

The Role of Transformational Leadership, Organizational Culture and Organizational Commitment on SMEs Performance in the Digital Era

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to analyze the relationship between transformational leadership and performance, the relationship between organizational culture and performance and the relationship between organizational commitment and performance. This research uses an explanatory research approach, which aims to explain the causal relationship between research variables and testing hypotheses. The population in this study was all 760 SMEs employees. Meanwhile, to determine the number/size of samples in this research, simple random sampling was used of 240 employees. The data collection technique used was an online questionnaire. This data will be analyzed using a quantitative approach using statistical analysis, namely partial least squares – structural equation model (PLS-SEM) which aims to carry out path analysis with latent variables. The software tool for processing data is SmartPLS 3.0. This analysis is often referred to as the second generation of multivariate analysis. The questionnaire is designed using statement items with a Likert scale of 1 to 7. The stages of data analysis are validity testing, reliability testing and significance testing or hypothesis testing. The conclusion of this research is that transformational leadership has a positive and significant relationship to performance, organizational culture has a positive and significant relationship to performance and organizational commitment has a positive and significant relationship to performance.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, organizational culture, organizational commitment, performance, SMEs, digital era

Introduction

According to [Acar et al. \(2012\)](#) Human resources in SMEs are a very important factor for the effectiveness of activities within the organization. Every company, whatever its form or type, will require human resources who have the ability to think, act and are skilled in dealing with the success of a company. SMEs are required to improve the quality of resources so that employee performance increases and can contribute to improving company performance. According to [Greimel et al. \(2023\)](#) Managing Human Resources in an organization is not an easy thing, because it involves various elements in the organization, namely employees, leaders and the system itself. Human needs are defined as everything they have, achieve and enjoy, therefore humans are encouraged to carry out activities by working. Performance is a work result achieved by a person in carrying out the tasks assigned to him which is based on skill, experience, seriousness and time. This performance is a combination of three important factors, namely a worker's ability and interest, ability and acceptance of explanations of task delegation and roles as well as a person's level of motivation. According to [Gideon \(2023\)](#) Employee performance really determines the progress of a company because performance is very

important in the organization's efforts to achieve its goals. If employees have good performance, this will certainly have a beneficial impact on the company, and vice versa, if employee performance is low, the company will experience difficulties and losses in achieving the goals set by the company. According to [Nasir et al. \(2022\)](#) SMEs performance is also the level of work results of employees in achieving the job requirements that have been given. Employee performance is something that needs to be taken seriously by a company, because employee performance with various aspects within it will have a direct impact on the performance of SMEs.

According to [Atik et al. \(2023\)](#) Many SMEs managers realize that in order to compete effectively in the market, companies need to retain their employees and to be able to minimize employees' desire to leave their jobs is possible if employees feel confident in the business. According to [Evitasaki et al. \(2023\)](#) states that commitment is a feeling of identification, involvement and loyalty expressed by workers towards the company. Organizational commitment that is carried out well will be able to increase the performance and performance discipline of employees and employees will always be responsible for the work carried out. According to [Alzoraiki et al. \(2023\)](#) High organizational commitment results in work performance, low absenteeism rates and low employee turnover rates. With high commitment, the possibility of performance decline can be avoided. Organizational commitment also plays an important role in increasing the satisfaction and performance of SMEs

According to [Haris et al. \(2023\)](#) transformational leadership is where there is a lack of harmony in the relationship between leaders and employees, in this case the leaders in question are all the leaders in each section, where the leaders are always busy and often outside the office, apart from that the leaders do not pay more attention to the future direction of the organization, other than This is a lack of approach between leaders and employees so that employees feel less than optimal at work, besides that leaders do not provide motivation to employees and the rewards they get if the specified targets are achieved so that employees feel not motivated to work better. This is because the company leadership is busy and not optimally dealing with all of its employees, so that without realizing it, employees receive direct motivation from the leadership and affect employee morale, and it is difficult to achieve the company's desired goals, which can also lead to a decrease in SMEs' work productivity.

Thus, performance becomes a benchmark in SMEs to assess employees in carrying out their duties and responsibilities properly and correctly. According to [Liu et al. \(2023\)](#) Performance is the result of completing work in the form of tasks and responsibilities during a certain period. According to [Kehr et al. \(2023\)](#) SMEs performance is measured based on the achievements of the work carried out, the better the employee's performance, the greater the contribution in achieving goals, conversely, if performance decreases, the contribution in achieving company goals will be lower. Several previous studies relating to commitment, compensation and work discipline on employee performance show differences or gaps in their research conclusions. The results of research by [Korku et al. \(2023\)](#); [Liu et al. \(2023\)](#) state that organizational commitment is positively related to performance. Meanwhile, according to [Haris et al. \(2023\)](#); [Hilton et al. \(2023\)](#); [Iqbal et al. \(2021\)](#) found that organizational commitment had no significant effect on the performance of SMEs.

Literature Review

Transformational Leadership

According to [Kumar et al. \(2023\)](#) transformational leadership is pure transformational leadership which is leadership that is social and cares about the common good. These socially transformational leaders overcome their own interests for the good of others. According to [Hilton et al. \(2023\)](#) the goals and benefits of leadership are certainty of direction and purpose, pride, trust. According to [Korku et al. \(2023\)](#) transformational leadership has four indicators, namely Charisma, inspirational, intellectual stimulation, individual attention. According to Handoko, 2013, leadership indicators are Ability, Needs, Intelligence, Assertiveness, Self-confidence, Creativity. This is where the leader gets the main values, the priority scale, the way for his employees to work and to work. A leader must have the courage to bear everything. This means there are sacrifices because the leader is a servant, not a king. This means that the leader must be ready to serve in any situation and condition. Research carried out [Haris et al. \(2023\)](#); [Hilton et al. \(2023\)](#); [Liu et al. \(2023\)](#) found that transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence on employee satisfaction and organizational commitment. Other research by [Iqbal et al. \(2021\)](#); [Kumar et al. \(2023\)](#) shows that transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence on organizational satisfaction and commitment. This is also in line with research conducted by [Hilton et al. \(2023\)](#) where it was stated that transformational leadership has a significant positive influence on employee satisfaction and organizational commitment. With leaders who are able to direct and motivate employees in a better direction, the company will have employees with high commitment to the company because employees feel that with guidance from highly competent leaders they will always succeed in achieving something better in the future.

Organizational culture

According to [Leso et al. \(2023\)](#) Organizational culture means the values, attitudes and beliefs reflected in the mission and goals, and practices of the organization. According to [Prayuda et al. \(2023\)](#) there are six factors that influence organizational culture, namely observed behavioral regularities, norms, dominant values, philosophy, rules, organizational climate. According to [Rehman et al. \(2019\)](#) states that to assess the quality of an organization's culture it can be seen from ten indicators, namely individual initiative, tolerance for risky actions, direction, integration, management support, control, identity, reward system, tolerance for conflict, pattern-communication patterns. Previous research shows the influence of organizational culture on employee performance. Previous research, [Osman et al. \(2023\)](#); [Rehman et al. \(2019\)](#) has various theoretical and managerial contributions and has certain limitations in guidance in the Indonesian education sector. The weakness of this research is that it only focuses on organizational culture as a predictor. From this perspective, recent research to include other predictors such as leadership behavior, management support, and change management to act as additional predictors of employee engagement and performance, while moderating variables such as organizational environment can be implemented to enhance or explain employee differences. According to [Osman et al. \(2023\)](#) Performance will improve significantly and the current framework will be extended. This also increases the percentage explaining the difference

Organizational Commitment

According to [Schmitz et al. \(2023\)](#) the definition of organizational commitment is a promise (agreement/contract) to do something. Promises to ourselves or others that are reflected in our actions.. According to [Rubia et al. \(2023\)](#) factors that influence organizational commitment are Personal Factors, Organizational Factors, Relational Factors. According to [Sakulkijkarn et al. \(2022\)](#); [Soomro et al. \(2019\)](#) there are three types of components of organizational commitment, namely affective commitment, sustainable commitment, and normative commitment. Organizational Commitment is a psychological condition that characterizes an employee's relationship with the organization or its implications which influence whether an employee always stays in the organization or not, which is categorized into three parts, namely affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. According to [Samson et al. \(2019\)](#); [Sakulkijkarn et al. \(2022\)](#) organizational commitment is an individual's strong desire based on his beliefs to continue to be in an organization and try to comply with the organization's rules. In other words, it is an attitude that reflects his loyalty as an employee to the organization. According to [Sakulkijkarn et al. \(2022\)](#); [Soomro et al. \(2019\)](#); [Susanto. \(2023\)](#) states that organizational commitment is the feelings, attitudes and behavior of individuals identifying themselves as part of the organization, being involved in the process of organizational activities and being loyal to the organization in achieving organizational goals. Organizational commitment encourages employees to maintain their jobs and show the results they should. According to [Samson et al. \(2019\)](#); [Sakulkijkarn et al. \(2022\)](#) states that organizational commitment or job loyalty is the degree to which workers identify with the organization and want to continue actively participating in the organization

SMEs Performance

According to [Schmitz et al. \(2023\)](#) states that employee performance (performance) is the work result that can be achieved by a person or group of people in an organization, in accordance with their respective authority and responsibilities, in order to achieve the objectives of the organization concerned legally, without violating law and in accordance with morals and ethics. According to [Schmitz et al. \(2023\)](#) describes these factors as personal factors, leadership factors, team factors, system factors, contextual factors. The components of employee performance indicators. According to [Schmitz et al. \(2023\)](#) are technical capabilities including knowledge possessed by employees, ability to use methods, work techniques used by employees, equipment used to carry out tasks, experience that employees have had with similar work, training received by employees. The next indicator of conceptual ability includes the ability to understand the complexity of the company, adapting the field of action of each unit to the operational field of the company as a whole, responsibility as an employee. Then the next indicator of interpersonal relationship abilities includes the ability to collaborate with other people, motivate employees, carry out negotiations, work produced by employees. Performance indicators are something that will be calculated and measured. The performance indicators [Soomro et al. \(2019\)](#); [Susanto. \(2023\)](#); [Schmitz et al. \(2023\)](#) state that they are quality of work, quantity of work.

Hypothesis Development

The relationship between transformational leadership and performance

The application of transformational leadership in SMEs can encourage increased organizational and SME performance. Transformational leadership is widely applied in various organizations.

According to Acar et al. (2012);Atik et al. (2023) Transformational leadership is widely applied in various organizations. According to Greimel et al. (2023) that transformational leadership has a positive and significant relationship to performance, other research by Haris et al. (2023); Iqbal et al. (2021) Transformational leadership is widely applied in various organizations. Research by Kumar et al. (2023); Liu et al. (2023) say that transformational leadership has a positive and significant relationship to performance. The application of transformational leadership in SMEs can encourage increased organizational and SME performance. Based on the results of previous research, this research hypothesis was prepared as follows:

H1: Transformational leadership has a positive and significant relationship to performance

The relationship between organizational culture and performance

According to Leso et al. (2023);Mesu et al. (2015) Organizational culture has a positive and significant relationship to performance. Another study by Osman et al. (2023);Prayuda et al. (2023); Pratiwi et al. (2023); organizational culture has a positive and significant relationship with performance, other research According to Rubia et al. (2023); Sakulkijkarn et al. (2022) Organizational culture has a positive and significant relationship to performance. Another study by Soomro et al. (2019) organizational culture has a positive and significant relationship to performance. Based on the results of previous research, this research hypothesis was prepared as follows:

H2: Organizational culture has a positive and significant relationship with performance

The relationship between organizational commitment and performance

According to Tipu et al. (2012); Tung et al. (2022) Organizational commitment has a positive and significant relationship with performance, other research by Widiyanto et al. (2017); Wijaya, E. (2023) Organizational commitment has a positive and significant relationship to performance. Other research Zhao et al. (2023);Zhu et al. (2023) show that organizational culture has a positive and significant relationship with performance. Based on the results of previous research, this research hypothesis was prepared as follows:

H3: Organizational commitment has a positive and significant relationship with performance

Method

This research uses an explanatory research approach, which aims to explain the causal relationship between research variables and testing hypotheses. The population in this study was all 760 SMEs employees. Meanwhile, to determine the number/size of samples in this research, simple random sampling was used of 240 employees. The data collection technique used was an online questionnaire. This data will be analyzed using a quantitative approach using statistical analysis, namely partial least squares – structural equation model (PLS-SEM) which aims to carry out path analysis with latent variables. The software tool for processing data is SmartPLS 3.0. This analysis is often referred to as the second generation of multivariate analysis. The questionnaire is designed using statement items with a Likert scale of 1 to 7. The stages of data analysis are validity testing, reliability testing and significance testing or hypothesis testing.

The hypothesis in this research is:

H1: Transformational leadership has a positive and significant relationship to performance

H2: Organizational culture has a positive and significant relationship with performance

H3: Organizational commitment has a positive and significant relationship with performance

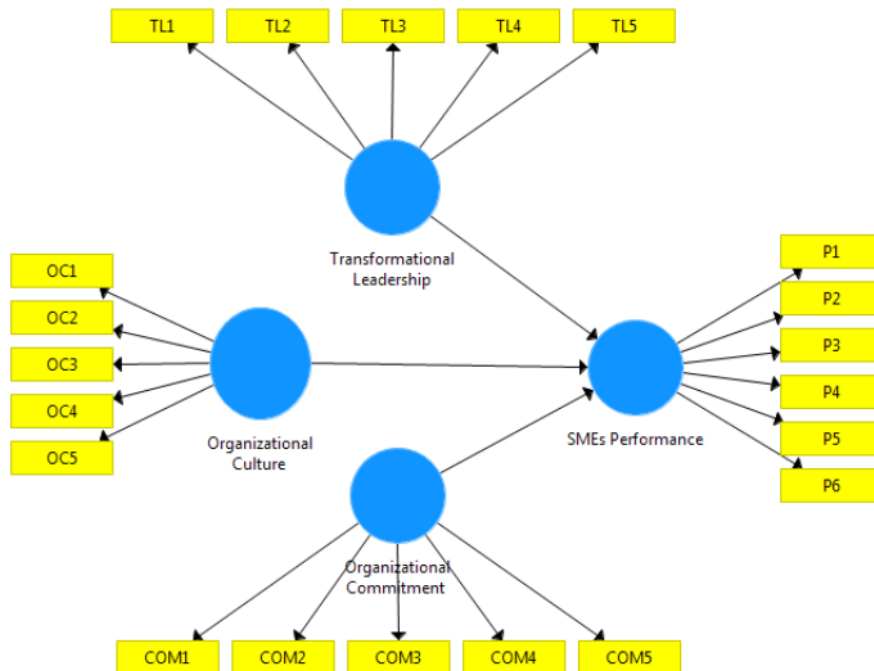


Fig 1. Research Model

Result and Discussion

Convergent Validity Test

This test consists of three tests, namely the validity test of each indicator, composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE). The ideal factor loading value is greater than 0.70 and is considered valid as a construct building indicator.

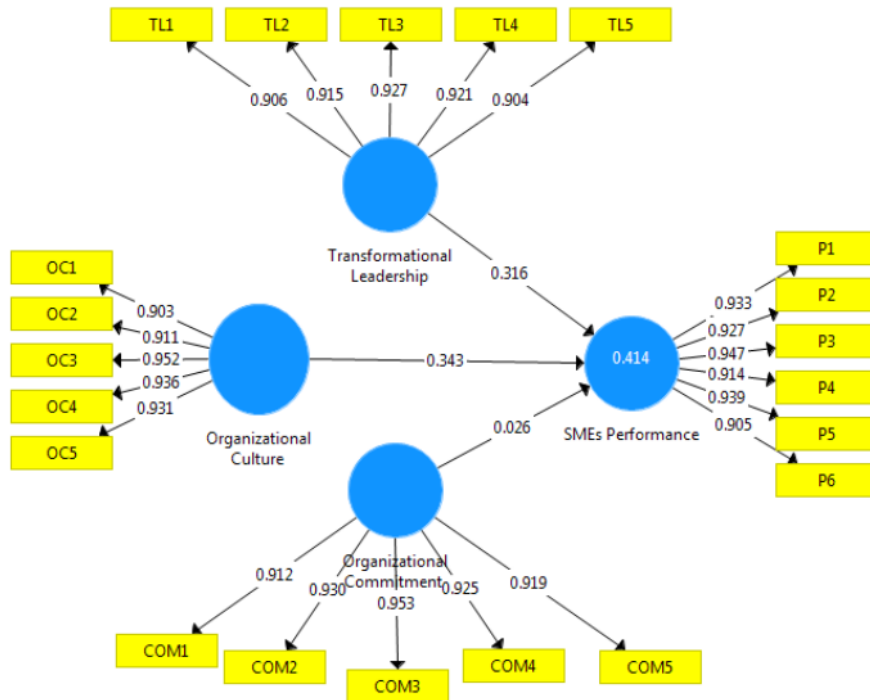


Figure 2. Standardized Loading Factor Inner and Outer Model

Based on Figure 2, the indicator value for each variable is greater than 0.70, so it is concluded that it is valid and able to explain the variables of transformational leadership, organizational culture, organizational commitment and SMEs performance.

Composite Reliability

Composite reliability is the reliability of a construct which is assessed with Cronbach Alpha, a variable has high reliability if the Cornbach Alpha value and composite reliability value are greater than 0.60.

Table 1. Composite Reliability Results

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability
Transformational leadership	0.918	0.922	0.915
Organizational culture	0.982	0.921	0.909
Performance	0.978	0.908	0.901
Organizational commitment	0.908	0.909	0.934

Based on table 1 above, it shows that the composite reliability value for organizational culture is 0.909; transformational leadership of 0.915; performance of 0.901; organizational commitment

of 0.934. The four latents obtained Cronbach's alpha values above 0.6, so it can be said that all factors have good reliability as measuring instruments. This means that latent variables can explain on average more than half of the variance of the indicators.

Table 2. Results of Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Transformational leadership	0.918	0.922	0.754
Organizational culture	0.982	0.921	0.787
Performance	0.918	0.910	0.712
Organizational commitment	0.908	0.909	0.737

Based on table 2, the AVE value of the organizational culture variable is 0.787; transformational leadership is 0.754; performance is 0.712; organizational commitment is 0.737. These four variables have an AVE above 0.5 so that the construct has good convergent validity where the latent variable on average is able to explain more than half of the variance of the indicators.

Hypothesis test

Hypothesis testing is to test the significance of all relationships or test a hypothesis. Based on data processing that has been carried out using the smartPLS 3.0 program, the results of the direct influence hypothesis test can be seen in the following path coefficient picture below

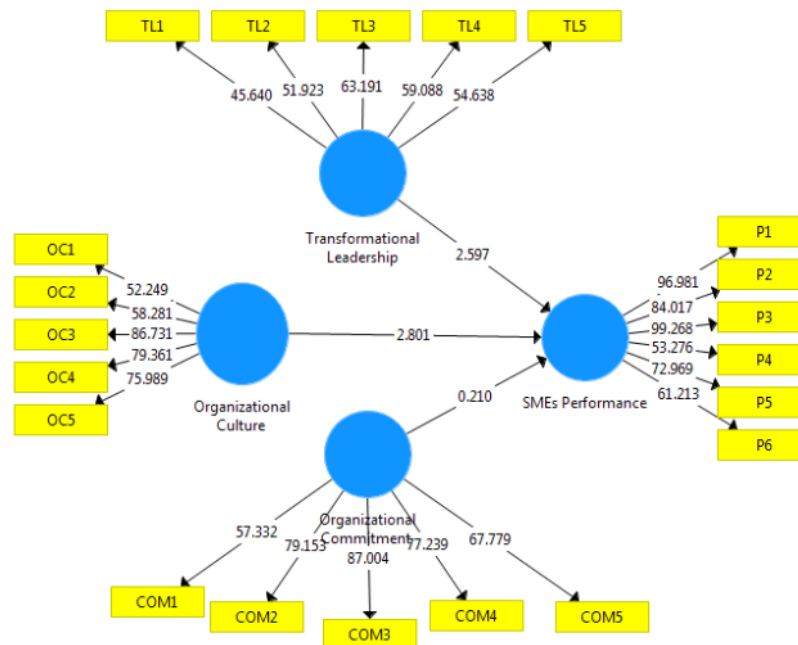


Fig 3. Hypothesis test

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing

Correlation	T Statistics	P Values	Conclusion
Transformational leadership and performance	2.597	0.000	Supported
Organizational culture and performance	2.801	0.000	Supported
Organizational commitment and performance	6.210	0.000	Supported

Discussion

The findings in this research are regarding the suitability of theory to research, opinions and previous research that have been put forward by the results of previous research as well as behavioral patterns that must be carried out to overcome these things. The following is a discussion of the analysis of the findings of this research as follows:

The Influence of Transformational Leadership on Performance

From the results of the hypothesis testing analysis, the influence of transformational leadership on performance has a path coefficient of 0.316. This influence has a probability value (p-values) of $0.000 < 0.05$, meaning that transformational leadership has a significant effect on employee performance. This shows that transformational leadership is able to improve performance, where the leader provides work enthusiasm, provides advice, motivates skill development, approaches work rules and procedures and provides warnings and praise to members of the organization so that employees will be more active in carry out their work so that the employee's performance will increase. The results of this research are in line with the results of previous research conducted by [Susanto. \(2023\)](#); [Schmitz et al. \(2023\)](#) proving that transformational leadership has an influence on employee performance. The results of data analysis show that transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence on job satisfaction. According to [Acar et al. \(2012\)](#); [Atik et al. \(2023\)](#) Transformational leadership is widely applied in various organizations. According to [Greimel et al. \(2023\)](#) that transformational leadership has a positive and significant relationship to performance, other research by [Haris et al. \(2023\)](#); [Iqbal et al. \(2021\)](#) Transformational leadership is widely applied in various organizations. Research by [Kumar et al. \(2023\)](#); [Liu et al. \(2023\)](#) say that transformational leadership has a positive and significant relationship to performance. Results of the analysis means that the more transformational leadership increases, the more job satisfaction increases. In other words, if SMEs are able to create good transformational leadership, the job satisfaction that is built will increase. Employees will feel satisfied when they have a leader who is charismatic and is able to provide encouragement to progress. Leaders who are able to be role models for their employees will certainly make employees satisfied with their presence in the company. This is in line with research conducted by [Rubia et al. \(2023\)](#); [Samson et al. \(2019\)](#) which found that transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence on employees' job satisfaction. Another research by [Bhaskra \(2019\)](#) shows that transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence on employee job satisfaction. This is also in line with research conducted by; [Samson et al. \(2019\)](#); [Sakulkijkarn et al. \(2022\)](#) where it is stated that transformational leadership has a significant positive influence on employee job satisfaction.

The Influence of Organizational Culture on Performance

From the results of the hypothesis testing analysis, the influence of organizational culture on performance has a path coefficient of 0.343. This influence has a probability value (p-values) of $0.000 < 0.05$, meaning that organizational culture has a significant effect on employee performance. This shows that with the existence of a conducive organizational culture, performance will increase where employees have a series of values, beliefs, behaviors, habits and attitudes that help employees in carrying out their work and understand the principles adhered to by SMEs where the values are in accordance with. If employees adhere to the values that apply in the agency, employees will be more serious in carrying out their work, thereby increasing employee performance. The results of this research are in line with the results of previous research conducted by Zhao et al. (2023); Zhu et al. (2023) which states that organizational culture influences employee performance. Research conducted by Tipu et al. (2012); Tsai et al. (2015) regarding the influence of organizational culture and performance has received positive recognition by organizational culture researchers. Revealing that, researchers use the influence between culture and performance to influence the way organizations search for and use these facts or information. According to Leso et al. (2023); Mesu et al. (2015) Organizational culture has a positive and significant relationship to performance. Another study by Osman et al. (2023); Prayuda et al. (2023); Pratiwi et al. (2023); organizational culture has a positive and significant relationship with performance, other research According to Rubia et al. (2023); Sakulkijkarn et al. (2022) Organizational culture has a positive and significant relationship to performance. Another study by Soomro et al. (2019) organizational culture has a positive and significant relationship to performance. According to Tung et al. (2022); Widiyanto et al. (2017) stated that employees who are on the same path and culture can achieve their organizational goals, which offers opportunities or encouragement for employees to develop and grow within the organization. According to Wijaya, (2023) argue that organizational goals cannot be achieved without a solid approach through a healthy organizational culture. Culture and organization can encourage and shape the attitudes and behavior of all workers, and emphasize that organizational culture has an influence on employee performance. According to Zhao et al. (2023); Zhu et al. (2023) stated that each employee has various personal needs and the organizational culture given to employees results in unsatisfactory or inconsistent with employee needs. Zahra et al. (2020) argue that researchers agree that organizational culture and employee performance have an influence on each other. According to Tipu et al. (2012); Tsai et al. (2015); Tung et al. (2022) argue that a significant research subject, namely employee performance, is very important for the success of an organization by understanding the correlation between organizational culture and employee performance. Empirical studies conducted by many researchers reveal organizational culture that influences employee performance. These results are in line with what was proven by Tung et al. (2022); Widiyanto et al. (2017) regarding the influence of organizational culture and performance which has received positive recognition among organizational culture researchers. Revealing that, researchers use the influence between culture and performance to influence the way organizations search for and use facts or information Tipu et al. (2012); Tsai et al. (2015); Tung et al. (2022) stated that employees who are on the same path and culture can achieve their organizational goals, which offers opportunities or encouragement for employees to develop and grow within the organization. Culture and organization can encourage and shape the attitudes and behavior of all workers, and emphasize that organizational culture has an influence on employee performance. According to Zhao et al. (2023) stated that each employee has various personal needs and the

organizational culture given to employees results in unsatisfactory or inconsistent with employee needs. According to [Tsai et al. \(2015\)](#); [Zhu et al. \(2023\)](#) argue that a significant research subject, namely employee performance, is very important for the success of an organization by understanding the correlation between organizational culture and employee performance.

The Effect of Organizational Commitment on Performance

From the results of the hypothesis testing analysis, the influence of organizational commitment on performance has a path coefficient of 0.260. This influence has a probability value (pvalues) of $0.000 < 0.05$, meaning that organizational commitment has a significant effect on employee performance. This shows that with increasing organizational commitment, employee performance will increase, where with committed employees, employees will feel confident and believe that the values and goals of the organization are in line with employee expectations so that employees will work harder so that employee performance will be even better. increase. The results of this research are supported by [Acar et al. \(2012\)](#); [Alzoraiki et al. \(2023\)](#) showing that organizational commitment has a positive effect on increasing employee performance. Organizational Commitment influences employee performance, whether it can be accepted or proven to be true. This is reinforced by the theory put forward by [Nasir et al. \(2022\)](#); [Gideon \(2023\)](#); [Greimel et al. \(2023\)](#) which states that organizational commitment can influence employee performance, as follows, organizational commitment to the company is seen as very important in business. Loyal employees will be willing to put the company's interests before their own interests. Commitment is also one of the requirements in employee performance appraisals and job promotions. Every organizational behavior definitely discusses the importance of organizational commitment. According to [Tipu et al. \(2012\)](#); [Tung et al. \(2022\)](#) Organizational commitment has a positive and significant relationship with performance, other research by [Widianto et al. \(2017\)](#); [Wijaya, E. \(2023\)](#) Organizational commitment has a positive and significant relationship to performance. Other research [Zhao et al. \(2023\)](#); [Zhu et al. \(2023\)](#) show that organizational culture has a positive and significant relationship with performance. Organizational commitment is associated with job satisfaction, absenteeism levels, turnover intention and performance. High organizational commitment is very necessary in an organization, because creating high commitment will influence a professional work climate. [Eviatasari et al. \(2023\)](#); [Atik et al. \(2023\)](#) states that organizational commitment is a situation when an employee supports a particular organization and its goals and wishes to maintain his membership in that organization. Attitudes that reflect employee loyalty to the organization from an ongoing process when organizational members express their concern for the organization and its continued success and progress. Organizational commitment in this research can be measured from several indicators such as employee willingness, employee loyalty and employee pride

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and discussion previously presented, it can be concluded that transformational leadership directly has a significant effect on employee performance. Organizational culture directly has a significant effect on employee performance. Organizational commitment directly has a significant effect on employee performance. Results of the analysis means that the more transformational leadership increases, the more job satisfaction increases. In other words, if SMEs are able to create good transformational leadership, the job satisfaction that is built will increase. Employees will feel satisfied when they have a leader who is charismatic and is able to provide encouragement to progress. Leaders who are able to be role models for

their employees will certainly make employees satisfied with their presence in the company. the existence of a conducive organizational culture, performance will increase where employees have a series of values, beliefs, behaviors, habits and attitudes that help employees in carrying out their work and understand the principles adhered to by SMEs where the values are in accordance with If employees adhere to the values that apply in the agency, employees will be more serious in carrying out their work, thereby increasing employee performance. Loyal employees will be willing to put the company's interests before their own interests. Commitment is also one of the requirements in employee performance appraisals and job promotions. Every organizational behavior definitely discusses the importance of organizational commitment. Organizational commitment is associated with job satisfaction, absenteeism levels, turnover intention and performance. High organizational commitment is very necessary in an organization, because creating high commitment will influence a professional work climate

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