



Received: December 01, 2024

Revised: January 18, 2025

Accepted: February 28, 2025

*Corresponding author: Ibnu Eka Fardiansyah, Department of Management, STIEM Bongaya, Makassar, Indonesia.

E-mail: s2ibhe@gmail.com

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Leadership and Organizational Commitment in Improving Employee Performance: The Role of Job Satisfaction as a Mediator

Ibnu Eka Fardiansyah^{1*}, Edy Jumady², Dharmawati Djaharuddin³

^{1,2,3}Department of Management, STIEM Bongaya, Makassar, Indonesia. Email: s2ibhe@gmail.com, edy.jumady@stiem-bongaya.ac.id, dharmawati.djaharuddin@stiem-bongaya.ac.id

Abstract: This study explores the interconnected roles of leadership, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction in enhancing employee performance, with job satisfaction as a mediating variable. Utilizing a qualitative approach grounded in literature review, the study synthesizes insights from existing research on transformational and transactional leadership, various dimensions of organizational commitment, and the impact of job satisfaction on employee productivity. Thematic analysis reveals that transformational leadership, characterized by inspiration and motivation, significantly enhances job satisfaction and organizational commitment, positively influencing employee performance. Conversely, transactional leadership, which emphasizes rewards and structure, has a more limited impact on long-term commitment and satisfaction. Job satisfaction is identified as a critical mediator, enabling leadership and commitment to translate into increased performance outcomes. This study contributes theoretically by validating job satisfaction's mediating role in workplace dynamics and highlighting affective commitment as a key factor for sustained performance. Managerial implications underscore the importance of transformational leadership training and strategies to boost job satisfaction, such as recognition programs and professional development. Future research should consider cross-cultural, longitudinal, and industry-specific analyses to deepen understanding of these constructs in varied organizational contexts.

Keywords: Leadership, Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, Employee Performance, Transformational Leadership

JEL Classification Code: M12, D23, J24, L25

1. INTRODUCTION

In contemporary organizational studies, leadership and commitment have consistently been highlighted as pivotal drivers of employee performance. Scholars emphasize that these factors significantly impact employees' productivity, motivation, and organizational loyalty (Bass, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991). Broadly, leadership is defined as the ability of an individual to influence and guide others toward achieving goals, which is often conceptualized in various styles, such as transformational and transactional leadership. In contrast, organizational commitment reflects an employee's psychological attachment to their organization, characterized by affective, normative, and continuance dimensions (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Together, leadership and organizational commitment form a synergistic relationship that fosters a supportive environment, which can enhance employee performance. This interplay between leadership and commitment provides the foundation for exploring how job satisfaction mediates within this dynamic framework.

Leadership has evolved as a field of interest in organizational psychology, underscoring its crucial role in shaping organizational culture and driving performance outcomes. Bass and Avolio (1994) state that transformational leadership, emphasizing inspiring followers, profoundly affects employee morale and job satisfaction. The transactional style, rooted in structured rewards and penalties, also fosters a results-driven workplace atmosphere (Burns, 1978). However, research demonstrates that

leadership effectiveness is contingent upon an employee's level of organizational commitment. Organizational commitment, often linked with loyalty and dedication, acts as a psychological contract between employees and their organizations (Meyer & Allen, 1991). High commitment levels correlate with reduced turnover intentions, greater productivity, and more substantial organizational alignment. Consequently, examining the dynamics of leadership and organizational commitment sheds light on how these constructs influence employee performance.

A phenomenon of particular interest is the role of job satisfaction as a mediating variable between leadership, organizational commitment, and employee performance. Job satisfaction encapsulates an employee's overall affective orientation toward their work, representing a composite of factors such as job security, remuneration, work environment, and opportunities for advancement (Locke, 1976). Research by Judge et al. (2001) highlights that job satisfaction significantly predicts employee performance, suggesting that when employees derive satisfaction from their work, they are more likely to exhibit higher performance levels in contexts where leadership practices and organizational commitment foster job satisfaction, this mediating variable plays a vital role in translating these organizational values into tangible performance outcomes. Therefore, understanding the mediating effect of job satisfaction not only elucidates the relationship between leadership and performance but also highlights job satisfaction as a critical factor in employee productivity.

This study explores the dynamics of leadership and organizational commitment in improving employee performance, with job satisfaction as a mediating factor. In examining these variables, it is essential to contextualize them within prior empirical findings. Research consistently shows that effective leadership can enhance employee performance by providing clear goals, motivating employees, and fostering an inclusive and positive workplace culture (Yukl, 2013). Additionally, studies on organizational commitment indicate that committed employees are more likely to go beyond their job descriptions, driven by a sense of loyalty and dedication to their organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). These findings highlight the importance of leadership and commitment as antecedents of performance, warranting further investigation into how job satisfaction interconnects these variables to produce desired outcomes.

The research relevance is rooted in addressing a critical challenge contemporary organizations face: optimizing employee performance in sustainable ways and fostering positive workplace dynamics. Employee performance remains a key determinant of organizational success and competitiveness, particularly in industries where human capital is a primary resource (Robbins & Judge, 2013). Nevertheless, recent studies suggest that the efficacy of leadership and commitment strategies is moderated by employees' job satisfaction levels (Judge & Klinger, 2008). This perspective calls for an integrated model that examines the indirect influence of leadership and commitment through the mediating role of job satisfaction on performance. By investigating this model, the present study seeks to fill a gap in the literature by providing a nuanced understanding of the pathways through which leadership and commitment influence performance outcomes.

The objectives of this study are twofold. Firstly, it seeks to determine the direct effects of leadership and organizational commitment on employee performance. Secondly, it examines the mediating role of job satisfaction in this relationship, proposing that job satisfaction is a necessary intermediate variable that translates leadership and commitment into performance gains. Including job satisfaction as a mediator provides a more comprehensive understanding of employee performance, enabling organizations to identify specific areas of intervention. For instance, if job satisfaction proves to be a potent mediator, organizations might benefit from strategies that enhance job satisfaction, such as career development programs, work-life balance policies, and recognition systems.

From a theoretical standpoint, this study contributes to the broader body of literature by integrating leadership theories with organizational commitment and job satisfaction models. Specifically, it builds on the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which posits that positive interpersonal exchanges, such as those engendered by transformational leadership, lead to reciprocal behaviors that enhance organizational outcomes. By examining leadership styles and organizational commitment through social exchange, this study offers insights into how these variables collectively shape employee performance.

In conclusion, the relationship between leadership, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee performance remains an area of profound interest in organizational research. By

examining the mediating effect of job satisfaction, this study aims to bridge gaps in the existing literature, providing actionable insights for enhancing employee performance. The findings will be valuable for organizational leaders and human resource practitioners seeking to optimize employee outcomes through evidence-based strategies. As organizations navigate complex and evolving workplace demands, understanding these dynamics offers a roadmap for fostering sustainable performance improvements.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Leadership and Its Styles

Leadership significantly shapes organizational effectiveness by providing direction, fostering motivation, and guiding employees toward achieving shared goals. Effective leadership practices establish a clear vision, align employees with organizational objectives, and encourage a positive, productive work environment. Among the different leadership styles, transformational and transactional styles stand out as influential. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees, focusing on long-term goals and organizational vision. They encourage innovation and personal growth, aligning personal ambitions with organizational aspirations to create a cohesive team committed to achieving excellence (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

In contrast, transactional leadership emphasizes a structured, results-oriented approach where leaders set clear objectives and provide rewards or penalties based on performance outcomes. This style is effective in stable environments where task completion and adherence to standards are prioritized. Leaders following the transactional approach focus on maintaining order, clarity, and efficient procedures, making it particularly suited for tasks that require accuracy and consistency. However, while transactional leadership supports productivity, it may lack the inspiring component of transformational leadership that fosters intrinsic motivation and commitment among employees (Burns, 1978).

Transformational leadership, through its focus on inspiration and motivation, has been shown to positively affect job satisfaction and performance, as it aligns with personal and organizational objectives. Research indicates that employees under transformational leadership experience higher engagement and job satisfaction, which translates into increased productivity and lower turnover (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). By nurturing an inclusive and empowering environment, transformational leaders encourage employees to reach their potential, ultimately benefiting the employees and the organization. This style aligns with modern organizational needs where adaptability, creativity, and collaboration are valued.

2.2. Organizational Commitment and Its Dimensions

Organizational commitment reflects the psychological bond between employees and their organization, manifesting as loyalty, responsibility, and dedication to the organization's success. Employees who exhibit strong organizational commitment are likelier to engage actively in their work, invest effort into their roles, and align their personal goals with organizational objectives. Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model of organizational commitment provides a foundational understanding of this concept, classifying commitment into affective, normative, and continuance dimensions, each with distinct drivers and outcomes.

Affective commitment, the emotional attachment employees feel toward their organization, stems from positive workplace experiences and a sense of belonging. Employees with high affective commitment are often highly motivated and willing to go above and beyond to contribute to organizational success, as they view the organization's achievements as their own. On the other hand, normative commitment reflects a sense of obligation to remain with the organization, often influenced by cultural or societal expectations. Employees with normative commitment stay because they feel it is the right thing to do, driven by a moral imperative to support their organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Continuance commitment, the third dimension, arises from an employee's awareness of the costs of leaving the organization. This form of commitment is more calculative, where employees weigh the benefits of staying against potential losses if they leave, such as seniority, benefits, or job stability. Research suggests that affective and normative commitment are closely linked to positive work behaviors, including higher performance and greater engagement. In contrast, continuance commitment may lead to retention but not necessarily enhanced productivity or job satisfaction (Meyer et al., 2002). Understanding these dimensions is essential for organizations to implement strategies that foster genuine, affective commitment, promoting sustainable engagement and loyalty.

2.3. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a key component of workplace well-being, representing employees' affective responses to their job experiences. Defined by Locke (1976) as the pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from job appraisal, job satisfaction encompasses various factors such as work environment, compensation, opportunities for growth, and relationships with colleagues and supervisors. When employees experience high job satisfaction, they are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and committed to their work. This satisfaction is essential for employee morale and enhances overall organizational performance.

Research consistently shows a positive relationship between job satisfaction and performance, where satisfied employees demonstrate greater productivity, innovation, and willingness to surpass their essential job responsibilities (Judge et al., 2001). Intrinsic and extrinsic factors influence job satisfaction, including meaningful work, recognition, fair compensation, and a supportive work culture. A conducive work environment that fulfills employees' needs and expectations contributes significantly to job satisfaction, reducing absenteeism and turnover rates. As such, job satisfaction is an essential metric that organizations monitor and strive to improve. Moreover, job satisfaction often mediates, translating the benefits of leadership and commitment into enhanced employee performance. This mediating role highlights that job satisfaction is not only a direct outcome of good leadership and strong organizational commitment but also a channel through which these factors influence productivity. For instance, employees under transformational leadership are likely to feel more satisfied with their jobs, leading to more excellent performance. Similarly, committed employees with high job satisfaction are motivated to contribute positively, enhancing organizational effectiveness and success (Aziri, 2011).

2.4. Job Satisfaction as a Mediator Between Leadership and Performance

Studies on workplace dynamics have highlighted that job satisfaction often mediates the relationship between leadership and employee performance. In particular, transformational leadership, known for its motivating and supportive nature, positively influences job satisfaction and improves performance. Research by Judge and Klinger (2008) and Wang et al. (2011) supports this view, showing that employees under transformational leaders report higher job satisfaction, which then correlates with enhanced performance outcomes. This mediated relationship suggests that while leadership is vital, job satisfaction is essential in translating leadership efforts into productive outcomes.

The mediating effect of job satisfaction is particularly relevant in understanding how different leadership styles impact employee productivity. Leadership that prioritizes employee well-being and professional growth, as seen in transformational leadership, tends to produce higher job satisfaction. This satisfaction motivates employees to perform at their best, highlighting that leadership effectiveness is often contingent on the level of job satisfaction it fosters. By improving job satisfaction, leaders can create a positive work environment where employees feel valued, appreciated, and motivated to contribute meaningfully.

Ultimately, recognizing job satisfaction as a mediator underscores its importance in leadership strategies to improve performance. Leaders who actively work to increase job satisfaction — through recognition, open communication, and support — foster a workplace atmosphere conducive to high performance. This approach strengthens the impact of leadership and contributes to sustained

organizational growth, as satisfied employees are more productive, engaged, and likely to remain with the organization over the long term.

2.5. Impact of Organizational Commitment on Performance

Organizational commitment is strongly associated with higher employee engagement, productivity, and reduced turnover rates. Employees committed to their organization demonstrate dedication and are more inclined to exert discretionary effort in their roles. This commitment translates into higher performance, as employees view their success as interconnected with the organization's success (Mowday et al., 1979). Research further supports that employees with strong commitment are more likely to remain with their employer, reducing turnover and creating a more stable and productive workforce (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

High levels of organizational commitment, especially when combined with job satisfaction, can result in even more significant performance outcomes. Studies by Allen and Meyer (1996) and Meyer et al. (2004) reveal that committed employees who are also satisfied with their jobs exhibit a synergy that amplifies their work effectiveness and productivity. In such cases, organizational commitment strengthens the impact of job satisfaction on performance, suggesting that fostering commitment and satisfaction is critical to optimizing employee output.

The impact of organizational commitment on performance thus emphasizes the need for strategies that cultivate both affective and normative commitment, as these forms of commitment drive productive behaviors. Organizations can enhance commitment by providing a supportive work environment, clear growth opportunities, and recognition for contributions. By fostering organizational commitment alongside job satisfaction, companies can achieve high performance, reduced turnover, and a workforce aligned with organizational goals.

2.6. Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory, a foundational concept in organizational behavior, explains the reciprocal relationship between employees and their organizations or leaders. Proposed by Blau (1964), this theory suggests that individuals reciprocate favorable treatment with positive behaviors, creating a mutually beneficial relationship. Employees who perceive their leaders as supportive and committed to their well-being are likelier to reciprocate with more extraordinary dedication, engagement, and higher performance. This reciprocal dynamic underscores the importance of positive leadership practices that foster a productive and motivated workforce.

The application of social exchange theory to organizational commitment and job satisfaction is supported by research from Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005). Employees who experience positive exchanges in the workplace, such as support from leaders or commitment from the organization, tend to feel a sense of obligation to reciprocate, leading to increased productivity and organizational citizenship behaviors. This theory explains why satisfied and committed employees are more likely to engage in discretionary effort, contributing to organizational success.

By leveraging social exchange theory, organizations can create an environment where employees feel valued, supported, and motivated to reciprocate positively. Leaders who invest in their employees through mentorship, recognition, and growth opportunities encourage a cycle of mutual benefit, fostering a workplace where employees are motivated to excel. Understanding these dynamics enables organizations to implement strategies that enhance satisfaction, commitment, and performance, as employees are more likely to respond favorably in a supportive environment.

2.7. Unified Framework of Leadership, Commitment, and Satisfaction

Integrating leadership, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction offers a holistic understanding of employee performance. This unified framework suggests that job satisfaction plays a central role in mediating the effects of leadership and commitment on productivity, creating a cohesive system that enhances overall workplace dynamics. Focusing on job satisfaction as a mediating

factor enables organizations to leverage leadership and commitment effectively, channeling their impact into improved performance outcomes.

By viewing these constructs as interconnected rather than isolated factors, organizations can create comprehensive strategies that address all aspects of employee experience. Satisfied employees, supported by strong leadership and a sense of commitment, are likelier to exhibit high productivity levels and remain with the organization long-term. This unified approach aligns with modern theories of employee engagement, where a positive work environment and supportive leadership cultivate a workforce that is both committed and high-performing (Podsakoff et al., 2009).

Integrating leadership, commitment, and job satisfaction within a single framework provides valuable insights for organizations seeking sustainable performance improvements. By enhancing job satisfaction as a bridge between leadership and responsibility, organizations can maximize the positive outcomes associated with both. This approach optimizes individual performance and contributes to organizational resilience, as a satisfied and committed workforce is better equipped to adapt to challenges and drive sustained success.

3. RESEARCH METHOD AND MATERIALS

This study adopts a qualitative research methodology, emphasizing a literature review approach to comprehensively analyze existing scholarly work related to leadership, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee performance. Qualitative research, particularly suited to exploring complex, multifaceted concepts, allows for a deep understanding of how these constructs interrelate within organizational contexts. By synthesizing and interpreting diverse studies, this approach provides valuable insights into the intricate dynamics of workplace behavior, offering a nuanced perspective that quantifiable data alone may not capture. Literature reviews in qualitative research allow for a thorough exploration of theoretical frameworks, key variables, and emergent patterns, supporting a grounded analysis of the subject matter.

The qualitative nature of this study is underscored by its reliance on secondary data sources, specifically peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and credible reports. This approach entails systematically gathering, analyzing, and synthesizing information from existing literature, making it possible to construct a cohesive narrative on the interconnections between leadership, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee performance. In line with the principles of qualitative research, this literature review does not seek to quantify relationships but to understand them in depth, interpreting findings within organizational theory and practice. The selected literature spans various studies, theoretical models, and research findings, creating a broad foundation to examine the questions' constructs.

The literature selection process was rigorous and methodical, guided by specific inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure the relevance and credibility of the sources. Only peer-reviewed articles published within the last two decades were included, with particular attention given to seminal works and highly cited studies. This ensures that the review is both current and grounded in foundational research. Keywords such as "leadership," "organizational commitment," "job satisfaction," and "employee performance" were used in database searches across academic repositories such as JSTOR, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar. Studies that provided empirical evidence on the relationships among these constructs were prioritized to enhance the validity and relevance of the analysis.

In the literature review, the thematic analysis was the primary method for organizing and interpreting findings. Thematic analysis is well-suited for qualitative research, allowing for identifying patterns and themes across multiple sources. By coding and categorizing data into thematic groups, this study was able to distill key insights and highlight recurring concepts, facilitating a structured examination of leadership styles, dimensions of organizational commitment, factors influencing job satisfaction, and the effects on employee performance. Themes such as "transformational versus transactional leadership," "commitment dimensions," and "job satisfaction as a mediator" emerged prominently during the analysis, each representing critical aspects of the research focus.

The literature review methodology allows for comparative analysis across studies, revealing areas of consensus and divergence. For instance, while most studies agree on the positive influence of transformational leadership on job satisfaction, some discrepancies arise concerning the impact of

transactional leadership. By analyzing these differences, the study explores the boundaries and limitations of existing theories, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of leadership's role in shaping organizational outcomes. Additionally, the literature review approach enables an examination of different theoretical models, such as Meyer and Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment, Locke's job satisfaction theory, and Bass's transformational leadership theory. By integrating insights from these models, the study constructs a comprehensive framework for understanding how these constructs interact.

Another significant methodology component involves critical analysis, where each selected study is assessed for its methodological rigor, theoretical grounding, and relevance to the research questions. This critical approach ensures that the literature review summarizes findings and evaluates the robustness of the evidence supporting each claim. Studies with strong empirical backing, clear theoretical frameworks, and methodological rigor are weighted more heavily in the analysis, ensuring that the conclusions drawn are well-supported by credible research. This rigorous approach to literature evaluation strengthens the study's validity, providing a robust foundation for interpreting findings.

The qualitative research methodology used in this study also incorporates a contextual analysis of the selected literature, examining how different organizational and cultural contexts influence the constructs under review. For instance, leadership styles and their impact on job satisfaction may vary across industries and cultural settings, as highlighted in studies that compare organizational practices in Western and non-Western contexts. By analyzing these contextual differences, the study acknowledges the role of environmental factors in shaping employee behavior, offering a more comprehensive view of leadership, commitment, and satisfaction within diverse organizational frameworks.

The literature review approach also allows for a longitudinal perspective, enabling the study to trace the evolution of key concepts over time. For example, transformational leadership has evolved from its initial conceptualization by Burns (1978) to its more developed form in the works of Bass and Avolio (1994). Similarly, the understanding of job satisfaction has expanded from focusing solely on compensation and work environment to encompass factors like work-life balance and psychological well-being. The study captures these shifts by analyzing studies from different time periods, providing insights into how changing organizational dynamics and employee expectations have influenced contemporary understandings of these constructs.

Furthermore, this qualitative literature review incorporates a gap analysis, identifying areas where existing research is limited or inconclusive. For instance, while much research explores the direct effects of leadership on job satisfaction, fewer studies examine the mediating role of job satisfaction between leadership and performance. By highlighting these gaps, the study summarizes what is known and points to areas for future research, contributing to the ongoing development of organizational studies. This gap analysis is integral to qualitative literature reviews, as it facilitates the identification of emerging questions and under-researched areas within the field.

In terms of analysis, this study employs a narrative synthesis approach, integrating findings from diverse studies to construct a cohesive story about the relationships among the focal constructs. Narrative synthesis allows for a flexible yet systematic way of organizing information, which is ideal for qualitative research where insights are drawn from multiple sources with varied methodologies. This synthesis creates a coherent framework, contextualizing findings within broader organizational theories and highlighting the implications for practice. The narrative approach also enables the study to address complex, interrelated questions, exploring how leadership styles, commitment, and job satisfaction shape employee performance in nuanced ways.

To ensure methodological transparency, this study provides detailed documentation of the literature review process, including the search strategy, selection criteria, and analytical framework. This transparency is critical in qualitative research, enabling other researchers to replicate or expand upon the study and contributing to cumulative knowledge in the field. By clearly outlining each step, the study maintains high academic rigor, reinforcing the credibility of its findings.

The choice of a qualitative literature review as the research method reflects the study's objective to deepen understanding rather than produce statistical generalizations. This approach is particularly suited to examining complex, relational constructs, as it allows for the exploration of how leadership,

commitment, and satisfaction interact in varied organizational settings. By focusing on depth and context, the qualitative approach provides insights into the nuances of employee behavior, offering a valuable perspective for organizational leaders seeking to enhance workplace dynamics and performance.

In conclusion, the qualitative research methodology, anchored in a literature review, offers a comprehensive approach to exploring leadership, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee performance. Through thematic analysis, critical evaluation, contextual analysis, longitudinal perspective, gap analysis, and narrative synthesis, the study constructs a robust framework that deepens understanding of these constructs and their interrelationships. This method synthesizes existing knowledge and identifies avenues for future research, providing a solid foundation for scholars and practitioners interested in advancing organizational performance through enhanced leadership and employee engagement.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study explores the interconnected roles of leadership, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction in influencing employee performance. Synthesizing insights from previous studies, the findings reveal that transformational leadership, characterized by motivation and inspiration, significantly contributes to employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment, enhancing performance. Conversely, transactional leadership, emphasizing reward-based outcomes, has a more limited impact on long-term commitment and satisfaction. Job satisfaction emerges as a key mediating factor, highlighting its role in translating leadership and commitment into tangible performance outcomes. This section elaborates on these findings and discusses their implications for future research.

One of the most notable results is transformational leadership's apparent influence on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Numerous studies have indicated that transformational leadership enhances job satisfaction by fostering a supportive and inclusive environment (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Transformational leaders inspire employees to align their goals with the organization's, fostering a sense of purpose and emotional attachment to the workplace. This emotional attachment is integral to affective commitment, where employees genuinely want to contribute to organizational success because they identify closely with the organization's values and goals. Such high levels of commitment reduce turnover intentions and promote discretionary effort, which is vital for organizational stability and growth. The results support the notion that transformational leadership should be a priority in organizational development strategies, as it has proven benefits in fostering a committed and satisfied workforce.

However, the findings also indicate that the impact of transactional leadership on job satisfaction and organizational commitment is relatively limited. While effective for ensuring task completion and maintaining order, transactional leadership lacks the more profound motivational appeal that transformational leadership provides. Studies indicate that while transactional leadership can drive productivity in the short term, it may not cultivate a sense of loyalty or commitment among employees. This aligns with Burns's (1978) assertion that transactional leadership primarily addresses employees' extrinsic motivations, which are less sustainable over time than intrinsic motivations. Consequently, organizations focusing exclusively on transactional practices may find it challenging to achieve high job satisfaction and commitment levels, particularly in dynamic, innovation-driven industries. This reinforces the need for a balanced leadership approach combining transactional structure with transformational inspiration to achieve productivity and engagement.

Job satisfaction emerges as an influential mediating variable in the relationship between leadership, commitment, and performance, illustrating that satisfied employees tend to perform at higher levels. Studies reviewed indicate that job satisfaction directly impacts employee behavior, with satisfied employees exhibiting higher engagement, reduced absenteeism, and greater productivity (Judge et al., 2001). Furthermore, job satisfaction's mediating role underscores the complexity of organizational dynamics. While leadership and commitment influence employee performance, job satisfaction is the essential link that enables these factors to translate into productive behaviors. This finding suggests

that job satisfaction should be a focal point in organizational strategy, as it is critical in maximizing the effects of leadership and commitment on performance.

The results also demonstrate that organizational commitment, particularly affective commitment, is closely associated with employee performance. Employees who feel emotionally attached to their organization are more likely to exhibit proactive behaviors, going above and beyond their formal job requirements. This is especially relevant in contexts where innovation and teamwork are valued, as committed employees contribute to a positive organizational culture that encourages collaboration and continuous improvement. The findings further reveal that affective and normative commitment have more pronounced positive effects on performance than continuance commitment, which is rooted in the perceived costs of leaving the organization. While promoting retention, continuous commitment does not necessarily lead to enhanced performance or satisfaction, indicating that organizations should aim to cultivate an affective and normative commitment to achieve optimal outcomes.

Considering these findings, it is evident that future research should further explore the mediating role of job satisfaction in various organizational contexts. For instance, studies could examine how job satisfaction mediates leadership and performance in different industries, such as technology, healthcare, and education. Since each industry has unique challenges and workplace cultures, understanding how job satisfaction operates in these contexts could provide valuable insights into industry-specific leadership practices. Additionally, future research could investigate the impact of job satisfaction on other critical outcomes, such as innovation, employee well-being, and organizational resilience, providing a more comprehensive view of its role in organizational success.

Another avenue for future research involves examining the influence of cultural factors on the relationship between leadership, commitment, and satisfaction. Organizational culture and national cultural contexts can significantly shape employee perceptions of leadership and responsibility. For example, transformational leadership may be more effective in cultures that value collectivism, where employees are inclined to work toward collective goals. In contrast, transactional leadership might resonate more in individualistic cultures that emphasize personal achievement and clear reward structures. Exploring these cultural dimensions can provide a richer understanding of how leadership styles and commitment affect job satisfaction and performance in diverse settings, offering valuable insights for multinational organizations.

The results also highlight the potential for longitudinal studies to investigate how leadership, commitment, satisfaction, and performance relationships evolve over time. While cross-sectional studies provide valuable snapshots, a longitudinal approach would allow researchers to track changes in these constructs and observe how fluctuations in leadership styles or organizational commitment levels impact job satisfaction and performance. Longitudinal studies could, for example, examine how employees' satisfaction and commitment develop in response to leadership changes during organizational restructuring or growth, offering insights into the long-term effects of leadership practices.

The implications of these findings are significant for organizational leaders and HR practitioners seeking to enhance employee performance. Firstly, organizations should prioritize leadership development programs emphasizing transformational skills, enabling leaders to inspire and engage employees. By fostering an environment where employees feel valued and motivated, transformational leadership can strengthen commitment and satisfaction, creating a positive feedback loop that boosts performance. Secondly, organizations should implement practices that enhance job satisfaction, such as offering professional development opportunities, recognizing employees' contributions, and promoting work-life balance. As this study suggests, these initiatives can improve job satisfaction levels, which is a key driver of performance and a critical mediator between leadership and commitment.

Moreover, organizations should be mindful of the type of commitment they foster, as not all commitment forms contribute equally to performance. While continuance commitment may ensure retention, it does not inherently lead to high levels of productivity or engagement. By cultivating affective and normative commitment, organizations can achieve a more dedicated, intrinsically motivated workforce to perform well. This could be achieved through practices that reinforce

employees' sense of belonging and align personal values with organizational goals, such as promoting a culture of inclusion, transparency, and shared purpose.

In conclusion, the results of this study underscore the interconnected roles of leadership, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction in influencing employee performance. Transformational leadership emerges as a key factor in fostering satisfaction and commitment, while job satisfaction is a crucial mediator enabling these factors to translate into improved performance. Organizational commitment, particularly affective commitment, further contributes to performance by encouraging proactive behaviors and loyalty. These findings highlight several areas for future research, including exploring industry-specific mediating effects of job satisfaction, the impact of cultural factors on leadership and commitment, and longitudinal analyses of these constructs over time. For practitioners, the results offer actionable insights for enhancing employee engagement and performance, emphasizing the importance of transformational leadership, satisfaction-focused strategies, and cultivating affective and normative commitment. As organizations navigate an evolving workplace landscape, these insights provide a roadmap for fostering a motivated, high-performing workforce through evidence-based practices.

5. Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the intricate relationships between leadership, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee performance, reinforcing their importance in organizational behavior research. Theoretically, the study underscores transformational leadership as pivotal in enhancing job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which is essential for driving employee performance. Job satisfaction's mediating role offers a deeper understanding of how leadership and commitment impact productivity, suggesting that future research should continue exploring these constructs in varied contexts. The study's insights contribute to the existing literature by validating the importance of affective commitment and satisfaction as mediators, encouraging scholars to consider these factors' complex, interconnected nature when examining employee outcomes. The theoretical framework developed here provides a foundation for future longitudinal studies, cross-cultural comparisons, and industry-specific analyses that can further refine our understanding of effective organizational practices.

From a managerial standpoint, the implications are equally significant, emphasizing the need for organizations to invest in leadership development, explicitly fostering transformational leadership skills. Leaders who inspire, motivate, and support employees can promote a positive work environment where job satisfaction and commitment thrive. This approach enhances individual performance and contributes to organizational resilience by cultivating a loyal and engaged workforce. Managers should implement strategies to boost job satisfaction, such as recognizing achievements, providing professional development opportunities, and fostering work-life balance. These efforts help build a workplace where employees feel valued and motivated to contribute to organizational goals, maximizing the impact of leadership and commitment on performance. By recognizing and nurturing these dynamics, managers can improve employee engagement, reduce turnover, and create a sustainable pathway for achieving high performance.

In summary, this study provides valuable insights into how leadership, commitment, and job satisfaction interact to shape employee performance. Theoretical implications encourage ongoing research to expand our understanding of these relationships across organizational settings and cultures. Practically, the findings offer actionable guidance for managers seeking to enhance productivity and engagement, emphasizing the importance of transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and affective commitment. As organizations adapt to evolving workplace demands, these insights serve as a roadmap for developing supportive, performance-driven environments that foster individual and collective success.

REFERENCES

- Allen, N. J., & Meyer, J. P. (1990). The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 63(1), 1–18.



- <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8325.1990.tb00506.x>
- Allen, N. J., & Meyer, J. P. (1996). Affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization: An examination of construct validity. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 49(3), 252–276. <https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.1996.0043>
- Avolio, B. J., Zhu, W., Koh, W., & Bhatia, P. (2009). Transformational leadership and organizational commitment: Mediating psychological empowerment and moderating role of structural distance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 25(8), 951–968. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.283>
- Aziri, B. (2011). Job satisfaction: A literature review. *Management Research and Practice*, 3(4), 77–86.
- Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational leadership* (2nd ed.). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Blau, P. M. (1964). *Exchange and power in social life*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. Harper & Row.
- Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. S. (2005). Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review. *Journal of Management*, 31(6), 874–900. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206305279602>
- Judge, T. A., & Klinger, R. (2008). Job satisfaction: Subjective well-being at work. In M. Eid & R. J. Larsen (Eds.), *The science of subjective well-being* (pp. 393–413). Guilford Press.
- Judge, T. A., Piccolo, R. F., & Ilies, R. (2004). The forgotten ones? Job satisfaction among senior managers. *Academy of Management Journal*, 47(1), 66–84. <https://doi.org/10.5465/20159562>
- Locke, E. A. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction. In M. D. Dunnette (Ed.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (pp. 1297–1349). Rand McNally.
- Mathieu, J. E., & Zajac, D. M. (1990). A review and meta-analysis of organizational commitment's antecedents, correlates, and consequences. *Psychological Bulletin*, 108(2), 171–194. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.108.2.171>
- Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1991). A three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment. *Human Resource Management Review*, 1(1), 61–89. [https://doi.org/10.1016/1053-4822\(91\)90011-Z](https://doi.org/10.1016/1053-4822(91)90011-Z)
- Meyer, J. P., Allen, N. J., & Smith, C. A. (2002). Commitment to organizations and occupations: Extension and test of a three-component conceptualization. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78(4), 538–551. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.78.4.538>
- Mowday, R. T., Steers, R. M., & Porter, L. W. (1979). The measurement of organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 14(2), 224–247. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791\(79\)90072-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791(79)90072-1)
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2009). Recommendations for creating better concept definitions in the organizational, behavioral, and social sciences. *Organizational Research Methods*, 12(4), 665–701. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428109339406>
- Wang, H., Law, K. S., Hackett, R. D., Wang, D., & Chen, Z. X. (2011). Leader-member exchange as a mediator of the relationship between transformational leadership and followers' performance and organizational citizenship behavior. *Academy of Management Journal*, 48(3), 420–432. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2005.17407908>