4,16
X _{1.3.1}	37	60,66	12	19,67	4	6,56	6	9,84	2	3,28	4,25
X _{1.3.2}	32	52,46	17	27,87	4	6,56	6	9,84	2	3,28	4,16
Average for Inspirational Motivation											4,20
X _{1.4.1}	31	50,82	18	29,51	4	6,56	6	9,84	2	3,28	4,15
X _{1.4.2}	30	49,18	19	31,15	4	6,56	6	9,84	2	3,28	4,13
Average for Intellectual Stimulation											4,14
Average for Transformational Leadership Variable											4,16

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

Table 4 shows that transformational leadership is categorized as good, with an average score of 4.16, indicating that employees feel the leaders apply good transformational leadership. However, some employees still disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating room for improvement. The reasons include employees who feel uncertain about leadership, those who think leaders fail to articulate a motivating vision, do not request ideas, or are not always present when needed. Improvements can be made by increasing employee trust, clarifying leadership responsibilities, supervising work more closely, and maintaining harmonious communication to help employees adapt.

Work Creativity Variable

Based on the research results obtained through the questionnaire, the actual condition for the work creativity variable was measured using three indicator items: (1) high motivation, (2) skills in their field, and (3) creative competence. The responses are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Respondent Response Distribution on Work Creativity Variable

Item	Frequency of Respondent Answers (F) and Percentage (%)										Average
	SS (5)		S (4)		N (3)		TS (2)		STS (1)		
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Y _{1.1.1}	31	50,82	20	32,79	3	4,92	5	8,20	2	3,28	4,20
Y _{1.1.2}	29	47,54	22	36,07	4	6,56	4	6,56	2	3,28	4,18
Average for High Motivation											4,19
Y _{1.2.1}	38	62,30	15	24,59	2	3,28	4	6,56	2	3,28	4,36
Y _{1.2.2}	35	57,38	18	29,51	3	4,92	3	4,92	2	3,28	4,33
Average for Skills in Field											4,34
Y _{1.3.1}	31	50,82	16	26,23	5	8,20	6	9,84	3	4,92	4,08
Y _{1.3.2}	32	52,46	15	24,59	3	4,92	6	9,84	5	8,20	4,03
Average for Creative Competence											4,06
Average for Work Creativity Variable											4,20

Source: *Processed Primary Data, 2025*

Table 5 shows that work creativity is perceived as good, with an average score of 4.20. However, some employees still disagreed or strongly disagreed. The reasons include a lack of motivation, lack of skills matching their field, or inability to generate quick, innovative ideas. Improvements could be made through guidance, mentoring, aligning tasks with employee expertise, and providing training to enhance idea generation.

Analysis and Hypothesis Testing Results

The simple linear regression analysis results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Simple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Independent Variable	Regression Coefficient	Significance	Description
Transformational Leadership Behavior	0.602	0.000	Significant
$\beta_0 = 5.158$ R Square = 0.763 R = 0.874 Significance = 0.000 Standard Error = 2.872			N = 61 $\alpha = 0,05$

Source: *Processed Primary Data, 2022*

The constant (β_0) of 5.158 indicates that work creativity, before being influenced by transformational leadership behavior, is positive at 5.158 on the Likert scale. The regression coefficient of 0.602 shows a positive influence of transformational leadership

on work creativity, assuming other factors remain constant (*ceteris paribus*). The regression model explaining the relationship between transformational leadership behavior and employee creativity at the Office of Cooperatives and SMEs of Southeast Sulawesi Province can be stated as:

$$Y = 5.158 + 0.602X_1 + 2.872$$

The correlation coefficient (R) between transformational leadership behavior and employee creativity is 0.874, indicating a very strong relationship. The coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.763, meaning that transformational leadership behavior contributes 76.3% to employee creativity, while the remaining 23.7% is explained by other variables not included in this study.

The hypothesis proposed was that transformational leadership behavior has a positive and significant relationship with employee creativity. The regression test shows a significance value of 0.000, which is smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$, thus proving that the hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

The results show that transformational leadership behavior positively affects employee creativity. This is because each indicator item used to measure transformational leadership—including idealized influence, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation—supports creativity. The correlation between transformational leadership and employee creativity is 87.4%. Overall, it can be concluded that transformational leadership behavior has a significant positive effect on employee creativity at the Office of Cooperatives and SMEs of Southeast Sulawesi Province.

This finding aligns with Solso, Maclin & Maclin (2017: 444), who defined creativity as a cognitive activity producing new perspectives not limited by pragmatic outcomes. Torrance (in Ali & Asrori, 2016: 41) described creativity as the process of recognizing gaps, formulating new hypotheses, communicating results, and testing those hypotheses. Munandar (2012: 95) defined creativity as a process reflected in fluency, flexibility, and originality in thinking. Musbikin (2016: 6) emphasized creativity as the ability to initiate ideas, find new connections, formulate concepts beyond memorization, and produce new answers and questions. Munandar (2014: 25) added that creativity is

the general ability to create something new, provide new ideas for problem-solving, and discover new relationships among existing elements.

The success of a leader depends on leadership techniques that create situations encouraging employees' awareness to act according to the leader's direction. Leadership style is how a leader influences subordinates through behavior or personality patterns. One effective style is transformational leadership. This is consistent with Kreitner and Kinicki in Adrianty (2011: 3), who defined leadership as "a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organizational goals." Aynul in Kurniawan (2019) described leadership as a relationship within a leader that influences others to consciously work toward desired goals. Burns in Adrianty (2011: 5) stated that transformational leadership emphasizes motivating subordinates to take responsibility beyond expectations, defining, communicating, and articulating the organization's vision, which followers must accept and recognize.

These results are consistent with previous studies by Wijayanti & Supartha (2019), Adiebah (2020), Agustina & Putra (2021), Hidayat, Zaitul & Mulatsi (2021), Simamora, Afrianty & Prasetya (2021), and Hidayat & Zaitul (2020), which concluded that transformational leadership behavior has a positive and significant relationship with employee creativity.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis and the discussion of the research findings, it can be concluded that transformational leadership behavior has a positive and significant relationship with employee creativity at the Office of Cooperatives and SMEs of Southeast Sulawesi Province. An increase in transformational leadership behavior leads to a positive and tangible improvement in employee creativity, showing that good transformational leadership behavior contributes significantly to enhancing employee creativity within the organization. Therefore, it is recommended that leaders at the Office of Cooperatives and SMEs of Southeast Sulawesi Province continuously strengthen transformational leadership behavior, especially the idealized influence aspect, by consistently building employees' confidence in the leadership model so that they can develop an emotional bond with their leaders. In addition, leaders should continuously foster employee creativity by providing work-related training programs to enable employees to generate ideas quickly and maintain a high level of work creativity. Future researchers are encouraged to utilize and develop the results of this study by including

different variables or expanding the indicators used for each variable. For example, additional variables such as work motivation and work environment could be considered to broaden the scope of future research.

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