**Research Article**

# Employee Perceptions of Leadership Style: Transformational Theory

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| ARTICLE INFO | ABSTRACT |
|---|---|
| | The perception of each employee toward a company's leadership style can vary significantly. Inappropriate leadership styles that fail to meet employee expectations can negatively impact organizational success. Transformational leadership influences civil servant performance by empowering and developing subordinates while driving substantial organizational change. This study aims to analyze the perceptions of PT SAS Security Indonesia employees regarding the company's transformational leadership style. Conducted from October to December 2023, the study involved 48 respondents. A quantitative method was used, with tests for validity, reliability, and categorization of respondent characteristics. The results show that 26.3% of respondents strongly agreed with the transformational leadership style, 28.8% remained neutral, and 18.3% disagreed. The average response score of 3.40 suggests that the transformational leadership style is generally effective in fostering employee development at PT SAS Security Indonesia. The lowest responses were strongly disagree at 6.9%, and agree at 19.8%. These findings indicate that transformational leadership is perceived as an effective approach to guiding employee development within the company.<br><br>**Keywords:** Employee Perception, Leadership, Transformational Leadership Style |

## INTRODUCTION

Employees are considered the spearhead in achieving company goals and are a crucial resource for the company. To achieve these goals, high-quality employees are required (Haratua et al., 2023). Employee quality is also influenced by company leaders. Leaders have the power to influence their subordinates and actively engage them to enhance performance. To foster effective collaboration, organizations need reformist leaders capable of initiating change (Prayudi, 2020). To produce high-quality goods and services at competitive prices, organizations must be strategically agile in consistently responding to commercial competition and economic innovation (Rizki et al., 2023). The actions of a company will determine whether it succeeds or fails in reaching its objectives. In the era of globalization, companies must contend with increasingly intense competition in the labor market and industry (Budiarti, 2023). To improve performance in various areas, including finance, human resources, and technology, companies must prioritize human resource management (Tahar et al., 2022). The relationship between management and employees can lead to job shortages or unemployment, necessitating effective human resource management (Batubara, 2020).

A leader's style is a set of traits used to influence followers and achieve group goals (Camelia & Pujianto, 2024). It is a desired behavior pattern that a manager can use to inspire staff members and improve work outcomes. To achieve optimal business performance, executives and employees must maintain a good working relationship and a cooperative work environment (Erri et al., 2021). Leaders contribute significantly to achieving goals and enhancing employee performance. They build trust, encourage productivity and innovation, and are directly linked to dedicated practices (Mutropin et al., 2023). Influential personalities greatly impact job satisfaction and the performance of

their followers. There are various definitions of leadership (Prayuda, 2022). This study focuses on leadership factors as the main influence on employees' innovative work behavior, as their interactions significantly impact the overall work environment (Etikariena, 2020). This raises the question: what leadership style is capable of advancing the company?

One leadership style that can be utilized is transformational leadership. Transformational leadership impacts employee performance by empowering and developing subordinates and driving significant organizational change (Amaliah & Sakir, 2023). Leaders attend to their followers by solving their problems and fostering enthusiasm. This method promotes work dedication, ensuring that each follower's needs are met and goals are achieved (Hasanah et al., 2023). The aim of transformational leadership is to create long-term change and transform organizational culture. Transformational leadership fosters creativity, continuous progress, and team motivation to achieve common goals. Transformational leaders set a good example by acting with honesty, integrity, and trustworthiness (Mahyadi & Safrizal, 2023). Under principles such as communication, appreciation of human resources, and inspiration for employees, transformational leadership involves guiding or implementing change within the organization. Leaders who use this style ensure that staff members receive the necessary tools in an organized manner (Malik et al., 2023). Workplace success is positively influenced by employees' perceptions of their supervisor's transformational leadership style (Momongan et al., 2023).

Transformational leaders facilitate older workers' adaptation to technological changes by questioning conventional problem-solving techniques and encouraging intellectual stimulation (Cheung et al., 2018). Authoritarian or autocratic executives hold the highest authority, while democratic leaders encourage employee participation and decision-making. Formal delegation of responsibility and maintenance of hierarchy characterize bureaucratic leadership (Chikazhe et al., 2023).

The study by Khan, A., & Ali, S. (2022), *"Transformational Leadership and Employee Motivation: Evidence from the Manufacturing Sector,"* found a significant relationship between perceptions of transformational leadership style and work motivation in the manufacturing sector. The results showed a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership style and employee work motivation. Additionally, Johnson, R., & Lee, K. (2020), in their journal *"Examining the Role of Transformational Leadership in Enhancing Employee Motivation in Healthcare,"* revealed an impact of perceptions of transformational and transactional leadership styles on employee work motivation in the healthcare sector. This study differs from previous research in terms of its focus on the subjects used. The distinct characteristics of these subjects are expected to provide a new perspective on perceptions of transformational leadership and work motivation among employees.

Moreover, there is a limitation in research regarding how demographic characteristics, such as age and work experience, affect employees' perceptions of transformational leadership. Therefore, the research gap lies in gaining a deeper understanding of how transformational leadership is perceived by employees in the security services industry and how this leadership style affects employee stability and development in outsourcing companies. This study aims to fill the gap in the literature by highlighting specific aspects of transformational leadership relevant to this industry context.

SAS Security Indonesia is a security service or outsourcing provider located in Sumedang, West Java. Established in 2000, the company has been operating for 20 years. The company's development is undoubtedly facilitated by the successful leadership of its head. Through pre-task training, mentorship, and performance reviews, the organization ensures professional and optimal performance while providing cleaning services for various locations. This results in effective and efficient cleaning operations. This is evidenced by stable employee attendance, high morale, and their enthusiasm for work. Additionally, based on observations, there is no employee turnover from partners who have used the services of PT SAS Security Indonesia Sumedang. In 2021, the company had 63 employees with 3 departures, while in 2022, the number of employees increased to 70 with 2 departures. Employee stability in this company is attributed to the well-implemented leadership style, prompting the author to conduct research to understand employees' perceptions of transformational leadership.

## METHOD

This research uses quantitative methods. This research was conducted at PT SAS Security Indonesia Sumedang, West Java, from October to December 2023. Quantitative research is research that uses numbers (Efrilyati, et al., 2023). The population and sample used were 48 respondents who were employees of PT SAS Security Indonesia. This

sample selection uses the *Purposive Sampling Method* which is the one that sets the selection criteria based on the characteristics of the selected sample (Miyati, et al., 2022), the tests used are Validity Test, Reliability Test (Akbar and Jaenab, 2023), the test shows a one-way relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Safitri, et al., 2023).
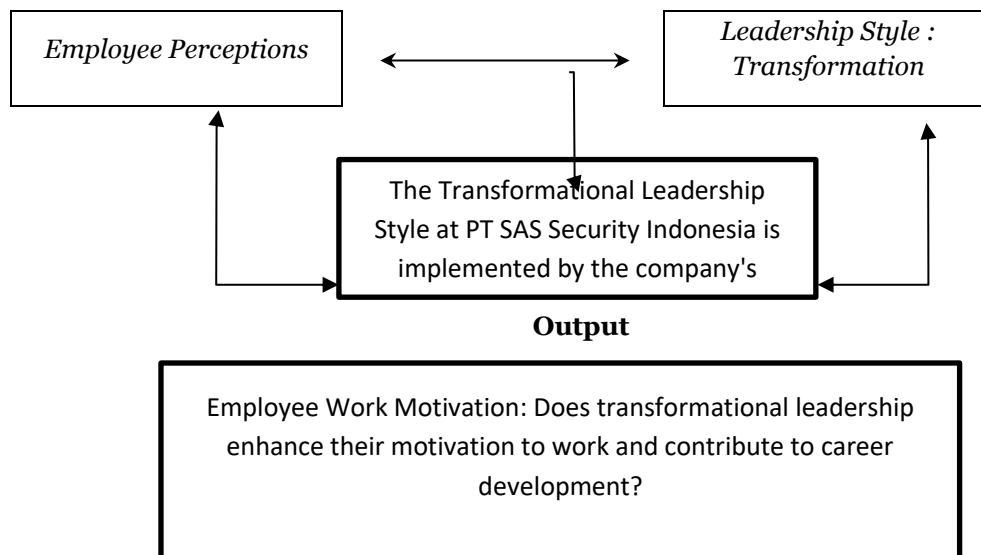


Through figure 1 above, it can be seen that this study aims to reveal and prove Employee Perceptions Of Leadership Style: Transformational Theory.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Before presenting the research results and discussion of Employee Perceptions of Leadership Style: Transformational Theory, the author provides a summary of the characteristics of respondents contained in several tables.

**1. Respondent Characteristics**

**a) Character by Age**

Respondents were classified based on age characteristics categorized into three types, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Characteristics by Age

| Age | Frequency | Percent (%) |
|---|---|---|
| < 30 Years | 5 | 10,4 |
| 30-50 Years | 27 | 56,3 |
| > 51 Years | 16 | 33,3 |
| **Total** | **48** | **100,0** |

*Source: SPSS data processing version 25, 2023*

Table 1 shows that ages 30 to 40 years are the group that has the highest percentage, namely 56.3% (27 people) and the number of groups that have the lowest percentage is less than 30 years, namely 10.4% (5 people). Based on the study's findings, it can be said that the majority of PT SAS Security Indonesia's employees are adults. An individual's age might have an impact on how they view corporate executives. Different generations' experiences, perspectives on life, attitudes, and tastes may all have an impact. It's critical to keep in mind that these are generalizations and that every person has particular tastes and beliefs. Aside from age, a person's perspective on evaluating business executives is significantly shaped by variables including education, cultural background, and personal experience.

**b) Characteristics based on Education**

Characteristics of respondents based on education can be classified in table 2 with four categories, namely junior high school, high school, D3 and Bachelor (S1). An important factor to note is how a person's educational history affects

them in the workplace. In essence, having a high-quality education will affect the way a person thinks in conveying ideas and choosing what to do. This will show the integrity of each member of the organizational group. Not only that, education can also affect the quality of a person's life (Andrenossa, et al., 2023).

**Table 2.** Characteristics of respondents based on gender

| Age | Frequency | Percent (%) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| S1 | 12 | 25,0 |
| D3 | 5 | 10,4 |
| SMA | 25 | 52,1 |
| SMP | 6 | 12,5 |
| **Total** | **48** | **100,0** |

*Source: SPSS data processing version 25, 2023*

It is evident from Table 2 that junior high school education is 12.5% (6 people), high school is 52.1% (25 people), and D3 is 10.4% (5 people) and those with S1 education are 25.0% (12 people). These results indicate that the company PT SAS Security Indonesia is managed by resources that have a high school background or upper secondary level. As previously said, employees' perceptions of corporate leaders are influenced by education as well. An individual can develop strong analytical and decision-making skills with a quality education. Leaders with a strong background in economics, business, and management are seen to be more equipped to make strategic choices. A strong education can also help someone become a better communicator and leader. Effective communicators and team leaders are frequently rewarded with greater recognition. In an era of rapidly changing business, education that fosters critical thinking, creativity, and innovation may help leaders approach business difficulties in novel ways.

**c) Characteristics based on Length of Service**

**Table 3.** Characteristics of Length of Service

| Length of Service | Frequency | Percent (%) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| < 1 Year | 4 | 8,3 |
| 2-4 Years | 27 | 56,3 |
| > 4 Years | 17 | 35,4 |
| **Total** | **48** | **100,0** |

*Source: SPSS data processing version 25, 2023*

Table 3 shows that the longest working category is 2 to 4 years, which is 56.3%, followed by working time < 1 year as much as 8.3% and working time of more than 4 years as much as 35.4%. The majority of employees work for 2-4 years at PT SAS Security Indonesia.

**d) Characteristics based on Employee status**

**Table 4.** Employee Status Characteristics

| Employee Status | Frequency | Percent (%) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Contract Employee | 31 | 64,6 |
| Permanent Employees | 17 | 35,4 |
| **Total** | **48** | **100,0** |

*Source: SPSS data processing version 25, 2023*

From table 4, it is obtained that the employee status of contract employees is 64.6% (31 people) and then as permanent employees 35.4% (17 people). The evaluation of corporate executives may be influenced by the status of

the employees permanent or contract. These variations may be a reflection of the interactions that exist between managers and staff members, and they may also have an impact on how staff members perceive corporate culture and leadership. Because they are employed on a permanent basis, permanent workers typically exhibit more organizational dedication. Leaders of the company who can build strong relationships with long-serving staff members may receive more support and loyalty. Conversely, contract workers could be less committed because of the transient nature of their employment, even though they are still capable of making a significant contribution.

Long-term permanent employees tend to offer more support and loyalty to leaders who can build strong relationships with them. This is due to the sense of attachment, trust, and long-term relationships that have been established. On the other hand, contract workers, whose jobs are temporary, tend to have lower levels of commitment. This is because the nature of their contracts does not provide long-term certainty, which may make contract workers feel less attached to the company. However, despite their potentially lower commitment, contract workers are still capable of making significant contributions in their roles during the contract period. These contributions are important, even though they may not come with the long-term loyalty that permanent employees offer.

## 2. Validity and Reliability Test

The validity test is used to determine the validity of the data obtained from the respondents' answers. This validity test was carried out using the help of SPSS version 25 which is shown in table 5.

**Table 5.** Validity Test Results

| | $R_{count}$ | Decription |
|---|---|---|
| Employee Perceptions of Leadership Style: Transformational Theory | 0,621 ; 0,382 ; 0,483 ; 0,406 ; 0,369 ; 0,578 ; 0,607 ; 0,583 ; 0,679 ; 0,534 | Valid |

*Source: SPSS data processing version 25, 2023*

Based on the results of this recapitulation with 10 questions, it is found that the results are more than 0.2845, which means that the data is valid.

**Table 6.** Reliability Results

| Variabel | Cronbach Alpha | Description |
|---|---|---|
| Employee Perceptions of Leadership Style: Transformational Theory | 0,724 | Reliabel |

*Source: SPSS data processing version 25, 2023*

Based on the results of the recapitulation of the calculation of the *Cronbach Alpha* value of the table 6 variable, 0.724 was obtained, which shows that the value is> 0.60. So it is concluded that the research instrument is reliable so that this data can be used in further research.

## 3) Employee Perception of Leadership Style: Transformational Theory

Furthermore, after the questionnaire was distributed to respondents. The answers are described with the assessment criteria determined based on the values obtained. The class interval used in this study is by knowing the total average value of each respondent's questionnaire answer. Then classified based on the interval:

**Table 7.** Category Interval

| Rate | Category |
|---|---|
| 4,21 − 5,00 | Very good |
| 4,20 − 3,41 | Good |
| 3,40 − 2,61 | Good enough |
| 2,60 − 1,81 | Not good |
| 1,80 − 1,00 | Not very good |

The respondents' assessments are differentiated by 21 questions given to respondents relating to the transformational leadership style, which are presented in table 7. Transformational leadership is known as one of the most effective approaches in motivating and developing employees to reach their full potential. This leadership style focuses on empowerment, inspiration, and influence toward positive changes within the organization. Transformational leaders not only pursue short-term results but also build deep relationships with employees through a strong vision and inspiring goals. It should be noted that transformational leadership is influenced by several aspects:

1. Idealized Influence

2. Inspirational Motivation

3. Intellectual Stimulation

4. Individualized Consideration

Among these four aspects, Inspirational Motivation is found to be the most dominant, while Intellectual Stimulation ranks the lowest. Inspirational Motivation, as defined by Bass & Riggio (2006), is considered the highest aspect because leaders can engage employees in achieving organizational goals and communicate the work plan effectively to them.

The second aspect, Individualized Consideration, as explained by Bass & Riggio (2019), is influenced by leaders paying attention to the psychological needs of employees, allowing them to consult with leaders regarding their work. Idealized Influence, also defined by Bass & Riggio (2019), is driven by leaders who are able to effectively realize the organization's vision and mission, while demonstrating strong performance in leading the company. However, this aspect can be weakened by the fact that not all visions and missions can be successfully realized. The final aspect, Intellectual Stimulation, as explained by Bass & Riggio (2019), is influenced by employees working according to their capabilities and responsibilities.

The results of this study show a positive relationship between perceptions of transformational leadership and work motivation. This aligns with the study by Ramadhan & Mulyana (2018), which demonstrated a correlation coefficient of 0.488 with a significance level of 0.011 (p<0.05). These results indicate a positive relationship between perceptions of transformational leadership and work motivation. Another study by R. Rosiana & Safitri (2016) found a significant influence between perceptions of transformational leadership and achievement motivation.

Employee views on a leader's style have a significant impact on how they behave, think, and feel about their job in a company. Diverse leadership philosophies can influence workers' motivation, morale, and output in different ways. Workers could view this approach as authoritarian, with little room for teamwork. It may result in a loss of autonomy and a sense of empowerment. Transformational leaders are frequently seen by their staff as encouraging and helpful. This approach can strengthen workers' dedication, originality, and sense of direction. The way that employees perceive a leader's style is subjective and might differ from person to person. In order to foster a healthy and encouraging work atmosphere, effective leaders frequently modify their approach based on the demands of the circumstance and their team.

**Table 8.** Distribution of respondents' responses

| Question | Category (%) | | | | | Average | Category |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | STS | TS | N | S | SS | | |
| 1. Leaders provide motivation and foster self-confidence | 8,3 | 27,1 | 25,0 | 16,7 | 22,9 | 3,19 | Good |
| 2. Leaders increase employees' enthusiasm for work | 4,2 | 8,3 | 35,4 | 27,1 | 25,0 | 3,60 | Good enough |
| 3. Leaders have good communication with employees | 10,4 | 18,8 | 22,9 | 25,0 | 22,9 | 3,31 | Good |
| 4. Leaders provide opportunities for | 6,3 | 8,3 | 37,5 | 22,9 | 25,0 | 3,52 | Good enough |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | employees to solve problems with the creativity that employees can | | | | | | |
| 5. | Leaders provide direction to employees in completing work | 8,3 | 14,6 | 33,3 | 25,0 | 18,8 | 3,31 | Good |
| 6. | Leaders encourage employees to solve problems logically with various points of view | 4,2 | 14,6 | 31,3 | 25,0 | 25,0 | 3,52 | Good enough |
| 7. | Leaders make room for employees to develop their talents. | 8,3 | 25,0 | 25,0 | 16,7 | 25,0 | 3,25 | Good |
| 8. | Leaders are good listeners in the office and always motivate employees. | 4,2 | 14,6 | 35,4 | 20,8 | 25,0 | 3,48 | Good enough |
| 9. | Leader's behavior towards employees as individuals with their own strengths and abilities. | 6,3 | 29,2 | 18,8 | 10,4 | 35,4 | 3,40 | Good |
| 10. | Aspirations given to employees vary according to the abilities of the employees. | 8,3 | 22,9 | 22,9 | 8,3 | 37,5 | 3,44 | Good enough |
| **Average Number** | | | | | | | **3,40** | Good |

*Source: SPSS data processing version 25, 2023*

Table 8 shows that of the 48 respondents, the percentage of transformational leadership style of each respondent gave the most answers, namely Neutral at 28.8%, then Strongly Agree 26.3% and Disagree 18.3%. The average of the total of all questions given to respondents reached an average of 3.40, which in this case is in the Good category. Thus, it may be said about the Leadership Style that Transformational Theory in the company PT SAS Security Indonesia is able to be applied properly to company employees so that in this case it could be the reason the company can develop until now. Of all aspects of this leadership style, the lowest respondent answer is Strongly Disagree 6.9% and Agree 19.8%. Because leaders who practice transformational leadership allow their team members to identify with them, form psychological attachments with them, and show them individualized consideration, it has been reported that employee commitment increases and turnover intentions and absenteeism decrease (Khuzwayo, et al., 2023).

Of the 10 questions attached, the respondents' answers, starting from "being a good listener" the most answers given were Disagree 27.1%. Effective leaders can be identified by their willingness to hear ideas and opinions from their staff. Each head of service has the quality of being a good listener in different ways. Some share through formal meetings or WhatsApp, while others are more assertive and open to ideas and feedback (Ristanti and Darmastuti, 2023). Based on information from one employee, the company leader is active in discussions via telephone calls made by employees, responds quickly to input and suggestions from employees but is not too active in WhatsApp groups or discussions via chat. Because according to the company leader, a good enough discussion is a direct discussion. Furthermore, the leader is able to "increase employee enthusiasm at work" this is evidenced by the respondents' answers as much as 35.4% answered Neutral. This means that this leadership style is still in the category of good enough to be done at the company PT SAS Security Indonesia. On the question of "good communication" the average respondent gave the most answers, namely Agree (25%), which means that the communication applied by the leader

to the employees is quite good.  Designing communication systems is essential for large businesses to maintain development, improve desired quality, and support internal and external operations. Therefore, leaders are needed who can contribute to maintaining the effectiveness of communication between subordinates and superiors and between subordinates and other employees. superiors, and both reciprocally. This will undoubtedly have a significant impact on employee performance and productivity, which in turn will have an impact on the company's success (Elviana, 2023).

Leaders provide opportunities for employees to solve problems with the creativity of the average respondent answering Neutral (37.5%), Leaders give direction to employees on average answering (33.3%), leaders encourage employees to solve problems logically with various points of view the average respondent answers Neutral (31.3%), leaders make room for employees to develop their talents the average respondent has an imbalance between Disagree (25%), Neutral (25%), and Agree (25%). So it can be concluded that the average employee of PT SAS Security Indonesia partly feels that they are given space to solve problems, but some also feel that they are not given space to solve problems. This could be due to the age of the fund or the work experience possessed by the employee. Leaders provide motivation to employees and foster an attitude of confidence on average answer Neutral (35.4%) which means that leaders have implemented a motivating attitude to employees quite well. Employee motivation can motivate people to put forth more effort to accomplish goals. This will increase employee productivity, which will have an impact on target achievement. The leader's behavior towards employees as individuals with their respective strengths and abilities on average answered Agree (35.4%), which means that leaders really appreciate the strengths and weaknesses possessed by employees so that the strengths of these employees can be used as a benchmark in problem solving. The aspirations given to employees vary according to the abilities of the average employee who answered Agree (37.5%), which means that leaders still distinguish between one employee and another, especially those with more abilities. Of course this will be one of the impacts for employees in their performance because they feel differentiated and feel unappreciated so that they do not have enthusiasm and motivation at work. Differentiating amongst employees, particularly on the basis of their skills or job position, may have a big impact on workplace dynamics and employee engagement. Negative differentiation whether from perceived partiality or unfair treatment may cause employees to lose interest in and motivation for their work. Good leaders understand how important it is to treat staff members fairly, provide a happy work environment, and appreciate each person's unique contributions. By doing this, they may improve performance, motivation, and employee involvement generally, which will result in a more prosperous and long-lasting company.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research conducted, the survey results indicate that the majority of employees rated the transformational leadership style as "good," with an average score of 3.40, and the most dominant aspect being Inspirational Motivation. This reflects the leader's ability to inspire and effectively communicate the organization's vision to employees. However, the least dominant aspect was Intellectual Stimulation, where some employees felt they were not given sufficient opportunities to develop their intellectual abilities. Furthermore, there was a noticeable divide in opinions regarding the leader's willingness to listen to employees' ideas, with 27.1% of respondents disagreeing that the leader is a good listener. Overall, transformational leadership at PT SAS Security Indonesia has had a positive impact on employee performance and motivation, though some challenges remain in fostering a more inclusive and intellectually stimulating work environment. Long-term permanent employees tend to show higher levels of support and loyalty toward leaders who build strong relationships with them, whereas contract employees exhibit lower levels of commitment but still make significant contributions to their work.

The validity and reliability tests confirm that the data obtained is both valid and the research instruments reliable. While most employees gave neutral assessments of the transformational leadership style, the dominance of Inspirational Motivation suggests that this style is effective in promoting employee development. However, areas such as communication improvement and providing opportunities for employees to enhance creativity and independent problem-solving still need attention. Although some employees feel limited in their opportunities for growth, the majority agree that leaders in the company value individual strengths and abilities, aligning aspirations with each employee's potential. This leadership style has therefore created a supportive work environment and contributed positively to the company's overall development.

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