

# The Effect of Leadership on Employee Performance: An Integrative Perspective in Human Resource Management

Vini Rizky Permatasari<sup>1</sup>, Ading Rahman Sukmara<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Education, Universitas Galuh, Ciamis, West Java, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Economics, Universitas Galuh, Ciamis, West Java, Indonesia

Corresponding author: [ading\\_rahman34@unigal.ac.id](mailto:ading_rahman34@unigal.ac.id)

Preprint – March 2026

Published: April 2026

Document Type: Preprint

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## ABSTRACT

Leadership is a critical factor influencing employee performance in organizations, particularly within the framework of human resource management (HRM). However, many previous studies tend to examine leadership in isolation without considering its interaction with other HRM variables.

This study aims to analyze the effect of leadership on employee performance using an integrative perspective. A conceptual research design was employed, supported by a structured literature review of studies published between 2015 and 2025. The analysis was conducted using a thematic approach to identify key patterns and relationships.

The findings reveal that leadership has a significant positive effect on employee performance. Effective leadership enhances employee motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, which in turn improve productivity and work outcomes.

This study also highlights that leadership interacts with other HRM variables, forming a comprehensive framework in explaining employee performance.

This study contributes to HRM literature by offering an integrative perspective on leadership and performance, while providing practical implications for organizations in developing effective leadership strategies. It also provides a foundation for future empirical research in developing more comprehensive performance models.

Keywords: *leadership; employee performance; human resource management; organizational commitment*

Citation:

Permatasari, V. R., & Sukmara, A.R. (2026). The Effect of Leadership on Employee Performance: An Integrative Perspective in Human Resource Management.

# **1. INTRODUCTION**

Leadership has become one of the most important factors influencing employee performance in modern organizations. Effective leadership enables organizations to achieve their goals by directing, motivating, and supporting employees (Robbins & Judge, 2017; Dessler, 2020).

Leadership is not only about authority but also about influencing employee behavior, shaping organizational culture, and creating a supportive work environment (Armstrong, 2021). Human resource management plays a key role in developing leadership capabilities that enhance employee performance (Sukmara, 2024; Sukmara, 2025).

Previous studies have demonstrated that leadership significantly influences employee performance, particularly when integrated with motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Permatasari & Sukmara, 2026; Sukmara et al., 2024; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Armstrong, 2021). Empirical evidence also shows that leadership contributes to employee engagement and organizational effectiveness (Yoppi & Ading, 2024).

In addition, recent developments such as digital transformation, artificial intelligence, and HR analytics have reshaped leadership practices in organizations (Widyarini et al., 2026; Astari et al., 2026; Nugraha et al., 2026).

Despite extensive research, many studies still examine leadership independently without considering its interaction with other HRM variables. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effect of leadership on employee performance from an integrative HRM perspective.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Leadership**

Leadership refers to the ability to influence and direct individuals toward achieving organizational goals (Robbins & Judge, 2017). Leadership styles such as transformational and transactional leadership significantly influence employee behavior and performance.

From an organizational perspective, leadership is closely related to organizational behavior, culture, and HRM practices (Sukmara, 2025; Yukl, 2013; Robbins & Judge,

2017). Effective leadership also encourages creativity and innovation in organizations (Enas et al., 2024).

Leadership is also influenced by strategic management practices, where leaders play a key role in aligning organizational goals with human resource strategies (Sukmara et al., 2025; Armstrong, 2021).

## **2.2 Employee Performance**

Employee performance refers to the effectiveness and efficiency of employees in completing their tasks (Dessler, 2020). Performance is influenced by leadership, motivation, competence, and organizational systems (Sukmara, 2024).

Empirical studies indicate that competence, motivation, and work discipline significantly influence employee performance (Sukmara et al., 2024; Becker & Huselid, 1998). In addition, transparency, accountability, and organizational systems contribute to improved performance outcomes (Sukmayadi & Sukmara, 2024).

Low quality of human resources has been identified as a key factor affecting performance, emphasizing the need for HR development strategies (Sukmara, 2025).

## **2.3 Leadership and Employee Performance**

Leadership is a key determinant of employee performance. Effective leaders can motivate employees, improve job satisfaction, and enhance organizational commitment (Sukmara et al., 2024; Armstrong, 2021; Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Furthermore, leadership interacts with other HRM variables such as motivation and job satisfaction, which together influence employee performance outcomes (Permatasari & Sukmara, 2026). Leadership studies also emphasize that effective leadership styles contribute significantly to employee performance by fostering motivation and commitment within organizations (Yukl, 2013; Armstrong, 2021).

From a strategic perspective, leadership plays a crucial role in integrating human resource management and business strategies to achieve sustainable organizational performance (Sukmara et al., 2025; Becker & Huselid, 1998).

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This study employs a conceptual research design using a structured literature review approach to examine the relationship between leadership and employee performance. A conceptual approach is appropriate as it enables the integration of theoretical and empirical findings from previous studies to develop a comprehensive understanding of the research topic (Snyder, 2019).

Unlike empirical studies that rely on primary data collection, this research synthesizes existing knowledge to identify patterns, relationships, and research gaps. This approach is particularly relevant in human resource management (HRM), where leadership interacts with multiple organizational variables such as motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

#### **3.1 Data Sources**

The data for this study were collected from reputable academic databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus-indexed journals, and other peer-reviewed sources.

To ensure a comprehensive literature search, keywords such as “leadership,” “employee performance,” and “human resource management” were used.

#### **3.2 Inclusion Criteria**

The study applied the following inclusion criteria:

1. Articles published between 2015 and 2025
2. Studies focusing on leadership and employee performance
3. Peer-reviewed publications

Studies that were not relevant or lacked methodological clarity were excluded.

#### **3.3 Data Analysis**

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), which involves identifying and interpreting patterns in qualitative data.

The analysis process included:

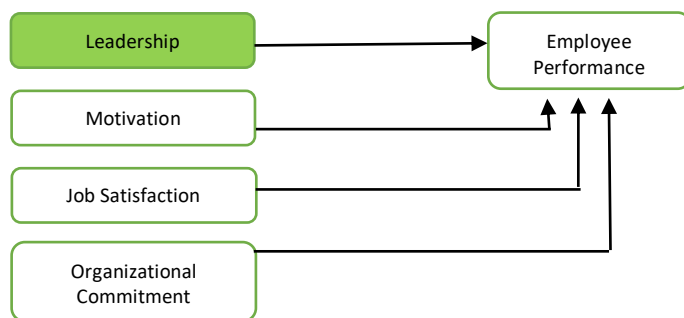
1. Data familiarization
2. Initial coding
3. Theme categorization
4. Interpretation

### 3.4 Research Framework

This study adopts an integrative framework in which leadership is positioned as a key variable influencing employee performance.

In addition, leadership interacts with other HRM-related variables such as motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, which collectively influence performance outcomes.

The conceptual model of this study is presented in Figure 1. The model illustrates the relationships between leadership and employee performance within an integrated HRM perspective. This framework provides a conceptual basis for understanding how leadership and other HRM variables collectively influence employee performance.



**Figure 1. Integrative Research Model of Leadership and Employee Performance**

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Key Findings**

The findings indicate that leadership has a significant positive effect on employee performance. Employees under effective leadership demonstrate higher productivity, improved efficiency, and better work outcomes.

This finding suggests that leadership plays a strategic role in shaping employee behavior and organizational performance.

### **4.2 Role of Leadership**

Leadership plays a crucial role in influencing employee motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

Effective leaders are able to create a supportive work environment, provide clear direction, and foster employee engagement.

### **4.3 Integrated Perspective in HRM**

This study confirms that leadership does not operate independently but interacts with other HRM variables such as motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

This integrated approach provides a more comprehensive explanation of employee performance.

### **4.4 Theoretical and Practical Implications**

This section discusses the theoretical and practical implications of the findings.

#### **Theoretical Implications**

This study reinforces the importance of leadership as a key variable in HRM literature and extends previous research by adopting an integrative perspective.

## **Practical Implications**

Organizations should develop leadership strategies that enhance employee motivation, satisfaction, and organizational commitment to improve performance.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

This study concludes that leadership plays a significant role in influencing employee performance.

This study also shows that leadership interacts with other HRM variables such as motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to HRM literature by emphasizing leadership as a central variable.

From a practical perspective, organizations should develop effective leadership strategies to improve employee performance.

This study is limited as it is conceptual. Future research should use empirical approaches to validate the findings.

Future studies may also explore additional variables such as organizational culture and digital transformation in influencing employee performance.

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