

# The Effects of Leadership to Employee Performance During Covid-19 Pandemic

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## **Abstract**

*The role of leadership is very important in overcoming the impact of Covid-19 in companies. A good leader must be able to listen, share information and ask as well as communicate correctly to their subordinates. A transformational leader is required to improve employee performance even in tough times. The concept of transformational leadership in this research involves: (1) Idealized Influence, (2) Intellectual Stimulation, (3) Individual Consideration, and (4) Inspirational Motivation. The result of the research shows that there is significant influence between the leadership role and employee performance respectively with a value of 5,067 for idealized influence to employee performance, 7,223 for intellectual stimulation to employee performance and 13,992 for inspirational motivation to employee performance. While individual consideration to employee performance resulted as insignificant with a value of 1,235.*

**Keywords:** Leadership, Employee Performance, Covid-19

## **Introduction**

Coronavirus or Covid-19 have turned into a major global pandemic. Per April 2020, the number of Covid-19 victims globally have reached 3.1 million people where 0.951 million people have been cured and 0.217 million are deceased. In Indonesia, the number of Covid-19 victims up until April 2020 reached 10.118 people where 1.522 people are cured and 792 people are deceased. The pandemic, which originated from Wuhan, China, have not found a final solution even with the discovery of vaccines. Hence, [1] stated that until there is a standard treatment procedure and Covid-19 vaccines, it is very important to avoid infection and the spread of Covid-19 even further. The prevention of Covid-19 clusters need to be contained. For individuals who have travel history to Covid-19 infected areas in the last 14 days, they have to monitor their body temperatures and follow health protocols for 14 days. For workers in companies, health protocols have to be followed by wearing the appropriate protective gears. A strict

work protection procedures will also have to be implemented to prevent a wider spread of the virus.

Many countries are implementing policies for Covid-19 pandemic such as lockdown, high scale social distancing, fiscal and monetary policies, trade restrictions and travel restrictions. [2, 3] conducted research for the impact of Covid-19 prevention policies toward economic activities. The lockdown policy have negative impact toward economic growth, where each day passed in lockdown reduces economic activities by -0.113. High scale social distancing policy have positive impact toward economic activities by 1.369. This may be caused by the presence of economic activities by applying Covid-19 protocols. International travel restrictions have negative impact toward economic activities by -0.580.

[4] stated that eight main impacts for coronavirus or Covid-19 toward Indonesian economy which are: (1) Workers who are laid off and fired are more than 1.5 million, (2) PMI Manufacturing Indonesia experienced contractions or decreased up to 45.3 in March 2020, (3) Imports in the first quarter of 2020 decreased by 3.7% year-to-date (ytd), (4) Inflation in March 2020 reached 2.96% year-on-year (yoy), (5) 12.703 flights in 15 airports are cancelled between January to March 2020, (6) Number of tourists have decreased up to 6.800 each day, (7) Revenues lost in air service sector reached Rp 207 billion and (8) Occupancy rate in six thousand hotels have decreased by 50%.

The widespread of Covid-19 pandemic have affected the real sector and the business world. Many companies are forced to reduce the number of their employees for efficiency and reducing cost reasons. In another perspective, companies have to improve their company operations which involves hospitals, pharmacies and other support industries. [5, 6] stated that in times like this, the role of leadership is very important to overcome the impacts of Covid-19. Leaders have to be able to listen, share informations and ask as well as communicate to their subordinates correctly. In times of crisis, leaders have to be able to speak about solidarity and show high commitment to the organization. Leaders are also expected to walk the talk as well as understand the consequences of every decisions and actions taken. A good leader basically have to be able to adapt and solve complex problems.

[7] stated that it is important for leaders to understand different impacts of coronavirus to their employees. Health and safety problems have to be the main consideration in any business during Covid-19 pandemic. One of the biggest challenges is to understand the needs and condition of their employees that are affected by life, work and family conditions that are diverse. In current condition, leaders have to utilize every policy tools that can overcome employee problems to maintain the productivity,

This research uses the framework of [8, 9] in transformational leadership on how leaders act on Covid-19 pandemic. Transformational leadership involves: (1) Idealized Influence where leaders have strong vision and mission and the ability to build organization pride and instill confidence to their subordinates, (2) Intellectual Stimulation where leaders are able to improve intelligence, rationality and problem solving skills of their subordinates, (3) Individual Consideration where leaders are able to give personal attention, support and guidance to their subordinates, (4) Inspirational Motivation where leaders are able to provide motivations, high expectations toward the future and communicate achievements using the strengths that the organization possess. The objective of this research is to identify the influence of the variable Idealized Influence, Intellectual Stimulation, Individual Consideration and Inspiration Motivation toward employee performance.

## Literature Review

Performance is of the results of an organization or the actual outputs of an organization, which can be measured against intended outputs, goals and objectives. The organizational performance involves three areas associated with the organization—financial performance, shareholder return and the product/service market performance [10]. Performance also has been defined as the level of an individual's work achievement after having exerted effort). Performance dimension can include quantity, quality, time for work, and quality of service, managerial skill, teamwork and creativity [11]. [12, 13] found that leadership has a significant influence on achievement of goals by fostering trust and building relationship with subordinates. Leaders influence positively towards employee performance in terms of work engagement, quality, quantity and persistence.

### Relationship of Inspirational Motivation On Employee Performance

Inspirational motivation is about encouraging subjects in order to elevate their consciousness of about the organization's mission, vision and committing to the vision is a key theme of this factor. Inspirational motivation is concerned with motivating employees to a higher level of contribution and productivity by dedicating attention to a higher cause [14]. Leaders with inspirational motivation are able to create a strong sense of team spirit among followers as a means of inspiring them towards the realization of stated organizational outcomes [15]. Inspirational motivation refers to the way leader to motivate and inspire their followers to commit to the vision of the organization. Inspirational motivation has been identified as a key contributor to employee dedication and is applied by the leader to realize higher levels of employee engagement and effectiveness, which are connected to better performance outcomes [16]. Inspirational motivation is the ability of a leader to behave in a way that motivates the followers, generates enthusiasm and challenges people. Leaders do this when they develop and communicate a convincing and an attractive future vision and also when they clearly communicate the expectation [17]. The inspirational motivation variable indicator in this research is based on [18, 19] which are growing high expectations, providing stimulations and inspirations and communicating objectives and resources.

[20] researched the influence of inspirational motivation toward performance management. The variable indicator of inspirational motivation are communicating the vision, motivating and encouraging team spirit. The result of this research showed regression coefficient of 0.188 and the effect is significant at the level of 1%. Stanley, [21] conducted research on the effect of inspirational motivation on employee performance. The variable indicator for inspirational motivation include motivating employees to high productivity, ensure clear conveyance of message to employees, articulates a compelling vision for the future, able to ensure continued optimism and enthusiasm, provide continuous encouragement, show determination enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished. The correlation between inspirational motivation and employee motivation is 0.475 and significant at the level of 1%. The result also showed strong relationship between inspirational motivation and employee performance.

[22] researched the influence of inspirational motivation toward employee satisfaction. The variable inspirational motivation has three indicators which are: Communication, Teamwork and Motivation. The result of this research showed that inspirational motivation contributed up to 34% of job satisfaction. The study concluded that inspirational motivation influenced job satisfaction among employees in commercial Banks in Kenya. Based on the studies above, there is positive influence between

inspirational motivation and employee performance. Therefore, this study formulates the following hypothesis:

H<sub>1</sub>: *There is significant and positive influence of inspirational motivation on employee job performance*

### **Relationship of Idealized Influence On Performance Employee**

Idealized influence has been associated with a leader who has charisma, is ethical and one who is able to effectively communicate his/her vision for the organization to subordinates [23]. Leaders use idealized influence to exert influence by being role models, demonstrating high performance, being trustworthy as well as ethical [24]. These leaders manifest strong personal values that set them apart from the rest and establish positive images for their followers [25]. [26] idealized influence is leaders act as role models who are highly admired, respected and trusted by their followers. Idealized influence emerges when leaders behave in desirable ways that propel them to be role models for their followers. In this research, idealized influence applied [23] study by involving three indicators which are awareness on organization's vision and mission, developing organization pride and nurturing trust on subordinates.

[27] saw the influence of idealized influence to performance management. The indicating variables are articulating vision, role modelling and goal setting. the result of the research showed regression coefficient of 0.23 and real at the level of 1%. So, the influence of idealized influence to performance is real. Stanley, [28] researched the influence of idealized influence on employee performance. The indicators of idealized influence involved: Articulates an appealing and inspiring vision and goals, Motivates Employees to believe on our abilities, good role model in influencing high quality of service among employees, encourages participation of employees in decision making, enables efficient utilization of available resources, Emphasizes the importance of employee learning and Development, Talks to us about interpersonal relations and team cohesion. The result of this research showed positive correlation of 0.435 and significant at the level of 1%. Based on the research, this study formulates the second hypothesis:

H<sub>2</sub>: *There is significant and positive influence of Idealized influence on employee job performance*

### **Relationship of Individual Consideration On Performance Employee**

Individualized consideration as the consideration of employee's individuality and developing followers by coaching and mentoring [29]. Individual consideration refers to leader paying special attention to each individual followers for achievement and growth by acting as a coach or mentor. Individualized consideration is the inclusion of people into the transformation process of an organization. Individualized consideration constitutes developing followers through coaching, mentoring and teaching are the central indicator of the factor. A leader who gives personal attention to subordinates, reflect the behavior of treating each employee as an individual and initiate an interest in the long-term development of each employee. Referring to [29], the indicators of individualized consideration are the competency of leaders in providing personal attention, support, mentoring and coaching.

[30] showed a significant positive influence between individualized consideration and employee performance. The results of the regression results indicated that individualized consideration explained a significant proportion of variance in employee performance,  $R^2 = .855$ ,  $F(1, 194) = 33.606$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . Based on this study, leaders who encourage self-development practices, effective communication as well as mentoring and coaching; makes employees to perform maximally at work. [31] conducted study to establish the

relationship between individualized consideration and organizational Performance. The results of coefficients estimates were significant at the 0.05 level of significance. This indicated that the hypothesis was rejected hence there exists a significant and positive relationship between individualized consideration and organizational performance of state corporations in Kenya. Based on the above research, this third hypothesis is formulated:

H3: *There is significant and positive individual consideration influence on employee job performance*

**Relationship of Intellectual Stimulation On Performance Employee**

Intellectual stimulation is characteristic of transformational leaders who develop competence followers, stimulate creative thinking to generate innovative ideas, and teach how to think about a variety of things with a new alternative. Intellectual stimulation will increase the ability of subordinates to understand and solve the problems, thought provoking and imaginative exercise, including changes in values and beliefs [32]. Intellectual stimulation refers to the leader’s challenge to developed assumptions, risk takers and to gather some follower ideas, employees must be willing to challenge the status quo, not avoid the risks and be willing to share an understanding of consumer needs and the changing environments [33]. This research referred to [34] where the indicators of intellectual stimulation are the ability of leaders to improve intelligence, rationality and problem solving skills.

[35] showed the relationship between Intellectual Stimulation to knowledge sharing positive relationship with the value of 0.489 and significant at the 0.05 level of sig. Knowledge sharing positive relationship to Product Innovation with the value of 0.759 and significant at the 0.05 level of sig. Product Innovation positive relationship to Business Performance with the value of BP 0.981 and significant at the 0.05. This study has shown the importance intellectual stimulation has a positive and significant impact on knowledge sharing, product innovation and business performance. Based on the above research, this fourth hypothesis is formulated:

H4: *There is significant and positive intellectual stimulation influence on employee job performance*

Based on the review and hypotheses generated, the following conceptual framework is proposed for the study.

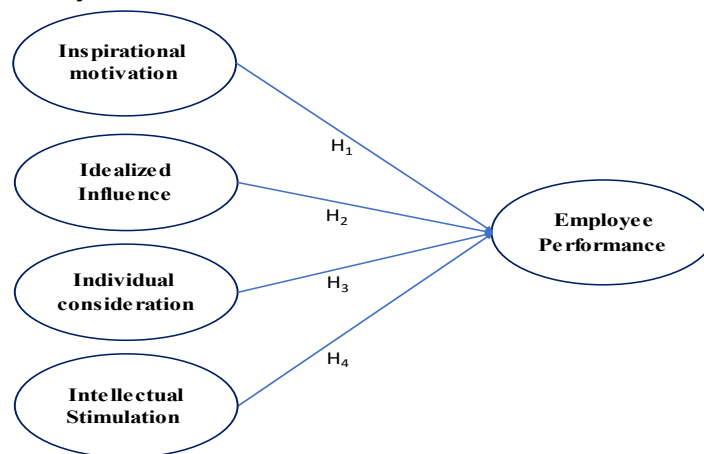


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

## Research Method

This research is a quantitative research where statistic method is mostly used to collect and calculate quantitave data, using systematic framework and relating it to the theories that are relevant for the variables researched.

## Subject

82 questionnaires are distributed in accordance to the total number of population. There are 76 questionnaires that are returned with complete answers with a response rate of 92%. Out of 76 questionnaires, 47 (62%) are male and 29 (38%) are female. Therefore, the method or sampling technique used in this research is saturated sampling method, where every population are used as research sample because of the limited number of samples. The demographic aspect of the research subjects are as follows:

*Table 1*

**Demographic Aspect of Subject**

| Attributes |                 | Number | Percent |
|------------|-----------------|--------|---------|
| Gender     | Male            | 47     | 0,62    |
|            | Female          | 29     | 0,38    |
| Age        | 20-29 year      | 13     | 0,17    |
|            | 30-39 year      | 17     | 0,23    |
|            | 40-49 year      | 29     | 0,38    |
|            | 50-59 year      | 17     | 0,22    |
| Education  | High school     | 28     | 0,37    |
|            | Graduate        | 38     | 0,50    |
|            | Postgraduate    | 10     | 0,13    |
| Position   | Director        | 3      | 0,04    |
|            | General Manager | 11     | 0,15    |
|            | Manager         | 17     | 0,22    |
|            | Staff           | 45     | 0,59    |

Overall, most of the subjects are male (62%). The age that has the highest normal curve distribution is in the range of 40-49 years old (29%). For education, the highest normal curve distribution are undergraduates reaching up to 38%, showing a lot of jobs that have planning and implementing activities. From job position perspective, 59% of the total respondents are staffs.

## Procedure Measures

### Normality

Normality test is used to identify whether the researched data are normally distributed. Skewness ratio and kurtosis ratio are used to determine whether the data are normally distributed or not. Skewness ratio is calculated by the skewness value divided by the standard error of skewness. Kurtosis ratio is calculated by the kurtosis value divided by the standard error of kurtosis. If the value of the kurtosis and skewness ratio is in the range of +2 and -2, the data is normally distributed.

### Reliability



Reliability test is used to identify the reliability of the questionnaire used in this research. A reliable questionnaire will have accurate data. In this research, the reliability test will use cronbach alpha coefficient. If the cronbach alpha coefficient is greater than 0.6 or close to 1, the questionnaire and data used in the research in reliable [36]. Based on table 2, the lowest cronbach alpha coefficient is the variable employee performance with a value of 0.84 and the highest cronbach alpha coefficient is the variable inspirational motivation with a value of 0.92. All variables in this research have a cronbach alpha coefficient greater than 0.6 meaning that the research questionnaire is reliable.

Table 2

Reliability of Scale

| Variables                | Number of Item | Cronbach Alpha |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Inspirational Motivation | 15             | 0,92           |
| Idealized Influence      | 13             | 0,89           |
| Individual Consideration | 20             | 0,91           |
| Intellectual Stimulation | 15             | 0,91           |
| Employee Performance     | 30             | 0,84           |

The dependent variable in this research is employee performance. The indicators of employee performance in this research are quantity, quality, work completion time, service orientation, discipline and leadership. There are 30 questions on the variable employee performance. The lowest cronbach alpha coefficient are the questions regarding thorough completion of work with a value of 0.827 and the highest cronbach alpha coefficient are the questions regarding carrying out work according to orders with a value of 0.834. Looking at the cronbach alpha coefficient, every questions regarding employee performance have a value greater than 0.6. Therefore, it can be concluded that the variable employee performance is valid.

There are four independent variables in this research. The variable idealized influence has 13 questions and have cronbach alpha value greater than 0.6, in the range of 0.881 to 0.889. The variable intellectual stimulation has 15 questions and have cronbach alpha value greater than 0.6, or in the range of 0.889 to 0.905. The variable individual consideration has 20 questions and have cronbach alpha value greater than 0.6, or in the range of 0.901 to 0.906. The variable inspirational motivation has 15 questions and have cronbach alpha value greater than 0.6, or in the range of 0.909 to 0.915. Considering that every questions have a cronbach alpha value of greater than 0.6, it can be concluded that there is enough accuracy to advance to further analysis.

## Results and Analysis

### Descriptive statistics

The variable intellectual stimulation has the highest mean with a value of 3.44. Following that is the variable inspiration motivation with a mean value of 3.41. The variable intellectual stimulation covered intelligence, rationality and problem solving skills. The three indicators are the requirements for appointing leaders in the selection process as well as a valid measurement scale. The variable inspirational motivation has a mean value of 3.41, indicating that leaders have the ability to give expectations to their employees and showing high level of communication.

| Variables                | N  | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|--------------------------|----|------|--------------------|
| Inspirational Motivation | 76 | 3,41 | 0,532              |
| Idealized Influence      | 76 | 3,24 | 0,504              |
| Individual Consideration | 76 | 3,23 | 0,502              |
| Intellectual Stimulation | 76 | 3,44 | 0,546              |
| Employee Performance     | 76 | 3,68 | 0,575              |

The relatively lower results are idealized influence and individual consideration. The two variables are relevant to the coaching and organizational awareness aspect. These two aspects are generally weak and difficult to measure during the selection process. Individual consideration include giving personal attention, support, mentoring and coaching. While idealized influence include the vision and mission of the organization, pride and respect for each other.

### Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is used in this research to identify the influence of the dependent variables which are inspiration motivation, idealized influence, individual consideration and intellectual motivation on the dependent variable employee performance. Regression result showed the coefficient correlation (R) value of 0.808. This showed that every independent variables have 80.8% influence on the dependent variable. The coefficient determinant ( $R^2$ ) value is 0.653 showing that independent variables are able to explain the dependent variables by as much as 65.3%. Hence, the model developed in this research can be concluded quite well.

*Table 4*

**Model Summary**

| Model  | R     | R square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|--|-------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1  | 0,808 | 0,653    | 0,643             | 0,198                      |
| Predictors: (constant), Idealized Influence (II), Intellectual Stimulation (IS), Individual Consideration (IC), Inspirational Motivation (IM). |       |          |                   |                            |
| Dependent Variable : Employee Performance (EP)   |       |          |                   |                            |

The magnitude of influence in every independent variables to the dependent variable can be identified by the value of the coefficient.

*Table 5*

### Regression Analysis

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|



| Coefficients a |                             |            |                           |       |        |       |
|----------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|--------|-------|
| Model          | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | T     | Sig.   |       |
|                | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |       |        |       |
| 1              | (Constant)                  | 0,094      | 0,192                     |       | 4,678  | 0,000 |
|                | Inspirational_Motivation    | 0,141      | 0,029                     | 0,261 | 5,067  | 0,000 |
|                | Idealized_Influence         | 0,213      | 0,031                     | 0,367 | 7,223  | 0,000 |
|                | Individual_Consideration    | 0,041      | 0,033                     | 0,063 | 1,235  | 0,220 |
|                | Intellectual_Stimulation    | 0,418      | 0,029                     | 0,723 | 13,992 | 0,000 |

Dependent variable: Employee Performance

### Discussion of Hypothesis

Based on table 6, the result of the hypothesis test in this research is as follows:

*Table 6*

| Hypothesis  |            |        |         |       |                                  |
|---|------------|--------|---------|-------|----------------------------------|
| Hypothesis  | Beta Value | t      | t-table | Sig   | Result                           |
| H1: There is significant and positive influence of inspirational motivation on employee job performance | 0,141      | 5,067  | 2,000   | 0,000 | Positive, Significant Accepted   |
| H2: There is significant and positive influence of Idealized influence on employee job performance      | 0,213      | 7,223  | 2,000   | 0,000 | Positive, Significant Accepted   |
| H3: There is significant and positive individual consideration influence on employee job performance    | 0,041      | 1,235  | 2,000   | 0,220 | Positive, Insignificant Rejected |
| H4: There is significant and positive intellectual stimulation influence on employee job performance    | 0,418      | 13,992 | 2,000   | 0,000 | Positive, Significant Accepted   |

The objective of this research is to identify the influence of leadership toward employee performance during Covid-19 pandemic. The result of the hypothesis test is as follows:

The first hypothesis test ( $H_1$ ), showed that the analysis result support hypothesis  $H_1$ , where there is influence of inspirational motivation on employee performance by 5.067. This shows that employee performance is influenced by inspiration motivation. The higher the inspiration motivation, employee performance will also be higher. This result strengthens prior research from Merry, [30] that stated a positive relationship between individualized consideration and employee performance. The results of the regression results indicated that individualized consideration explained a significant proportion of variance in employee performance,  $R^2 = .855$ ,  $F(1, 194) = 33.606$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . Based on this study, leaders who encourage self-development practices, effective communication as well as mentoring and coaching; makes employees to perform maximally at work. [30] conducted study to establish the relationship between individualized consideration and organizational performance.

The second hypothesis test ( $H_2$ ), showed that the analysis result support hypothesis  $H_2$ , where there is influence of idealized influence on employee performance by 7.223. This showed that employee performance is influenced by idealized influence. The higher the idealized influence, employee performance will also be higher. This result strengthens prior research from [27] that stated the influence of idealized influence on performance management. The result showed a coefficient regression of 0.23 and real at the level of 1%. Therefore, the influence of idealized influence on performance management is real. [8] also conducted research on the influence of idealized influence on employee performance. The result showed positive correlation of 0.435 and significant at the level of 1% significance.

The third hypothesis test ( $H_3$ ), showed that the analysis result does not support hypothesis  $H_3$  where positive individual consideration only influence job performance by 1.234 where the result is below the t table of 2.00. This showed that positive individual consideration have no significant influence on employee performance. The result does not support prior research from [27] that showed positive significant influence between individual consideration and employee performance. The results of the regression results indicated that individualized consideration explained a significant proportion of variance in employee performance,  $R^2 = .855$ ,  $F(1, 194) = 33.606$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . Based on this study, leaders who encourage self-development practices, effective communication as well as mentoring and coaching; makes employees to perform maximally at work.

The fourth hypothesis test ( $H_4$ ), showed that the analysis result support hypothesis  $H_4$  where intellectual stimulation influence employee performance by 13.992. From all four variables, intellectual stimulation is the variable that has the highest influence. This showed that intellectual stimulation influence employee performance. The higher the level of intellectual stimulation, the higher the level of employee performance. This result strengthens prior research from [37] that stated the relationship between Intellectual Stimulation to knowledge sharing positive relationship with the value of 0.489 and significant at the 0.05 level of sig. Knowledge sharing positive relationship to Product Innovation with the value of 0.759 and significant at the 0.05 level of sig. Product Innovation positive relationship to Business Performance with the value of BP 0.981 and significant at the 0.05.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

The conclusion that can be drawn from this research is that inspirational motivation, idealized influence and intellectual stimulation can partially influence employee performance (H<sub>1</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>4</sub> supported), while individual consideration does not support employee performance (H<sub>3</sub> not supported)

Time and other limitations in this research, such as respondents from only one company, while employee performance improvement may be influenced by other factors, it can be suggested that similar research is to be conducted to identify other factors that may improve employee performance, both the internal and external factor from the employee itself.

Based on this research, the role of leadership is important in improving employee performance, both during the pandemic and the normal circumstance. Leaders that are able to provide motivations, good influence and extensive knowledge in regards to their jobs is necessary and needed, supported by good personality from the leader itself.

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