

THE ROLE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN MEDIATING WORK STRESS AND WORK MOTIVATION ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

received: 17/03/2025

revised: 19/03/2025

accepted: 14/04/2025

Keywords:

Employee Performance;

Work Stress;

Transformational

Leadership; Work

Motivation

DOI:

10.32509/mirshus.v5i1.124

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyse the role of transformational leadership in mediating the influence of work stress and work motivation on employee performance. The research was conducted at the Intelligence and Security Agency (Baintelkam) of the Indonesian National Police using a quantitative approach and path analysis method. The sample consisted of 126 respondents selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using questionnaires and tested for validity, reliability, and regression assumptions. Path analysis using the help of the sobel-test application. The findings reveal that work stress does not significantly affect transformational leadership or employee performance. conversely, work motivation positively and significantly influences transformational leadership and employee performance. Transformational leadership also mediates the relationship between work motivation and employee performance but does not mediate the effects of work stress on performance. These results underscore the importance of transformational leadership in enhancing work motivation and improving employee performance. However, addressing the effects of work stress requires additional measures, such as creating a more adaptive work environment. Practically, this study highlights the need for organisations to strengthen transformational leadership capacity and prioritise managing employee motivation and stress to foster a productive and conducive workplace.

INTRODUCTION

The ability of each individual activity to carry out various tasks in a particular job is distinguished by intellectual ability and physical ability. Knowledge and skills possessed by individuals will direct behaviour. Meanwhile, behaviour will result in performance. The ability a person has in carrying out work will encourage them to perform well. However, in reality, many of them find problems at work and in the work environment that have serious implications

for their performance. Dewi, et al (2014) found that employee performance is a key element that determines the success of an organisation, including the institution of the Intelligence and Security Agency (Baintelkam) of the Indonesian National Police which plays a strategic role in maintaining security and public order (Dewi et al., 2014). However, high work demands often trigger members of the work stress that negatively affects their work productivity. Stress can arise as a result of leadership

pressure or tension stemming from a misalignment between a person and their environment. Stress experienced by employees is generally caused by the environmental conditions they face, so management needs to improve the quality conditions of the organisational environment (Noviansyah & Zunaidah, 2015). Work stress that is not handled properly results in decreased performance, causes dissatisfaction, and increases the risk of turnover intention, which is the desire to quit work (Robbins & Judge, 2017). If someone who experiences pressure at work, thus experiencing job stress, results in decreased performance, it will result in permanent resignation, either voluntary or involuntary. The incident begins with the employee's desire to leave the job. *Turnover* leads to the final reality faced by the organisation in the form of employees leaving the organisation, while turnover intention leads to individual evaluation results (Hanim, 2016). Increasing turnover intention will be dangerous for the sustainability of the organisation and can reduce organisational productivity (Joarder et al., 2017).

However, these two variables, namely work stress and work motivation, do not stand alone depending on the situation and conditions of each employee. When employees are in low condition, the role of transformational leadership is believed to be able to mediate the influence of stress and work motivation on employee performance. Transformational leadership has the ability to inspire, provide guidance, and change the behaviour of subordinates to be oriented towards work performance. Effective leaders not only encourage productivity, but also help subordinates deal with work pressure through a constructive approach (Munandar, 2015). Furthermore, the role of transformational leadership can increase the motivation of subordinates and can overcome psychological challenges in their workplace (Pratama, 2017).

On the other hand, work motivation is an important factor that encourages employees to achieve optimal performance ((Ghozali, 2017);(Bemana et al., 2018)). Strong work motivation can help employees cope with job pressures, increase commitment, and maintain productivity. The key factor in influencing work stress between

employees and other employees and between subordinates and their leaders is work motivation. This motivational factor plays an important role in increasing employee job satisfaction and can help in improving employee performance (Safitri & Singgih, 2022). Motivation is important, because motivation will be able to encourage or move someone to do something more enthusiastically, especially regarding work motivation in order to improve the performance of the employee concerned. Motivation is a process of willingness to do a high level of effort to achieve organisational goals conditioned by the ability of the effort to satisfy the needs of a number of individuals (Ghozali, 2017). Highly motivated employees will feel happier and more willing to work for their organisation (Bemana et al., 2018). Work motivation has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction. While work motivation has a significant effect on employee performance due to an employee having high work motivation. Employees who have high motivation will use all their abilities to work. The higher the employee's work motivation, the higher the performance (Pratama, 2017). The relationship between employee work motivation and leadership is the extent to which the leader provides, direction, role models, gives awards in order to motivate members of his employees so that the awareness of his employees increases. The application of appropriate leadership styles in organisations is one way to improve employee performance (Andilolo et al., 2024). The quality of the leader is often considered the most important factor that determines the success or failure of the organisation. Effective leadership can help organisations to survive in situations of uncertainty in the future. An effective leader must be responsive to change, able to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of their human resources so as to maximise organisational performance. The success of the leader is determined by the leader who tries to change the behaviour of subordinates in order to have high ability and motivation and strive for high and quality work performance to achieve organisational goals (Munandar, 2015). Transformational leadership has a flexible nature so that it is considered to be an alternative as a leadership that can be

applied by leaders in an organisation. One of the factors that cause job dissatisfaction is the nature of leadership that does not want to hear complaints and views of workers and want to help if needed.

The findings of Ni Putu Enika, L.D & I. Gusti Salit Ketut Netra, (2015) that the management of an organisation/institution must pay attention to work stress and work motivation. Because it has been proven that stress and motivation have a significant effect on employee job satisfaction. The aspect of work motivation that needs to be improved is the provision of work facilities. Because this value in the eyes of employee members is the smallest value compared to other values. But in the aspect of work stress that needs to be improved is maintaining good communication relations between employee members and leaders. (Dewi & Netra, 2015)

THEORETICAL BASIS

Work Stress

According to Robbins & Judge (2017: 198) that work stress is defined as a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint, or demand that is associated with what is highly desirable and the results are perceived as uncertain and important. Stress is a response or action taken by a person in response to changes around them. Factors causing stress include work environment factors, co-worker factors, leadership factors and factors from oneself. 1) Stress due to pressure from within (internal factor); 2) Stress due to external pressures; 3) In addition to internal and external factors, stress can be caused by: a) financial problems; b) problems related to children; c) problems related to marriage (example divorce); d) problems adapting to the living environment and; e) other personal problems. The individual or police officer approach and the company approach are two kinds of work stress approaches (Robbins & Judge, 2017) (Noor et al., 2016).

Therefore, Mangkunegara, A.P (2016: 93) divides work stress into six important indicators, as follows: 1) Working conditions; a) Poor working conditions; Poor working conditions have the potential to cause employee members to fall ill easily, some of the causes are uncomfortable rooms, heat, inadequate air circulation, overcrowded

work spaces, unclean work environment, noisy, of course a big influence on employee work comfort; b) *Overload*; *Overload* can be distinguished quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative *overload* is said if the amount of work targeted exceeds the capacity of the police officer. As a result, the employee is easily tired and is in high tension. Qualitative *overload* if the work is so complex and difficult that it takes up the employee's ability; c) *Deprivational stress*; Job conditions are no longer challenging, or no longer interesting for employees. Usually complaints that arise are boredom, dissatisfaction, or the job lacks social elements (lack of social communication); d) High-risk work; Work that is high risk or dangerous for safety, such as work in offshore oil mining, the army, and so on; 2) Role Conflict; Job Stress due to unclear roles at work and not knowing what is expected by management. As a result, there is often job dissatisfaction, tension, decreased achievement and eventually the desire to leave work. Working women experience higher stress than men. The problem is that these working women face role conflicts as career women and housewives; 3) Career Development; Everyone must have expectations when starting to work in a company or organisation. However, many aspirations and career developments are not implemented; 4) Organisational Structure; The company's image is coloured by an unclear organisational structure, lack of clarity regarding positions, roles, authorities and responsibilities, rules that are too rigid or unclear, unclear company political climate and lack of supervisor involvement make police members stressed; 5) Work Control; Poor work control causes work stress which can result in illness and decreased performance and productivity; 6) Workload; Work stress can be caused by workloads that are perceived to be too heavy, urgent work time, low quality supervision, erratic work climate, insufficient authority related to responsibilities, work conflicts, differences in values between employees and the company, and frustration. (Mangkunegara, 2016)

Work Motivation

According to Mangkunegara, A.P (2016: 120) that work motivation is a tendency to move, starting from the drive

within himself (drive) and ending with self-adjustment. So it can be concluded that motive is something that is behind the actions of an employee in working to achieve certain goals. Furthermore, work motivation is also a very strong driver and suppressor that will appear in persistent behaviour in the direction of achieving certain goals. Motivation is the willingness to expend high levels of effort for organizational goals, which is conditioned by the ability of that effort to meet some individual needs. There are three human needs that are very important in an organisation or company regarding employee motivation. (Mangkunegara, 2016)

McClelland theory of needs (in Robins & Judge (2017: 50) focuses on 3 (three) main things in work motivation, namely: 1). *Need for Achievement*, namely the ability to achieve a relationship to predetermined company standards as well as employee struggles to test success. Some people have a desire to achieve success. They strive to fulfil ambitions personally rather than achieving success in the form of corporate or organisational awards. So they do always better and more efficiently over time; 2) *Need for Power* - The *need* to make people behave in a reasonable and prudent manner in their respective tasks. Some people may always be influential, respected and like to organise other human beings. This kind of person is actually happy with the task assigned to him or his status and tends to be more concerned with pride, prestige and gaining influence over other humans; 3) The need for *affiliation* (*Need for Affiliation*) is the desire to be friendly and get to know more closely colleagues or employees in the organization. People who have needs like this of course they have motivation for friendship, bear and work together rather than as a competition within an organization.

Transformational Leadership

According to Robins & Judge (2017: 175) that transformational leadership is defined as a leader who devotes attention to the concerns and development needs of individual followers, they change followers' awareness of problems by helping them look at old problems in new ways and they are able to excite, arouse, and inspire followers to expend extra effort to achieve group goals. Work motivation variables are measured in

line with McClelland (Robbins & Judge, 2017) who analyses three very important human needs in organisations or companies about their motivation. McClelland's theory needs focuses on 3 (three) things, namely: 1). Need in Achieving Success (Need for Achievement), namely the ability to achieve a relationship to the company's predetermined standards as well as the struggle of police members to test success. Some people have a desire to achieve success. They strive to fulfil ambitions personally rather than achieving success in the form of corporate or organisational awards. So they do always better and more efficiently over time; 2) Need for Power - The need to make people behave in a reasonable and prudent manner in their respective duties. Some people may always be influential, respected and like to organise other human beings. This kind of person is actually happy with the task assigned to him or his status and tends to be more concerned with pride, prestige and gaining influence over other humans; 3) The need for affiliation (Need for Affiliation) is the desire to be friendly and get to know more closely colleagues or members of the police in the organization. People who have needs like this certainly have motivation for friendship, bear and work together rather than as a competition within an organization.

Employee Performance

According to Sedarmayanti, S. (2017:142) (Sedarmayanti, 2017), employee performance is defined as a description of the level of achievement of the implementation of a program or policy in realising the goals, objectives, mission and characteristics of the organisation as stated in the strategic planning of an organisation. The term performance is often used to refer to the achievement or success rate of individuals or groups of individuals. Performance can be known only if the individual or group of individuals has predetermined success criteria. The success criteria are in the form of certain goals or targets to be achieved. Without a goal or target, the performance of a person or organisation is impossible to know because there is no benchmark. Various opinions about indicators put forward by experts, including using employee performance indicators vary greatly. Employee performance is the result of work

in quality and quantity achieved by an employee in carrying out his functions in accordance with the responsibilities given to him. By paying attention to the theoretical views of these performance variables, however, in order to be in line with the definition of employee performance, in line with the views of Christi (2015) argues that employee performance is used to measure whether employees are performing well at their jobs. Indicators of employee performance include: a) Punctuality; that is, a certain type of work requires the presence of employees in doing it according to the specified time; b) Job Description; is a written statement that describes the responsibilities that must be carried out from a particular job; c) Quantity of work; means that a person can complete his work within a predetermined period of time; d) Quality of work; that is, each employee is able to recognise and solve relevant problems and has a positive work attitude at Work. (Christi, 2015)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a quantitative approach with the type of explanatory research that aims to analyse the causal relationship between the research variables, namely work stress, work motivation, transformational leadership, and employee performance. The research location was conducted at Baintelkam of the Indonesian National Police. The population in this study were all employees in the Baintelkam of the Indonesian National Police. The sampling technique used purposive sampling, which is a sampling technique that considers certain criteria. The criteria for respondents in this study include employees with more than one year of work experience and all levels in the organisation. The number of samples used was 126 respondents, the analysis used path analysis with the help of the Sobel-test application Primary data is obtained through questionnaires distributed directly to respondents. To fulfil quality data, validity and reliability tests were carried out on each instrument (item) of each variable (Ghozali, 2017). All research instruments are tested

first through validity tests and reliability tests to ensure the instrument has accuracy and consistency in measuring the research variables. In addition to quality data, another prerequisite is the assumption that the data must be normally distributed (Sugiono, 2019).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Before knowing the results of the findings, the researcher made a picture of the previously developed model equation follows figure 1 as:

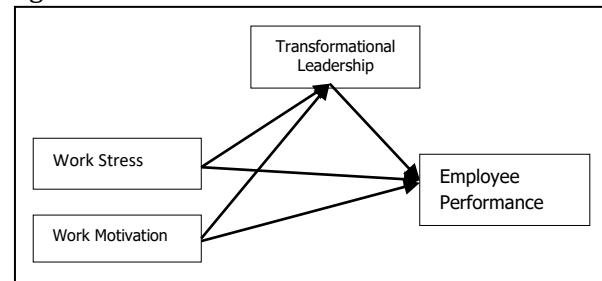


Figure 1. Research Model Equation..

From Figure 1, we can summarize the problem formulation as follows: a) the influence of work stress on transformational leadership; b) the influence of work motivation on transformational leadership; c) the influence of work stress on employee performance; d) the influence of work motivation on employee performance; e) the influence of transformational leadership on employee performance; f) the influence of work stress on employee performance through transformational leadership; g) the influence of work motivation on employee performance through transformational leadership.

Information on the characteristics of respondents is known that; respondents based on length of service 1-10 years or 60% dominate the number of respondents. Based on the level of education dominated by undergraduate at 50% followed by undergraduate at 40% and undergraduate at 10%. Respondents based on gender are dominated by men by 80% The results of the validity and reliability tests can be seen from table 1 below:

Table 1. Results of Validity And Reliability Tests of All Research Variables Instruments

Variable	Validity	Reliability		Desicion	
	R count is greater than R table Product Moment above 0.5	Cronbach Alpha	N of Item	Valid	Reliable
Work Stress	high value	0,963	14	Valid	Reliable
Work Motivation	high value	0,977	08	Valid	Reliable
Transformational Leadership	high value	0,970	09	Valid	Reliable
Employee Performance	high value	0,934	06	Valid	Reliable

Source: Primary data processed, 2025.

From table 1, it can be explained that: all instruments or items of each variable in the research model equation show high validity. Where work stress consisting of 14 statement items, work motivation consisting of 8 statement items, transformational leadership consisting of 9 statement items, and employee performance consisting of 6 statement items have a calculated R value greater than the R product moment table of 0.50, so it can be categorized into high validity. Furthermore, we can see the results of the reliability test of the work stress variable consisting of 14 statement items with a cronbach alpha value of 0.963, work motivation consisting of 8 statement items with a cronbach alpha value of 0.977,

transformational leadership consisting of 9 statement items with a cronbach alpha value of 0.970, and employee performance consisting of 6 statement items with a cronbach alpha value of 0.934. Thus, all data has met the assumptions of validity and reliability.

Next, to find out whether a variable used in this study is normal or not, in addition to having met other data normality assumptions, the researcher also used the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test data normality test. The following presents the results of the data normality test for all variables in the study as stated in table 2 below:

Table 2. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test Results

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test					
		Work Stress	Work Motivation	Transformational Leadership	Employee Performance
N		126	126	126	126
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	35.0159	33.8968	40.0556	26.5794
	Std. Deviation	7.82814	4.69524	4.50299	2.91027
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.214	.260	.308	.296
	Positive	.196	.260	.308	.296
	Negative	-.214	-.240	-.220	-.187
Test Statistic		.214	.260	.308	.296
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.060 ^c	.121 ^c	.082 ^c	.056 ^c

Test distribution is Normal.

As table 2 shows all research variables with a sample of 126 respondents have shown that the data is normally distributed. With the following results details: a) Work stress variable with Asymp.sig value (2-tailed) value of 0.060; b) Work motivation variable of 0.121; c) Transformational leadership variable of

0.082; and d) Employee performance variable of 0.056. Thus all variables have fulfilled the assumptions and are normally distributed. Furthermore, to determine whether or not an independent variable affects the dependent, it can be seen from table 3 of the direct effect test results as follows:

Table 3. Results of Direct Effect Analysis of Research Model Equation 1

Model	Coefficients ^a			t	Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	23.800	2.852	8.345	.000

Work Stress	-.015	.045	-.026	-.333	.739
Work Motivation	.495	.075	.516	6.636	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Transformational leadership.

From the data in table 3 above, the research results are as follows:

1. Work Stress Does Not Significantly Affect Transformational Leadership.

The statistical test results show the t value of -0.333 is smaller than the t table of 1.9794 with a significance value of 0.739 greater than the significance value of 0.05. Employees who experience acute job stress do not have behaviours that can change the awareness of themselves and others to help each other with the problems they face. Moreover, it is associated with a person who has a forward vision and is able to identify environmental changes and is able to transform these changes into the organisation, pioneer change and provide a motivation and inspiration for individuals in the organisation to be creative and innovative, bring renewal in management performance, dare and be responsible for leading and controlling the organisation. The findings of this study are in line with Arwinence Pramadewi (2018) that work stress does not significantly affect employee performance (Pramadewi, 2018). An employee who experiences work stress can experience nervousness and feel chronic *anxiety* if not treated immediately. They often become irritable, aggressive, restless, non-cooperative and at certain levels they can become destructive. In the short term, stress that is left untreated will make employees depressed, unmotivated and frustrated, which in turn causes employees to not be able to work optimally. Meanwhile, in the long run, if employees are unable to control their stress, it is likely that they will no longer be able to maintain their jobs. While at a very severe stage, the person concerned will be disturbed by physical and mental health (Sari, 2015).

2. Work Motivation Significantly Affects Transformational Leadership.

The statistical test results show that the t value of 6.636 is greater than the t table of 1.9794 with a significance value of 0.000. Work motivation will encourage employees to give all their abilities to the fullest and not just the basic general abilities of each person such as intellectual and physical abilities. However, employees' work motivation is driven by their enthusiasm to move up the ranks in career development in the organisational structure, so they are encouraged to become a leader.

The findings of this study are in line with the findings of Diva Riza Fahlefi (2016) that; Motivation has a significant effect on employee performance with leadership style as moderating (Fahlefi, 2016). Other support from Sari, P.M (2015) (Sari, 2015) that motivation has an influence on employee performance. Because motivation is related to human needs. Work motivation provided by the leader of the institution/company will encourage employees to give all their abilities to the fullest and not just the basic general abilities of each person such as intellectual and physical abilities. The amount of income and the ability to meet the needs of life are the impetus for employees to perform their best. The explanation above shows that there is a relationship between motivation and performance. However, the role of leadership in mediating motivation is very dominant in bridging an employee/police member to perform well. Furthermore, to determine whether or not the variables of work stress and work motivation affect employee performance, the researchers made table 4 as follows:

Table 4. Results of Direct Effect Analysis of Research Model Equation 2

Model	Coefficients ^a		Beta	t	Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients			
2	(Constant) 16.629	1.861		8.937	.000

Work Stress	-.018	.029	-.047	-.603	.548
Work Motivation	.312	.049	.503	6.406	.000
Transformational Leadership	.637	.010	.986	65.507	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

From the data in table 4 above, the research results are as follows

3. Work Stress Does Not Significantly Affect Employee Performance.

The statistical test results show the t value of -0.603 is smaller than the t table of 1.9794 with a significance value of 0.548. The logic of thinking is that if an employee who is stressed at work tends to consider a job is not something important to them, so they are unable to complete their work according to the target that has been set. A person who cannot control pressure actively causes stress and is not motivated. Job stress experienced by members of the police due to the pressure faced from within themselves and their work environment so that it will affect the decline in performance. The results of these findings can confirm the previous findings conducted by Dewi Putri Anjar Wulan, Syamsu Alam, Fauziah Umar (2018) that; work stress affects and significantly affects employee performance (Wulan et al., 2018). Another support is the findings of Bashir (2016) that there is a significant influence with a negative correlation between job stress and employee performance. This means that if an employee is exposed to increased work stress, it can reduce his performance, but conversely if his work stress capacity decreases, it will increase his performance. (Bashir et al., 2016)

4. Work Motivation has a Significant Effect on Employee Performance.

The statistical test results show that the t value of 6.406 is greater than the t table of 1.9794 with a significance value of 0.000. The work motivation of a member of the Indonesian National Police Baintelkam indicates participation in decision making. Real participation can be seen from the input given by employees to the leadership. Participation can also be seen from the willingness of police officers to learn by consulting with their leaders. Pride in work can be realised by providing challenges and rewards for work results. Providing challenges for an employee can

motivate him to do the best work so that he will feel valued, but it must be accompanied by appropriate rewards if an employee can achieve success. One of the most basic indications of positive motivation is monetary reward. The income factor plays the most fundamental role, this is in line with Maslow's basic needs theory, which is physiological needs. The fulfilment of physiological needs is strongly influenced by the level of income. With sufficient income, he will be motivated to do his job well.

The results of these findings are in line with previous findings by Dewi Putri Anjar Wulan, et al (2018) that; motivation has a significant effect on employee performance. These findings are in line with Maslow's needs theory which emphasises human physiological needs to achieve high rewards from institutions/companies (Wulan et al., 2018). Human physiological needs are included in the higher level needs, namely esteem needs and self actualisation needs. One of the most basic things in indicating positive motivation is the provision of monetary rewards. No matter how well work atmosphere is conditioned, the income factor plays the most fundamental role. With sufficient income, they will be motivated to carry out their work.

5. Transformational Leadership Has A Significant Effect On Employee Performance.

The statistical test results show that the t value of 65.507 is greater than the t table of 1.9794 with a significance value of 0.000. A leader in addition to having the knowledge and art to lead, is also able to carry out a planned action with a pattern of behaviour that can integrate individual goals to achieve the best performance for the company. This means that a leader is required to be able to direct, provide guidance and influence the thoughts, feelings of subordinates, actions and behaviour that are obediently emulated by others to move towards the best performance for the common goal. These findings are in line with Tri Eva Juniangsih

Ritonga & Usman Tarigan (2015), that transformational leadership has a significant positive effect on employee performance. An organisation or institution is largely determined by its leader. Where a leader is able to direct, provide guidance and influence the thoughts, feelings of subordinates, actions and behaviour that are exemplary by

subordinates and able to move all the abilities of its members towards the best performance. (Ritonga & Tarigan, 2015)

Furthermore, to determine whether or not the variables of work stress and work motivation affect employee performance through transformational leadership, the researchers made table 5 as follows:

Table 5. Sobel-Test Results Path Analysis

No	Path Analysis	Sobel-Test	Sig. Two-Tailed Probability Value	Path Coefficients	Decision
1	The Influence of Work Stress on Employee Performance Through Transformational Leadership	-0.3333287	0.738886	1,9794	Tidak Berpengaruh Signifikan
2	The Influence of Work Motivation on Employee Performance Through Transformational Leadership	6.5648566	0.00000	1,9794	Berpengaruh Signifikan

Source: Primary data processed, 2025.

From table 5 it can be concluded that the research results are as follows:

6. The Effect of Work Stress On Employee Performance Through Transformational Leadership.

The statistical test results show that the Sobel-Test value is -0.3333287 with a sig. two-tailed probability value of 0.738886. When compared to the path coefficients value of 1.9794, then Effect (-0.3333287 < 1.9794). This means that job stress no significant effect on employee performance mediated by transformational leadership. Logically, if an employee experiences work stress, it can cause excessive anxiety. They often become irritable, aggressive, restless, non-cooperative and to a certain extent they can be destructive. In the short term, stress left unchecked without serious treatment will make police officers depressed, unmotivated and frustrated, which in turn leads to employees not being able to work optimally. Stress can also be caused by many external and internal pressures in order to fulfil their needs, which will reduce their performance. Thus the role of leadership becomes dominant in providing direction, guidance and can even provide solutions in solving some of the problems faced in their work so that these employees perform well. The findings of this study are in line with Arwinence Pramadewi (2018) that work stress has no significant effect

on employee performance (Pramadewi, 2018). An employee who experiences work stress can experience nervousness and feel chronic *anxiety* if not treated immediately. Stress that is left unchecked without serious handling will make employees feel depressed and frustrated, which in turn causes employees to not be able to do their jobs properly. Meanwhile, in the long run, if employees are unable to control their stress, they will no longer be able to maintain their jobs. This leadership style is characterized by a lack of interpersonal sensitivity, concern for staff welfare, and a lack of empathy capacity, as well as a lack of guidance and motivational stimulation functions (Andilolo et al., 2024).

7. The Effect of Work Motivation On Employee Performance Through Transformational Leadership.

The Sobel-Test statistical test results show that there is a sobel statistical value of 6.5648563 with a two tailed probability significance of 0.000. When compared with the t value of 1.9794, then (6.5648566 > 1.9794). These results indicate that work motivation affects employee performance through transformational leadership. The logic of thinking is that if an employee already has a standard of ability to achieve higher personal success in his work environment, then the fulfilment of basic needs and power over his work authority, thus being

able to affiliate or cooperate with his colleagues and superiors, then improve his performance. This means that if an employee who has been motivated in carrying out his work, requires a transformational leadership role to always motivate, provide direction and guidance, discuss and can even provide solutions in solving some of the problems faced by his subordinates in solving the problems they face. So that subordinates feel that they are working with high motivation because they are also supported by their basic needs. However, if the leadership role is too much to regulate and interfere in all personal matters of employees not in the form of motivation, then the impact will not improve performance for these employees.

These findings can confirm previous findings by Diva Riza Fahlefi (2016), that motivation has no significant effect on employee performance. Even though an employee is given a large salary and high appreciation, it cannot guarantee that the employee concerned will perform well. Caused by the role of leadership too much regulating and interfering in all personal matters of employees not in the form of motivation, the impact will not improve performance for these employees. (Fahlefi, 2016)

CONCLUSION

An employee experiencing work stress can be *nervous* and feel chronic *anxiety*. They often become irritable, aggressive, restless, frustrated and not cooperative with their colleagues or superiors. Stress that is left without serious treatment will make employees feel depressed, unmotivated, and frustrated, which in turn causes employees to not be able to work optimally. In that condition, the role of transformational leadership is needed to provide direction, guidance, work motivation, provide work solutions, and provide rewards for themselves when subordinates can complete their work well. Another case with the condition of employees who are motivated in carrying out their work, they can receive direction and guidance from their superiors, discuss with fellow colleagues and can even provide solutions in solving some of their work problems. So that the role of the leader

will be easier in motivating his subordinates in solving the problems faced by his subordinates. The impact is that employees can improve their performance.

The role of transformational leadership is proven to be important in mediating the effect of work motivation on employee performance. Therefore, organisations need to focus on strengthening their leadership capacity. Inspirational, empowering and participative leadership skills are required. Leaders must be able to build employees' intrinsic motivation by creating a positive, supportive and appreciative work environment for employees' achievements.

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