

## The Influence of Transformational Leadership and Innovative Work Behavior on Employee Performance

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### ARTICLE HISTORY

Received date : 18/03/2026

Accepted date : 23/07/2026

Published date : 18/08/2026

### ARTICLE IDENTITY

Vol. 7 No. 2, August 2026

Page 166-174

### DOI

<https://doi.org/10.32815/jpro.v7i2.2959>

### ABSTRACT

This study examines the effects of transformational leadership and innovative work behavior on employee performance at PT. Cipta Niaga Semesta, an FMCG distribution company in Bojonegoro, East Java. A quantitative approach was used, involving all 50 employees as both population and sample through saturated sampling, with data analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS 4.0. The results show that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance and on innovative work behavior, while innovative work behavior has no significant effect on employee performance. This implies that strengthening transformational leadership is a more effective lever for improving performance than innovative work behavior alone. The study is limited to a single company and a cross-sectional design, which restricts generalizability.

**Keywords:** transformational leadership; innovative work behavior; employee performance

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menganalisis pengaruh kepemimpinan transformasional dan perilaku kerja inovatif terhadap kinerja karyawan di PT. Cipta Niaga Semesta, perusahaan distribusi FMCG di Bojonegoro, Jawa Timur. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan melibatkan seluruh 50 karyawan sebagai populasi sekaligus sampel melalui teknik sampling jenuh, dan data dianalisis menggunakan Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) melalui SmartPLS 4.0. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kinerja karyawan maupun perilaku kerja inovatif, sedangkan perilaku kerja inovatif tidak berpengaruh signifikan terhadap kinerja karyawan. Temuan ini mengimplikasikan bahwa penguatan kepemimpinan transformasional lebih efektif dalam meningkatkan kinerja dibandingkan perilaku kerja inovatif semata. Penelitian ini terbatas pada satu perusahaan dengan desain cross-sectional sehingga generalisasinya terbatas.

**Kata Kunci:** Kepemimpinan transformasional; perilaku kerja inovatif; kinerja karyawan

## INTRODUCTION

Information technology is a rapidly evolving field that impacts every aspect of our lives. These shifts, which began with the internet and have led to the implementation of artificial intelligence systems, not only produce innovation but also create new realities that radically transform our daily existence (Nazwa, 2023).

Human resource development in today's digital age is crucial for improving employee performance. Enhancing the quality of human resources allows employees to align their capabilities with their assigned tasks and determines how effectively they execute their work. This is particularly vital for long-tenured employees, as a lack of digital literacy often becomes a barrier to keeping pace with technological advancements (Angga, 2023).

The transformation of human resources in the digital era is becoming increasingly critical as technology's influence in the workplace grows. Companies must quickly adapt to shifting skill requirements to overcome digital-era challenges. Competencies such as data literacy, analytical skills, and the ability to adapt to new technologies are vital (Ramadhan, 2024).

PT. Cipta Niaga Semesta is a national distribution company operating in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector, located in Bojonegoro, East Java Province. The company distributes well-known Mayora Group products, including Le Minerale (Gallons), Teh Pucuk, Tujuh Kurma, Torabika coffee, Beng-Beng, Choki-Choki, Energen, Astor, Kalpa, Roma Kelapa, Malkist, Slai O'lai, Kopikap, Fruta Gummy, and Kopiko candy.

Employee performance is defined as the level and volume of work achieved by an employee in carrying out their responsibilities. Work efficiency is a primary parameter of a company's success in executing its functions and reaching its objectives (Widiyasari, 2023). However, based on interviews with employees at PT. Cipta Niaga Semesta, performance has seen a decline in work quality or results that do not meet the company's expectations.

Performance is the outcome of effort achieved by an individual when carrying out responsibilities based on ability, experience, commitment, and time duration; in this sense, performance is understood as the achievement obtained by someone when performing a task (Sari, 2023). One method used to improve employee performance is through Innovative Work Behavior. This refers to a series of sequential employee activities aimed at developing and increasing work effectiveness. This process consists of several stages:

1. Identifying and understanding the scope of work.
2. Having a high awareness of work quality and creatively seeking solutions.
3. Building cooperation and commitment to realize innovative improvement proposals within team work processes (De Jong, 2010).

Research conducted by Ponggohong (2025) explains that innovative work behavior significantly impacts performance. The findings show that through F-tests, innovative work behavior impacts employee performance by 0.88, with a T-statistic ( $X1 \Rightarrow Y$ ) of 4.445. Conversely, a study by Nurchalis (2024) indicates that innovative work behavior does not have a significant impact on performance; hypothesis testing suggested that innovative work behavior was not empirically capable of increasing employee performance. Based interviews with employees at PT. Cipta Niaga Semesta, the phenomenon of innovative work behavior there

is hindered by a lack of management support (budget and time) and a mismatch between employee competencies and innovation demands.

Another method companies can apply to improve employee performance is the implementation of Transformational Leadership. This style inspires staff to perform better than their usual habits; in other words, it strengthens the self-confidence of subordinates, which subsequently has a positive effect on increasing work productivity (Asri, 2024). According to a study by Ina Mery (2023), improving employee achievement can be facilitated through transformational leadership. The study revealed that partial tests on the transformational leadership variable were directly related to employee performance, where the t-count reached 2.395—higher than the t-table value of 2.037—with a significance level of 0.023.

However, interviews at PT. Cipta Niaga Semesta suggest that transformational leadership is lacking in wisdom regarding subordinate involvement in decision-making, which prevents the organization from developing or reaching its vision and mission. Furthermore, research by Purnamandiri (2024) explains that the transformational leadership model does not always impact employee work achievement. Their findings revealed a t-count for transformational leadership of -1.152, while the t-table value at df ( $65-3-1=61$ ) was 1.670, indicating a significance value  $> 0.05$ .

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Employee Performance**

Employee performance is defined as the level and volume of work outcomes achieved by an employee in carrying out the responsibilities or tasks assigned to them. Work efficiency serves as the primary parameter of a company's success in executing its functions and achieving its objectives (Widiyasari, 2023).

Performance is the result of effort attained by an individual while performing responsibilities based on ability, experience, commitment, and time duration. In this context, performance can be understood as the achievements obtained by someone when performing tasks according to applicable standards (Sari, 2023).

### **2.2 Innovative Work Behavior**

Innovative work behavior is a set of actions performed by individuals within an organization aimed at creating, developing, and implementing new ideas that have the potential to improve performance or provide added value to the organization (Nurdinni, 2024). Innovative work behavior is a three-stage process where employees generate ideas (Idea Generation) and realize them into tangible products or processes that increase productivity. These stages include creating new ideas or modified solutions, sharing ideas to gain support, and implementing those ideas into something concrete within individual or team work (Made, 2021).

### **2.3 Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership is a successful leadership model used in many global organizations to manage the interaction between leaders and their followers. The term "transformational leadership" is derived from the word "transform," which means changing something into a different form (Suriagiri, 2020).

Transformational leadership is an individual's ability to influence team members in executing and implementing changes, characterizing a leader who can steer the organization onto a new path (Robbins, 2017).

## RESEARCH METHODS

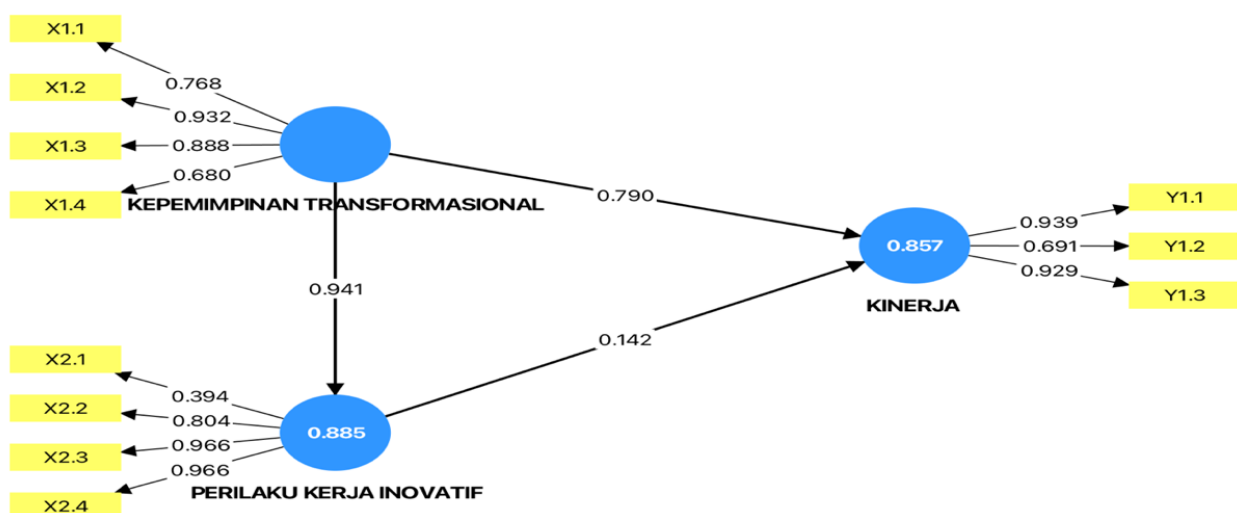
This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory (associative) research design to examine the causal relationships between transformational leadership, innovative work behavior, and employee performance. The population consisted of all 50 employees of PT. Cipta Niaga Semesta. Because the population size was fewer than 100, a saturated sampling technique (*sampling jenuh*) was applied, in which the entire population was used as the research sample (Ghozali, 2014).

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), covering three variables: transformational leadership, innovative work behavior, and employee performance, with indicators derived from the theoretical background discussed in the previous section.

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0. The outer (measurement) model was evaluated through convergent validity (outer loading and Average Variance Extracted/AVE), discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker criterion and cross-loading), and reliability (Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability). The inner (structural) model was evaluated through the path coefficient, coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), and hypothesis testing using the bootstrapping procedure, with a t-statistic threshold of 1.96 (5% significance level) used to determine the significance of each relationship (Ghozali, 2014).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Research Results



**Figure 2: Bootstrapping Model Measurement**

Source: Smart-PLS 4.0 (2026)

The findings indicate that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, with a path coefficient of 0.790 and a t-statistic of 3.677 ( $p = 0.000$ ).

This confirms that the transformational leadership practiced at PT. Cipta Niaga Semesta positively influences employee performance.

**Table 1. Path coefficient**

| Relationship between variables                          | Original Sampel | t-statistic | P-Values |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|----------|
| Transformational leadership on employee performance     | 0.790           | 3.677       | 0.000    |
| Transformational leadership on innovative work behavior | 0.941           | 6.920       | 0.001    |
| innovative work behavior on performance                 | 0.142           | 0.648       | 0.000    |

Source: Smart-PLS 4.0 (2026)

In this case, the coefficient value serves as a measure of positive transformational leadership and innovative work behavior. The findings indicate that transformational leadership has a path coefficient of 0.941 with a t-statistic of 6.920 ( $p=0.001$ ). These results confirm that transformational leadership impacts innovative work behavior. The transformational leadership interaction between superiors and subordinates at PT. Cipta Niaga Semesta has been shown to positively contribute to employee performance.

In contrast, innovative work behavior shows a positive but statistically non-significant relationship with employee performance, with a path coefficient of 0.142 and a t-statistic of 0.648, which is below the critical value of 1.96 at the 5% significance level. This suggests that innovative work behavior alone is not yet a strong determinant of employee performance at PT. Cipta Niaga Semesta, consistent with employees' reports of limited managerial support for innovation at the company.

### **Discriminant Validity**

This study used a discriminant validity test to assess whether the indicators were able to explain or represent the latent variables, as well as to assess the cross-loading values and root mean square value (AVE). The results of the discriminant validity test are presented below.

**Table 2. Discriminant validity value**

| Variable                     | AVE   | Transformational leadership | Inovative work behavior | Employee Performance |
|------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Transformastional leadership | 0,771 | 0.771                       |                         |                      |
| Innovative work behavior     | 1.021 | 0.814                       |                         |                      |
| Employee Performance         | 1.026 | 0.950                       | 0.791                   |                      |

Source: Smart-PLS 4.0 (2026)

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and the Fornell-Larcker criterion, whereby a construct is considered valid if its AVE exceeds 0.50 and the square root of its AVE is greater than its correlation with other constructs. As shown in Table 3, the AVE for Transformational Leadership (0.771) meets this criterion.

However, the AVE values reported for Innovative Work Behavior (1.021) and Employee Performance (1.026) exceed the theoretical maximum of 1.0, indicating a measurement anomaly that should be re-examined through the outer loading estimation, as also noted in the study's limitations.

### Reliability Test

Reliability testing is a method of assessing a questionnaire's ability to measure construct variables. A questionnaire is considered reliable if individual responses to the questions remain consistent or stable over time (Ghozali, 2014).

**Table 3. Uji Reliabilitas**

| Variable                    | Composite Reliability | Cronbanch alpha | Description |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Transformational leadership | 0.890                 | 0.839           | Valid       |
| Innovative work behavior    | 0.912                 | 0.825           | Valid       |
| Employee Performance        | 0.800                 | 0.840           | Valid       |

Source: Smart-PLS 4.0 (2026)

The results of construct reliability testing with values above 0.70, thus ensuring that all models applied in the study have shown a high and good level of reliability.

## DISCUSSION

This study examines empirical data that supports the proposed theory, specifically the role of transformational leadership and innovative work behavior in improving performance. According to the study, the proposed hypothesis is supported by real-world data analysis, which demonstrates the impact of transformational leadership and innovative work behavior on performance.

### The Effect of Transformational Leadership on Performance

With a path coefficient of 0.790 and a t-statistic of 3.677 ( $p = 0.000$ ), employee performance is positively and significantly influenced by transformational leadership. This confirms that the transformational leadership implemented by PT. Cipta Niaga Semesta has a positive impact on employee performance.

Research conducted by Ina Mery (2023) supports the findings of this study, which demonstrates how transformational leadership can significantly improve employee performance. The research found that a partial test of the transformational leadership variable on employee performance yielded a t-value of 2.395 at a significance level of 0.023. This t-value exceeds the t-table value of 2.037, confirming a statistically significant effect.

### The Influence of Transformational Leadership on Innovative Work Behavior

Transformational leadership exhibits a positive coefficient, consistent with research findings. The path coefficient for transformational leadership is 0.941 with a t-statistic of 6.920 ( $p=0.001$ ). These results indicate that transformational leadership impacts innovative work behavior, with interactions between superiors and subordinates at PT Cipta Niaga Semesta having a proven impact on performance.

The research findings align with those of Hoirunnisak (2022), who explained that transformational leadership impacts innovative work behavior. The findings demonstrate the impact of transformational leadership and innovative work behavior demonstrated by employees, as evidenced by a significant correlation of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ) with a coefficient of 0.573.

### **The Influence of Innovative Work Behavior on Performance**

Innovative work behavior does not show a statistically significant impact on performance in this study. The findings indicate a path coefficient of 0.142 and a t-statistic of 0.648, below the critical value of 1.96, meaning the effect cannot be considered significant at the 5% level.

This result differs from the findings of Alamsyah (2024), who reported a significant influence of innovative work behavior on employee productivity, with a t-value of 2.250 (higher than the t-table value of 2.021) and a significance value of 0.029. The discrepancy may be attributed to contextual differences between the two research settings, such as the extent of managerial support for innovation, organizational culture, or the specific characteristics of the FMCG distribution sector examined in this study, in which employees reported limited budget and time support for realizing innovative ideas.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study demonstrates that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on both employee performance and innovative work behavior at PT. Cipta Niaga Semesta, whereas innovative work behavior does not have a statistically significant effect on employee performance. These findings suggest that strengthening transformational leadership is a more effective and immediate lever for improving employee performance than relying on innovative work behavior alone, which in this context remains constrained by limited managerial support and a mismatch between employee competencies and innovation demands. The study is limited by its single-company, cross-sectional design and its reliance on self-reported data from only 50 employees at one FMCG distributor, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to other organizations, sectors, or regions; in addition, several AVE values and significance results reported in the analysis require further methodological verification, as discussed in the Result and Discussion section.

Future research is encouraged to broaden the scope by involving multiple companies across different industries and regions, adopt a longitudinal design, and incorporate additional variables such as job satisfaction, work motivation, organizational culture, or compensation as predictors, mediators, or moderators to build a more comprehensive model of employee performance. Researchers are also advised to conduct pilot testing of research instruments prior to full-scale data collection to ensure valid and reliable measurement. For practical purposes, PT. Cipta Niaga Semesta is encouraged to strengthen transformational leadership through structured leadership training and greater involvement of subordinates in decision-making, while also providing adequate time, budget, and facilities to support employees' innovative initiatives so that these efforts can more effectively translate into improved performance.

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