



# The Effect Of Transactional Leadership And Work Skills On Employee Performance Mediated By Work Discipline At The Research And Development Agency Of Lahat Regency

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the effect of transactional and work skills on employee performance mediated by work discipline at the Research and Development Agency of Lahat Regency. Respondents of this study were 60 respondents and this study used a quantitative approach with the SmartPLS 3.0 data processing application. The results of this study found that 1. Transactional leadership has a positive and significant effect on work discipline, 2. work skills have a positive and significant effect on work discipline, 3. work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, 4. transactional leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, 5. work skills have a positive and significant effect on employee performance, 6. transactional leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work discipline, 7. Transactional leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work discipline, Transactional leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through employee performance, and Work skill has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through employee performance through work discipline.

## INTRODUCTION

The role of the Lahat Regency Research and Development Agency in supporting the development of local government policies is very important, especially in formulating strategic policies based on valid research results. In achieving organisational goals, the quality of human resources (HR) is one of the crucial determining factors. Optimal employee performance is

needed to ensure the smooth and effective implementation of government tasks. Therefore, attention to the factors that influence employee performance is very relevant and urgent to be researched. One approach that is commonly used in an effort to improve employee performance is through the application of transactional leadership. Transactional leadership is known as a leadership style that focuses on rewards and punishments as a tool to direct and motivate employees. This leadership emphasises a clear structure and measurable performance management, so it is expected to significantly improve employee performance. In addition, work skills are an important aspect that must be possessed by every employee. Technical ability and professional competence play a direct role in the quality of work produced, as well as the ability to adapt to technological developments and work demands.

Employees who have adequate skills tend to be more productive and contribute more to the achievement of organisational goals. business, companies are required to obtain, develop and maintain quality human resources. Human resources as the driving force of the organisation are greatly influenced by their participation, and their functional role is very supportive for the success of the organisation. In order to achieve organisational goals, employees need charismatic leadership, and motivation at work so that the work done is more effective and efficient, and motivated for their career path. From the results of observations at the Lahat Regency Research and Development Agency, information was obtained regarding the lack of employee performance at work. A person who is uncomfortable in showing their feelings at work because they have low work skills results in low performance. Many factors affect employee performance, both from within and from the organisational environment where employees work such as Transactional leadership. Transactional leadership plays a central role in shaping organisational culture and directing employee performance. Transactional leadership which includes the leader's ability to inspire, have a strong vision, and be able to create emotional bonds with subordinates is considered capable of providing clear direction for the company, as well as those that can affect employee performance, namely work discipline.

Transactional leadership can be referred to as leadership that provides work skills to employees and the rewards they get if the specified target is achieved so that employees feel encouraged to work better. Transactional leadership is leadership that gets the work skills of its subordinates by calling for their own interests. Leadership behaviour focuses on the results of tasks and relationships from good workers in exchange for desired rewards. Transactional leadership encourages leaders to adjust their style and behaviour to understand followers' expectations (Thomas & Velthouse, 2003). Work discipline is one of the important factors to achieve good performance. Every government organisation has the right to regulate and make rules and regulations based on applicable labour laws. Company regulations are made by not burdening one party and not contradicting the provisions. Violations of the rules will usually be subject to sanctions or pay fines in accordance with the agreement applied in the office.

There are also offences that if committed beyond the existing limit, only then are sanctioned or fined, or even get a warning letter from the company, what these findings reveal is that work discipline as a mediating variable may have an influence under certain conditions, which needs to be explored further.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Transactional Leadership

According to Wibowo (2014, p.300) transactional leadership is leadership that helps the organisation achieve current goals more efficiently, such as by linking job satisfaction to reward assessments and ensuring that workers have the resources needed to get the job done. Transactional leaders identify the expectations of subordinates and provide rewards in exchange for the performance shown by subordinates. Transactional leadership models work skills to subordinates by promising a reward for their performance. The emphasis of

transactional leadership is on the exchange process between leaders and subordinates. For example, company leaders exchange salary rewards for the performance of their subordinates. Furthermore (Setiawan & Muhith, 2013) said that the factors that influence leadership style are

1. Personality, past experience and expectations of the leader, this includes values, background and experience will influence the choice of leadership style,
2. Expectations and behaviour of superiors,
3. Characteristics, expectations and behaviour of subordinates affect what leadership style,
4. Task needs, each subordinate's task will also affect the leader's style,
5. Organisational climate and policies influence subordinates' expectations and behaviour, and
6. Expectations and behaviour of colleagues.

According to (Yukl, 2010) the indicators that influence Transactional Leadership are:

1. Contingent Reward,
2. Active Management by Exception,
3. Passive Management by Exception.

According to (Robbins, 2012) the indicators of Transactional leadership are Contingent Reward, Active Management by Exception, and Passive Management by Exception.

### **Work skills**

According to Wahyudi in Istikomah et al (2014) work skills are skills or proficiency to do a job that is only obtained from practice, both through practical training and through experience. Meanwhile, according to Pesiwariisa in Polak (2012) work skills are employees in their positions who have, technical skills, skills in human relations, skills conceptually. Robbins in Ibrahim (2018) says skills are divided into 4 categories, namely:

1. Basic Literacy Skill (basic skills): Basic skills that everyone must have such as reading, writing, counting and listening.
2. Technical Skill: Technical skills obtained through learning in the field of engineering such as operating computers and other digital tools.
3. Interpersonal Skills: Everyone's expertise in communicating with each other such as listening to someone, giving opinions and working in teams.

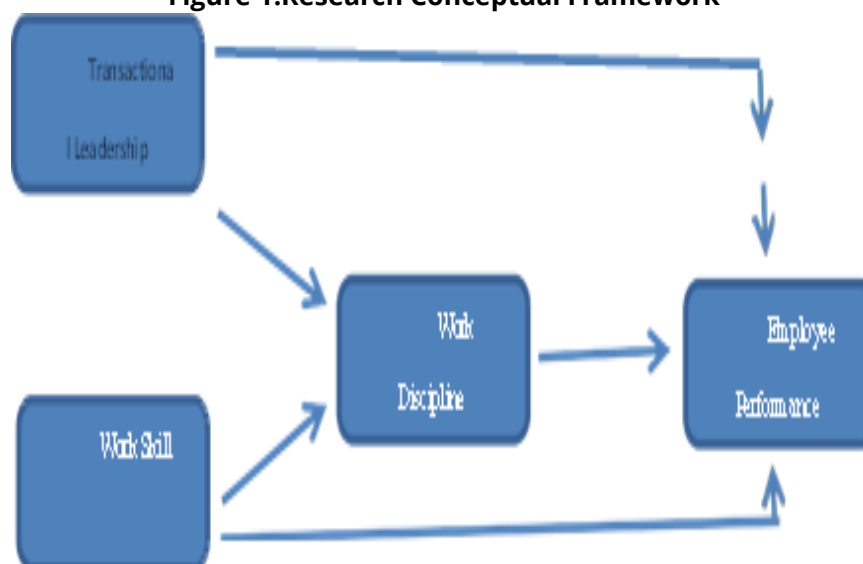
### **Work Discipline**

Work discipline is a tool used by managers to change a behaviour and as an effort to increase a person's awareness and willingness to obey all company regulations and applicable social norms (Afandi, 2021: 12) According to Hasibuan in (Sinambela & Poltak, 2018), work discipline is a person's ability to work regularly, diligently continuously and work in accordance with applicable regulations by not violating established regulations. The indicators of work discipline according to Hasibuan (2019: 194) are as follows: one goal and ability: Goals and abilities also affect the level of employee discipline. The goals to be achieved must be clear and ideally set, and challenging enough for employee abilities. Two Exemplary leader : The example of the leader plays a very important role in determining employee discipline because the leader is used as an example and role model by his subordinates. Three Rewards : Merit pay (salary and welfare) also affects employee discipline because merit pay will provide employee satisfaction and love for the company / work. Four Justice : Justice also encourages the realisation of employee discipline, because of the ego and human nature that always feels itself important and asks to be treated the same as other humans. Five Inherent supervision: Is the real and most effective action in realising the discipline of company employees. Inherent supervision means that superiors must actively and directly supervise the behaviour, morale, attitude, morale, and work performance of their subordinates.

## Employee Performance

According to (Sinaga, 2020: 14) states that performance is the result of a person's job function or activities in an organisation that are influenced by various factors to achieve organisational goals within a certain period of time. According to (Ramdhani, 2018), employee performance refers to the level of success in carrying out tasks and the ability to achieve predetermined goals. According to (Rivai, 2019), performance is a display of the overall condition of the company during a certain period of time, which is the result or achievement that is influenced by the company's operational activities in utilising its resources. Performance can also be interpreted as the results of work that can be achieved by an employee or group of employees in an organisation, in accordance with their respective authorities and responsibilities, in order to achieve the objectives of the organisation concerned legally, not against the law and in accordance with morals and ethics (Pasolong, 2018). Employee performance indicators according to (Ramdhani, 2011 in Maknur & Wahyuningsih, 2018) are as follows: First Individual variables, including: Ability and skills (physical), background (family, social level, and experience) Demographics (age, origin, gender). Second Organisational variables, including: Resources, Leadership, Awards, Structure, and Job design. Third Psychological variables, including: Mental/intellectual, Perception, Based on previous research that correlates transactional leadership, work skills, to employee performance mediated by work discipline at the Lahat Regency Research and Development Agency organisation, we can describe the conceptual research framework below:

**Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework**



## METHODS

This research uses quantitative methods, descriptive and associative types. According to (Sugiyono, 2019), "Quantitative research methods can be interpreted as research methods based on the philosophy of positivism, used to research on certain populations or samples, sampling techniques in this study were carried out randomly, data collection using research instruments, data analysis is quantitative or statistical with the aim of testing hypotheses that have been developed. The research population is all research and development employees of the Lahat Regency of South Sumatra, totalling 60 people The sample in this study amounted to 60 samples

## RESULTS

### Validity Test

**Table 1 Outer Loading**

VariabVarles	Indicators		Loading Factors	Validity
Transactional Leadership	X1.1	Leaders express a Vision that can inspire me to contribute maximally	0,877	Valid
	X1.2	Leaders explain Balitbang's Mission and Goals so that they can better assist us in carrying out activities	0,868	Valid
	X1.3	The leader sets an example so that I am encouraged to make a decision at work.	0,807	Valid
	X1.4	Leaders are committed to the company's success, which inspires me to make sacrifices to achieve common goals.	0,801	Valid
	X1.5	Leaders can cope with changes in the workplace environment and manage resources efficiently	0,846	Valid
	X1.6	Leaders realistically assess and help prepare for challenges	0,779	Valid
	X1.7	Leaders pay attention and provide the needs needed by subordinates for team and individual activities for the progress of Balitbang.	0,748	Valid
	X1.8	Leaders encourage creativity in the workplace even though it sometimes violates existing rules	0,889	Valid
	X1.9	I feel more confident in solving problems after receive support from my leader	0,822	Valid
	X110	The leader demonstrates a strong belief in the team's ability To solve problems with determination	0,838	Valid
	X1.11	I feel more confident in solving problems after receive support from my leader	0,886	Valid
	X1.12	The vision expressed by the leader inspires me to contribute maximally	0,807	Valid
Work Skill	X2.1	Understand and master the technical skills required to complete the tasks of your job?	0,820	Valid
	X2.2	Able to find effective solutions when facing problems or challenges in your work?	0,800	Valid
	X2.3	How well can you convey information to colleagues in a clear and understandable manner, both orally and in writing?	0,915	Valid
	X2.4	Manage time and complete tasks	0,825	Valid
	X2.5	Understand and master the technical skills required to complete the tasks of your job?	0,820	Valid

	X2.6	Able to find effective solutions when facing problems or challenges in your work?	0,800	Valid
	X2.7	How well can you convey information to colleagues in a clear and understandable manner, both orally and in writing?	0,915	Valid
	X2.8	Manage time and complete tasks	0,825	Valid
	X2.9	Understand and master the technical skills required to complete the tasks of your job?	0,820	Valid
	X2.10	Able to find effective solutions when facing problems or challenges in your work?	0,800	Valid
	X2.11	How well can you convey information to colleagues in a clear and understandable manner, both orally and in writing?	0,915	Valid
	X2.12	Manage time and complete tasks	0,825	Valid
Employee Performance	Y1	Assessment of the quality of work in meeting the standards set by Balitbang	0,808	Valid
	Y2	A lot of work was completed within the stipulated time without compromising the quality of the work.	0,846	Valid
	Y3	In managing time to complete tasks according to set deadlines.	0,794	Valid
	Y4	How much responsibility do you feel for the tasks assigned and the results expected?	0,812	Valid
	Y5	Take the initiative to perform additional tasks or provide solutions to problems that arise in the workplace?	0,739	Valid
	Y6	Comply with the rules, policies and procedures that apply in your work environment?	0,884	Valid
	Y7	Work together with colleagues in a team to achieve set goals	0,803	Valid
	Y8	Adapt to changes in tasks, roles or technology in the workplace	0,851	Valid
	Y9	In identifying workplace issues and finding appropriate solutions	0,907	Valid
	Y10	Successfully achieving targets or goals set by the organisation	0,892	Valid
	Y11	Conveying information to colleagues or superiors so that it can be clearly understood	0,786	Valid
	Y12	Your commitment to your work and desire to give your best in every task?	0,701	Valid
Work Discipline	Z1	Always set clear goals to be achieved in my work	0,817	Valid
	Z2	Leaders set a good example in behaviour and actions.	0,850	Valid
	Z3	Satisfaction and love for Balitbang Lahat has increased due to the treatment, compensation and rewards provided by Balitbang.	0,794	Valid
	Z4	Comply with the rules and policies that apply	0,825	Valid

		in the company and obey the entry time, exit time, and work breaks in accordance with company regulations?		
Z5		Carry out tasks assigned by superiors and complete work according to set deadlines?	0,724	Valid
Z6		How positive is your attitude towards the rules and policies set by the company?	0,884	Valid
Z7		How often do you take the initiative to comply with the rules without having to be supervised or reminded by your boss?	0,814	Valid
Z8		How often do you show up on time and consistently fulfil your set working hours?	0,856	Valid
Z9		How well do you complete assigned tasks with satisfactory quality and How much effort do you put into correcting mistakes or shortcomings in the work done?	0,910	Valid
Z10		How able are you to adjust and quickly complete additional tasks or sudden changes in work?	0,881	Valid
Z11		How disciplined are you in carrying out daily tasks according to predetermined procedures?	0,811	Valid
Z12		How well do you work independently without the need for close supervision to stick to work rules and procedures?		

Source: Primary data processed, 2024

Based on the results of the table above, it can be concluded that all indicators that measure Transactional leadership variables, work skills, employee performance, and work discipline have a loading factor value greater than 0.6. from these results it can be concluded that the indicator is declared valid in measuring Transactional leadership variables, work skills, employee performance, and work discipline.

**Reliability Test**

**Table 2 Reliability Test Results**

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Description
Transactional dreamership	0,960	0,965	Reliable
Work skills	0,939	0,950	Reliable
Work Discipline	0,952	0,959	Reliable
Employee Performance	0,955	0,961	Reliable

Source: Primary data processed, 2024

Based on the results of the table above, it can be seen that the composite reliability value on the transactional leadership, work skills, employee performance, and work discipline variables is greater than 0.7. Next, the Cronbach Alpha value on the transactional leadership, work skills, employee performance, and work discipline variables is greater than 0.6. Thus, from the results of the calculation of two tests, the indicators that measure the variables are declared highly reliable.

### Path Coefficient Results

From the results of hypothesis testing, the t-statistic value and probability value. To be able to test the hypothesis using statistical values, for alpha 5%, the t-statistic value used is 1.96.

**Table 3 Hypothesis Test Results**

Current	Type	Sample Original (O)	T statistic ( O/STDEV )	P Values	Conclusion
Transactional Leadership (X1) -> Employee Performance (Y)	Direct	0,396	4,045	0,000	Significant
Work Skill (X2) -> Employee Performance (Y)	Direct	0,444	5,931	0,000	Significant
Work Discipline (Z) -> Employee Performance (Y)	Direct	1,010	70,726	0,000	Significant
Transactional Leadership (X1)	Direct	0,334	3,380	0,001	Significant

Source: Primary data processed, 2024

### DISCUSSION

1. The effect of Transactional Leadership (X1) on Employee Performance (Y), getting results with an original sample value of 0.396 with a statistical T value of 4.045 and P Values of 0.000 or smaller than the  $\alpha$  value ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). So it can be concluded that  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted, meaning that there is an effect of transactional leadership on employee performance. This is in line with (Saelendra et al., 2023), The results showed that the Transactional leadership style had an effect on employee performance.
2. The effect of Work Skill (X2) on Employee Performance (Y), results in an original sample value of 0.444 with a statistical T value of 5.931 and P Values of 0.000 or smaller than the  $\alpha$  value ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). it can be concluded that  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted, meaning that there is an effect of work skills on Employee Performance. This is in line with (Akbar & Faida, 2023), the results of his research show that work skills affect employee performance.
3. The effect of Work Discipline (Z) on Employee Performance (Y), results in an original sample value of 1.010 with a statistical T value of 70.726 and P Values of 0.000 or smaller than the  $\alpha$  value ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). So it can be concluded that  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted, meaning that there is an effect of Work Discipline on Employee Performance. This is in line with (Mannipi et al., 2019), the results of his research show that work discipline affects employee performance.
4. The effect of Transactional Leadership (X1) on Work Discipline (Z), produces an original sample value of 0.334 with a statistical T value of 3.380 and P Values of 0.001 or smaller than the  $\alpha$  value of significance value ( $0.001 < 0.05$ ).It can be concluded that  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted, meaning that there is an effect of Transactional Leadership on Work Discipline. This is in line with (Holilah et al., 2021), the results of his research show that Transactional leadership style affects work discipline.
5. The effect of Work skill (X2) on Work Discipline (Z), results in an original sample value of 0.511 with a statistical T value of 6.849 and P Values of 0,0 or smaller than the  $\alpha$  value ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). So it can be concluded that  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted, meaning that there is an effect of work skills on work discipline. This is in line with (Sudjatmoko & Rusilowati, 2022), so the results showed that work skills affect work discipline.
6. The effect of Transactional Leadership (X1) on Employee Performance (Y) mediated by Work Discipline (Z), resulted in an original sample value of 0.338 with a statistical T value of 3.469 and P Values of 0.001 or smaller than the  $\alpha$  value ( $0.001 < 0.05$ ). So it can be concluded that  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted, meaning that there is an effect of Transactional Leadership on



employee performance mediated by Work Discipline. This is in line with (Rosalina & Wati, 2022), that the better the leadership style, the work discipline and employee performance will increase. Increased work discipline in company leadership can improve optimal employee performance.

7. The effect of Work skill (X2) on Employee Performance (Y) which is mediated by Work Discipline (Z), results in an original sample value of 0.516 with a statistical T value of 6.684 and P Values of 0.000 or smaller than the  $\alpha$  value ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). So it can be concluded that  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted, meaning that there is an effect of Work skills on Employee Performance mediated by Work Discipline. This is in line with (Hania & Bernardus, 2021), that the Work Discipline variable mediates the relationship between Work skills and Employee performance and has a positive and significant effect

## CONCLUSION

1. There is a positive and significant influence between bureaucratic leadership on the performance of employees of the Research and Development Agency of Lahat Regency Strong.
2. There is a positive and significant influence between Work Skill on the performance of Employees of the Laha Strong Regency Research and Development Agency.
3. There is a positive and significant effect of work discipline on employee performance at the Research and Development Agency of Lahat Regency Strong.
4. There is a positive and significant effect of Transactional leadership on work discipline at the Research and Development Agency of Lahat Regency Strong.
5. There is a positive and significant influence between Work skills on work discipline at the Research and Development Agency of Lahat Regency Strong.
6. There is a positive and significant effect of transactional leadership on the performance of the Research and Development Agency of Lahat Regency Strong.
7. There is a positive and significant influence of work skills on employee performance which is mediated by work discipline at the Research and Development Agency of Lahat Regency

## SUGGESTION

1. facilitating employee participation in making decisions in order to increase leadership effectiveness provide opportunities for them to develop in their careers. Management also needs to actively listen and respond to the needs and desires of employees to maintain and improve their work skills.
2. Based on the results of research on the Work Discipline variable, it is recommended to be able to consistently strengthen the rules and regulations of the Organisation. This can be done by providing training on the importance of work discipline, providing constructive feedback, and applying clear and fair sanctions for rule breakers.
3. Based on the research results on employee performance variables, it is recommended to provide clear and structured career development opportunities for employees, as well as provide ongoing feedback to help them understand their expectations and development areas. In addition, facilitating effective, collaborative teamwork can also improve overall employee performance.

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