Role of Transactional Leadership in Influencing Motivation, Employee Engagement, and Intention to Stay

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Abstract

This study examined the role of transactional leadership in influencing the motivation, employee engagement and intention to stay of employees at PT X. Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Square was employed using SmartPLS 3.2.8. The research was conducted at PT X, which is a company engaged in the property sector located in Sidoarjo. All employees were used in the sample with a total of 84 employees. Transactional leadership had a significant effect on motivation, employee engagement, and intention to stay. Furthermore, employee engagement and motivation also had a significant effect on intention to stay.

Keywords: Transactional Leadership, Motivation, Employee Engagement, Intention to Stay

1. Introduction

In achieving company goals, every company needs resources to achieve them. These resources include natural resources, financial resources, science and technology resources, and human resources. Among these resources, the resource that plays an important role is human resources. Human resources are an important organizational asset and crucial in order to make other organizational resources work. Human resources are no longer considered a supporting function, but as a key source of success for a company. As a company’s success asset, there is a need for attachment (engagement) from employees as human resources. In a company, employee engagement is more than a human resource initiative and is an impetus for controlling performance, as well as a strategic foundation that can lead to the achievement of company goals.

To manage and control the various subsystem functions in the company in order to remain consistent with company goals, a leader is needed because the leader is an important part of improving the performance of workers (Bass, 1994) [1]. The
effectiveness of a leader is affected by the subordinates’ characteristics and is related to the process of communication that occurs between the two parties. The failure of the leader is because the leader is not able to mobilize and satisfy employees in a certain job and environment. The task of the leader is to encourage subordinates to have competence and opportunities to develop in anticipating every challenge and opportunity at work (Lodge & Derek, 1992) [2].

Motivation is the key of a successful organization to maintain work continuity in the organization in a strong way and support to achieve sustainability. Motivation serves as a tool to provide proper direction or guidance, resources, and rewards for employees to maintain their interest and desire to work according to the organizational needs (Chukwuma & Obiefuna, 2014) [3]. Motivation is the process of generating behavior, maintaining progress in behavior, and channeling specific behavioral actions. In other words, motivation drives employees to act. Motivation is a process in which the need encourages a person to carry out a series of activities that lead to the achievement of certain goals. Goals that, if successfully achieved, will satisfy, or fulfill these needs.

The term employee engagement was first popularized by Kahn (1990) [4], stating that employee engagement is the attachment of organizational members to the organization itself not only physically and cognitively, but even emotionally in terms of its performance. Despite the fact that there are similar concepts such as organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991) [5] and job satisfaction (Smith et al, 1969) [6], and some experts are still debating the definition of employee engagement, it still overlaps with other concepts. However, there is one common thread that is agreed upon that employee engagement is very important in the organization and is closely related to performance.

The company is also faced with problems with the fact that retaining employees is something that must be done. The organization or company must be able to retain employees than to recruit back. Recruiting new employees will create new problems, namely employee turnover. This turnover loss results in disrupted organizational productivity.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Transactional Leadership

Transactional Leadership is an attempt by superiors to influence employees by managing their needs and interests (Bass, 1985) [7]. This is based on the argument which states that, every employee has needs and wants that he wants to fulfill. A boss who behaves transactional tries to meet the needs of his employees so that employees work
according to the expectations of the boss. The effect of transactional leadership on social capital is based on the assumption that reinforced behavior will repeat itself and neglected behavior will disappear. In the context of transactional leadership, the more a boss rewards his employee’s good performance, the better the employee will work. On the other hand, if employees who perform well are not rewarded, the employees will no longer perform well. Therefore, what happens in transactional leadership is a reciprocal relationship between superiors and employees, which then this reciprocal relationship will determine employee behavior (Bass, 1985) [7].

Bass (1985) [7] divides transactional leadership into two main components, namely contingent reward and management by exception as efforts that can be taken by superiors to form employee social capital. Contingent reward includes clarifying the work that must be done to get the reward, as well as using incentives to influence motivation (Bass, 1985) [7]. The definition of reward can be interpreted as a financial reward or non-financial reward (in the form of support, assistance, and praise). If a boss consistently and fairly provides rewards for employees who work well, employee trust will emerge in their superiors, which will determine the employee’s willingness to follow the supervisor’s instructions. If a boss who is consistent and fair in contingent reward wants employees to work well to achieve organizational goals, employees will act according to the expectations of their leaders. Bosses can compile work procedures that require employees to interact and work together, then provide rewards for employees who work according to established procedures.

2.2. Motivation

Mangkunegara (2017: 76) [8] argues that motivation is a condition or energy that moves employees who are directed or aimed at achieving company organizational goals. According to Flippo in Hasibuan (2016) [9], motivation is a skill, in directing employees and organizations so that want to work successfully, so that the desires of employees and organizational goals are achieved at once. Meanwhile, according to Hasibuan (2016) [9], motivation is the provision of a driving force that creates a person’s enthusiasm for work so that they are willing to cooperate, work effectively, and be integrated with all their efforts to achieve satisfaction.

The most known motivation theory is Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory, who argues that in each person there is a hierarchy of five needs, namely: (Robbins and Coulter, 2012) [10]

1. Physiological needs: food, drink, shelter, sexual satisfaction, and other physical needs.
2. Safety needs: security and protection from physical and emotional disturbances, as well as assurance that physical needs will continue to be met.

3. Social needs: affection, being part of the group, being accepted by friends, and friendship.

4. Esteem needs: internal self-esteem factors, such as self-esteem, autonomy, achievement, and external self-esteem such as status, recognition, and attention.

5. Self-actualization needs: growth, achievement of one’s potential, and self-fulfillment; the urge to become what he is capable of becoming.

Managers use Maslow’s hierarchy to motivate employees to do things to meet employee needs. But this theory also says that after a need has been substantially met, an individual is no longer motivated to meet those needs. Therefore, to motivate a person, we need to understand what level of existence that person is in the hierarchy and need to focus on satisfying needs at or above that level. Maslow’s theory of needs was widely recognized during the 1960s and 1970s, especially among trained managers, perhaps because it is logical and intuitively easy to understand (Robbins and Coulter, 2012) [10].

There are two types of work motivation, namely positive motivation and negative motivation, both of these motivations are explained described in the book Malayu S.P Hasibuan (2016) [9] as follows.

1. Positive Motivation, this motivation means that managers motivate (stimulate) subordinates by giving prizes to those who excel above standard achievements. With positive motivation, the morale of subordinates will increase because generally humans like to accept what is fine.

2. Negative Motivation, this motivation means that managers motivate their subordinates with the standard that they will get punishment. With this negative motivation, the subordinates’ working spirit in the short term will increase because they are afraid of being punished, but for a long period of time it can have negative consequences.

2.3. Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is defined by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) [11] as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Rather than a momentary and specific state, engagement refers to a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular
object, event, individual, or behavior.” This definition explains that work engagement is a positive state of mind and is associated with work characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption. Vigor (spirit) refers to the level of energy and mental strength during work, the courage to try your hardest to complete a job, and perseverance in the face of work difficulties. Dedication means feeling very strongly involved in a job and experiencing a sense of meaning, enthusiasm, pride, inspiration, and challenge. Absorption (appreciation) can be described as full concentration at work and as a happy experience at work.

The engagement expressed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) [11] does not refer to a momentary and specific condition, but rather a continuous and real affective-cognitive condition, which is not focused on the object, situation, condition, or behavior. Kahn (1990) [4] defines engagement as the employee’s own mastery of their role in work, where they will bind themselves to their work, then work and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally while playing their performance. Furthermore, Brown (in Robbins, 2003) [12] provides a definition of work engagement, where an employee is said to be engaged in his job if the employee can identify himself psychologically with his job, and considers his performance to be important to himself in addition to the organization.

Engagement is considered important by organizational managers and is one of the hot topics discussed in the insights of human resource management today. Some researchers use the term employee engagement and others use the term work engagement. However, these two terms do not show any difference in explaining employee engagement. Employee engagement or work engagement is a solution that can be recommended to managers in dealing with motivation and performance problems of their employees (Saragih and Margarethta, 2013) [13]. Engagement has been widely recognized as a concept that can provide information about the level of attachment of organizational members to the organization and work and is a factor that encourages organizational members to do their best beyond what is expected. Even this attachment factor also affects the decision of organizational members to stay or leave the organization. Saragih and Margarethta (2013) [13] found that organizational commitment, OCB (Organizational Citizenship Behavior) or extra-role behavior and desire to leave were related to both job engagement and organization engagement.

2.4. Intention to Stay

Intention to stay is the opposite of Intention to leave (Kim, Price, Mueller & Watson, 1996) [14]. Employee turnover prevents the company from achieving its goals. Intention to stay is defined as the employee’s intention to remain in the existing working relationship
with the company for the long term. To keep employees in the company, they want to feel part of the organization. Various studies have shown that HRM practices such as the remuneration system have a significant effect on employees’ desire to stay in the organization (Sanjeevkumar 2012) [15]. HRM practices affect employee intention to stay, HRM practice is not the only dominant factor that affects intention to stay. The employer and employee relationship are proven to be one of the main factors determining the desire of employees to remain in the organization. Apart from interpersonal factors, employee personal factors also affect the intention to stay (Sanjeevkumar 2012) [15].

Research conducted by Muhadi (2013) [16] explains that the desire of employees to continue working in their organization for a long time is strongly influenced by the orientation of employees towards what they get from work. The injustice felt after employees compare the commitment, workload, and skills they provide with career development, compensation and job satisfaction will cause employee intention to stay reduced. Through Human Resource Management, a management approach must be able to create a quality of work life that can provide opportunities for self-development, welfare and create a safe and comfortable work environment (good working atmosphere). The work atmosphere is very important because it can encourage enthusiasm to work better in achieving organizational goals.

2.5. Research Model & Hypothesis

Based on the literature review above, the research hypothesis is as follows:

H1: Transactional leadership has a significant effect on employee engagement.

H2: Transactional leadership has a significant effect on motivation.

H3: Transactional leadership has a significant effect on employees’ intention to stay.

H4: Employee engagement has a significant effect on employees’ intention to stay.

H5: Motivation has a significant effect on employees’ intention to stay.
3. Research Method

The type of this research is hypothesis testing research, as stated by Hartono (2017) [17]. The causal research studied was the relationship between transactional leadership, motivation, employee engagement, and intention to stay. The research approach to be carried out is quantitative research, where data is measured according to a numerical scale. In this study, indicators and measurement of transactional leadership were taken from Avolio, Bass, Jung (1999) [18]. Indicators and measurement motivation are taken from Gagne et al., (2014) [19]. Indicators and measurement of employee engagement are taken from Schaufeli et al., (2002) [20]. Indicators and measurement intention to stay are taken from Ghosh et al., (2013) [21]. Data analysis in this study used the PLS-SEM analysis method. The program used is SmartPLS 3.2.8.

4. Results

4.1. Validity Test

The validity test based Hair (2014) [22] of the reflective model of this study was carried out using factor loading (convergent validity) and cross loading (discriminant validity). Convergent validity testing includes two things, namely factor loading and AVE. The test results for factor loading and AVE can be seen in the tables below.

| Measurement Model | Result | Rule of Thumb | Model Evaluation |
|-------------------|--------|---------------|-----------------|
| Convergent Validity | Item   | Factor Loading | >0,7            | Good            |
|                   | TL1    | 0,745         |                 |                 |
|                   | TL2    | 0,774         |                 |                 |
|                   | TL3    | 0,798         |                 |                 |
|                   | TL4    | 0,872         |                 |                 |

Data shown on the tables above indicate that the overall factor loading of each indicator and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) has fulfilled the principle that the variable measures of a construct should be highly correlated.

4.2. Reliability Test

The measurement of reliability is seen through the value of Cronbach’s Alpha and Composite Reliability. Reliability measurement results can be seen in the tables below.
### TABLE 2: Validity Output Outer Model Motivation (X2)

| Measurement Model | Result | Rule of Thumb | Model Evaluation |
|-------------------|--------|---------------|------------------|
| Outer Model       |        |               |                  |
| Convergent Validity | Item   | Factor Loading | >0,7             | Good             |
|                   | MO1    | 0.850         |                  |                  |
|                   | MO2    | 0.804         |                  |                  |
|                   | MO3    | 0.831         |                  |                  |

### TABLE 3: Validity Output Outer Model Employee Engagement (X3)

| Measurement Model | Result | Rule of Thumb | Model Evaluation |
|-------------------|--------|---------------|------------------|
| Outer Model       |        |               |                  |
| Convergent Validity | Item   | Factor Loading | >0,7             | Good             |
|                   | EEV1   | 0.760         |                  |                  |
|                   | EEV2   | 0.855         |                  |                  |
|                   | EEV3   | 0.814         |                  |                  |
|                   | EEV4   | 0.928         |                  |                  |
|                   | EEV5   | 0.739         |                  |                  |
|                   | EEV6   | 0.932         |                  |                  |
|                   | EED1   | 0.882         |                  |                  |
|                   | EED2   | 0.876         |                  |                  |
|                   | EED3   | 0.935         |                  |                  |
|                   | EED4   | 0.812         |                  |                  |
|                   | EED5   | 0.928         |                  |                  |
|                   | EEA1   | 0.785         |                  |                  |
|                   | EEA2   | 0.899         |                  |                  |
|                   | EEA3   | 0.960         |                  |                  |
|                   | EEA4   | 0.808         |                  |                  |
|                   | EEA5   | 0.804         |                  |                  |
|                   | EEA6   | 0.831         |                  |                  |

### TABLE 4: Validity Output Outer Model Intention to Stay (X4)

| Measurement Model | Result | Rule of Thumb | Model Evaluation |
|-------------------|--------|---------------|------------------|
| Outer Model       |        |               |                  |
| Convergent Validity | Item   | Factor Loading | >0,7             | Good             |
|                   | ITS1   | 0.968         |                  |                  |
|                   | ITS2   | 0.953         |                  |                  |
|                   | ITS3   | 0.958         |                  |                  |
4.3. R-Square

Changes in the R-Square value can be used to explain the effect of certain exogenous latent variables on endogenous latent variables, whether they have a substantive effect. Processing using SmartPLS 3.2.8 produces the R-Square listed in table below.

|               | R-Square |
|---------------|----------|
| Motivation (X2) | 0.357    |
| Employee Engagement (X3) | 0.269    |
| Intention to Stay (X4) | 0.706    |

The R-Square value on the Motivation variable is 0.357, indicating that the transactional leadership variable has an influence on the motivation variable by 35.7%. Therefore, it can be concluded that the R-Square Motivation is in the moderate category.

The R-Square value on the Employee engagement variable is 0.269 indicating that the Transactional Leadership variable has an influence on the Employee engagement variable by 26.9%. Therefore, it can be concluded that R-Square Employee engagement is in the moderate category.
The R-Square value on the Intention to stay variable is 0.706, indicating that the Transactional Leadership variable has an influence on the Intention to stay variable by 70.6%. Therefore, it can be concluded that R-Square Intention to stay is in the strong category.

4.4. $F^2$

The effect size is used to see the predictor effect of the effect of latent variables. The results of testing the value of $f^2$ can be seen in table below.

| Exogen Variable toward Endogen Variable | Predictor Effect ($f^2$) | Cohen Category |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| Transactional Leadership toward Employee Engagement | 0.368 | High |
| Transactional Leadership toward Motivation | 0.556 | High |
| Transactional Leadership toward Intention to Stay | 0.192 | Medium |
| Employee Engagement toward Intention to Stay | 0.092 | Low |
| Motivation toward Intention to Stay | 0.361 | High |

4.5. Q-Square

Q2 is used for predictive relevance in the PLS model, the assessment of goodness of fit is known by looking at Q2 or what is called predictive relevance. The higher the Q2 the model can be said to be more fit. Q2 measurement results can be seen in table below.

| Variable (X) | Q Square | $0 < Q^2 < 1$ | Good |
|--------------|----------|---------------|------|
| Motivation (X2) | 0.216 | | Good |
| Employee Engagement (X3) | 0.169 | | Good |
| Intention to Stay (X4) | 0.571 | | Good |

Data shown on the table above indicates that the $Q^2$ value between transactional leadership and motivation is 21.6%, which means that the variable in the structural model can explain the motivation variable by 21.6%. The rest, which is 78.4%, is explained by other variables outside the model. Based on the results obtained, it can be said that the structural model has met a good goodness fit. It is also known that the $Q^2$ value between transactional leadership and employee engagement is 16.9%, which means that the variable in the structural model can explain the employee engagement variable by 16.9%. The remaining 83.1% is explained by other variables outside the model. Based
on the results obtained, it can be said that the structural model has met a good goodness fit.

Likewise, the $Q^2$ value between transactional leadership and Intention to stay is 57.1%, which means that the variable in the structural model can explain the intention to stay variable by 57.1%. The remaining 42.9% is explained by other variables outside the model. Based on the results obtained, it can be said that the structural model has met a good goodness fit.

### 4.6. Hypothesis Testing

After bootstrapping is carried out, the estimated coefficient and t-statistic values obtained in this study can be seen in table below.

| Hypothesis | Coefficient | t-statistic | Description |
|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| $H_1$ | Transactional Leadership → Employee Engagement | 0.519 | 6.585 | Significant |
| $H_2$ | Transactional Leadership → Motivation | 0.598 | 8.078 | Significant |
| $H_3$ | Transactional Leadership → Intention to Stay | 0.305 | 4.991 | Significant |
| $H_4$ | Employee Engagement → Intention to Stay | 0.217 | 2.771 | Significant |
| $H_5$ | Motivation → Intention to Stay | 0.456 | 5.091 | Significant |

![Figure 1: PLS - SEM Structural and Measurement Model after Bootstrap](image-url)
5. Discussion

5.1. Transactional Leadership → Employee Engagement

Based on the calculation of the path coefficient value, it is known that the t-statistic value of the relationship between the transactional leadership and employee engagement variables is 6.585. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between transactional leadership and employee engagement. This is in line with the opinion of Metzler (2006) [23], who said that the transactional leadership variable affected employee engagement. The results obtained in this study are also in line with research conducted by Aji (2019) [24] which states that there is a positive relationship between transactional leadership and employee engagement, so that the higher the transactional leadership style, the more employee engagement increases, and vice versa.

5.2. Transactional Leadership → Motivation

Based on the calculation of the path coefficient value, it is known that the t-statistic value of the relationship between the transactional leadership and motivation variables is 8.078. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between transactional leadership and motivation. This is in line with the opinion of Friska Ayu (2018) [25], Magdalena (2016) [26], and Amalia (2016) [27] who state that the transactional leadership style has a significant positive relationship with work motivation.

5.3. Transactional Leadership → Intention to Stay

Based on the calculation of the path coefficient value, it is known that the t-statistic value of the relationship between the transactional leadership and intention to stay variables is 4.991. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between Transactional Leadership and Intention to stay. This is in line with the opinion of Paripurna (2017) [28] which states that leadership has no significant effect on turnover intention, so it can be concluded that leadership has a significant effect on intention to stay considering that turnover intention is the opposite of intention to stay. Likewise, Gul et al. (2012) [29] also states that the transactional leadership style will reduce employee turnover.
5.4. Employee Engagement → Intention to Stay

Based on the calculation of the path coefficient value, it is known that the t-statistic value of the relationship between employee engagement and intention to stay variables is 2.771. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between employee engagement and intention to stay. This is in line with Fauziridwan (2018) [30] which states that employee engagement has a negative effect on turnover intention. This means that when employee engagement increases, it will reduce turnover intention. This situation indicates that employee engagement will significantly contribute to turnover intention. Likewise, Lamidi (2010) [31] also states that employee engagement can reduce the tendency to change jobs. This is also in line with Deborah (2015) [32] which states that strong employee engagement will have an impact on reducing turnover intention.

5.5. Motivation → Intention to Stay

Based on the calculation of the path coefficient value, it is known that the t-statistic value of the relationship between motivation and intention to stay variables is 5.091. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between motivation and intention to stay. This is in line with the opinion of Srinadi & Supartha (2015) [33] which states that motivation has a negative effect on intention to quit. This means that the decrease in work motivation will increase the desire of employees to change jobs. Haryani (2013) [34] and Sajjad et al. (2011) [35] also states that increased work motivation will have a negative and significant effect on the desire to change jobs and even leave your current job.

5.6. Implication

Based on the discussion of this study, it can be seen how important the role of a leader in a company. Transactional Leadership here is an attempt by superiors to influence employees by managing their needs and interesting. Motivation, Employee Engagement and Intention to Stay for PT X employees, respectively, have a significant relationship. In a company there must be a synergy between leaders and employees in order to have a good cooperation, which can realize the goals and mission of the company. This is also supported by communication, high employee self-reliance, employee ability to translate and apply each leader's direction into a mutually agreed work program.
6. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research, the following conclusions are taken:

1. H1. Transactional Leadership has a significant effect on employee engagement, accepted.
2. H2. Transactional Leadership has a significant effect on motivation, accepted.
3. H3. Transactional Leadership has a significant effect on Employee Intention to stay, accepted.
4. H4. Employee Employee has a significant effect on Intention to stay, accepted.
5. H5. Motivation has a significant effect on Employee Intention to stay, accepted.

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