

ANALYSIS OF THE TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE OF SUB-DISTRICT HEADS AND THE WORK ENVIRONMENT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF NEIGHBORHOOD HEADS WITH WORK MOTIVATION AS AN INTERVENING VARIABLE AT THE MEDAN BARU SUB-DISTRICT OFFICE MEDAN CITY

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of transformational leadership style and work environment on the performance of neighborhood heads with work motivation as an intervening variable at the Medan Baru Subdistrict Office in Medan City. The research problem is motivated by the differences in performance levels among neighborhood heads, which are suspected to be influenced by the subdistrict head's leadership style, work environment conditions, and individual motivation levels. This study uses a quantitative approach with a population of 64 neighborhood heads in Medan Baru Subdistrict, which was used as a saturated sample. Data analysis techniques use Partial Least Squares (PLS) through the SmartPLS 4 program. The results show that transformational leadership has a positive but insignificant effect on the performance of neighborhood heads, but has a positive and significant effect on work motivation. The work environment has a negative and insignificant effect on performance, but a positive and significant effect on work motivation. Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on the performance of neighborhood heads. In addition, work motivation is proven to significantly mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and the work environment on the performance of neighborhood heads. The R^2 value shows that 81.7% of the variation in work motivation and 95.1% of the variation in performance can be explained by this research model. The research findings confirm that improving the performance of neighborhood heads can be achieved by strengthening work motivation driven by the transformational leadership style of the sub-district head and a conducive work environment. It is recommended that the Medan Baru Sub-District Office strengthen leadership development and attention to employee potential, improve the comfort of the work environment, and provide rewards that encourage work motivation and responsibility.

Keywords: *transformational leadership, work environment, work motivation, environmental manager performance.*

INTRODUCTION

In the village-level government structure, the role of the neighborhood head is very important as the spearhead of public service. The success of neighborhood heads in carrying out their duties is greatly influenced by various factors, including the leadership style of their immediate superiors (i.e., sub-district heads), work environment conditions, and individual work motivation. The leadership style applied by the sub-district head plays a strategic role in directing, motivating, and inspiring neighborhood heads to work optimally. Amid increasingly complex public service demands, a type of leadership is needed that is , capable of creating positive change and empowering subordinates, one of which is the transformational leadership style. According to Bass and Riggio (2020), transformational leadership includes the leader's ability to inspire subordinates, exert ideal influence, stimulate intellectually, and provide individual attention. Transformational leaders do not only focus on achieving organizational goals, but also strive to improve the potential and commitment of the individuals they lead. This is reinforced by the findings of Desi Natalia (2023), who states that transformational leadership has a positive influence on employee work motivation, which ultimately has an impact on performance improvement. Apart from leadership

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factors, the work environment is also an important variable that determines work comfort and productivity. A conducive work environment can create a pleasant working atmosphere and encourage employees to work to their full potential. Research by Suwandi and Koerniawan (2023) shows that the work environment has a significant effect on employee motivation and performance, both directly and indirectly. In the context of sub-district offices, a supportive work environment can help neighborhood heads perform their duties better, including interacting with the community and resolving various administrative issues. Work motivation acts as a bridge between external influences such as leadership and the work environment and the performance results achieved. Robbins and Judge (2022) state that motivation is a psychological force that drives individuals to achieve certain goals. Previous research by Supriadi and Suyanto (2023) found that work motivation can significantly mediate the influence of leadership style and job satisfaction on employee performance. Therefore, work motivation in this study is expected to clarify the relationship between the sub-district head's transformational leadership style and the work environment on the performance of neighborhood heads.

The Medan Baru sub-district, as one of the administrative areas in the city of Medan, plays an important role in providing public services to the community at the lowest level. However, there are still frequent differences in performance levels among neighborhood heads, which may be caused by differences in leadership styles, work environment conditions, and individual work motivation levels. Therefore, an in-depth analysis of the relationship between the sub-district head's transformational leadership style and the work environment on neighborhood head performance, with work motivation as an intervening variable, is needed. Based on the above description, this research is important to contribute theoretically and practically to the development of the performance of officials in the subdistrict office environment, particularly in optimizing the role of neighborhood heads as technical implementers of government and community services at the most basic level.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Performance

Definition of Performance

According to Rahman & Lataruva (2023), employee performance is defined as the extent to which an employee is able to achieve expected results or meet established standards in the context of their work. Measurements include productivity, work quality, compliance with policies, creativity, initiative, attendance, and contribution to the achievement of organizational goals.

Factors Affecting Performance

Factors Affecting Performance According to Rahman & Lataruva (2023):

- 1) Leadership Style
The leadership style of superiors, especially those that are participatory, transformational, or supportive, greatly influences the enthusiasm, direction, and performance of subordinates.
- 2) Work Motivation
The level of motivation from within (intrinsic) and from outside (extrinsic) that drives a person to achieve work goals. High motivation can drive optimal performance.
- 3) Competence (Abilities & Skills)
The knowledge, expertise, and work experience possessed by employees greatly determine the quality and productivity of their work.
- 4) Work Environment
Both physical and non-physical aspects: workplace comfort, employee relationships, organizational culture, and the overall work climate.
- 5) Work Discipline
The level of employee compliance with rules, procedures, and work ethics. High discipline directly contributes to good performance.
- 6) Reward and Incentive System
Financial and non-financial compensation (recognition, promotion, bonuses) that encourages employees to work to their full potential.
- 7) Job Satisfaction
The level of satisfaction with work, superiors, facilities, and opportunities for self-development also affects the consistency and quality of performance.

Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators according to Rahman & Lataruva (2023):

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- 1) Work Quantity
The amount of output or work completed within a certain period of time in accordance with the set targets.
- 2) Work Quality
The level of precision, accuracy, and correctness of work results compared to applicable standards.
- 3) Timeliness
The ability to complete work within the specified time limit and work time efficiency.
- 4) Attendance and Discipline
Level of attendance and discipline in following the work schedule, including compliance with organizational rules.
- 5) Cooperation with Colleagues
Ability to work in a team, good communication, and active participation in completing joint tasks.
- 6) Initiative and Responsibility
A tendency to take action or find solutions without waiting for instructions, as well as an awareness of job responsibilities.
- 7) Understanding of Tasks and Implementation of Procedures
To what extent employees understand their tasks and perform their work in accordance with applicable procedures and instructions.

Work Motivation

Understanding Work Motivation

Bahasoan & Baharuddin (2023) define work motivation as an internal drive to work harder, be more disciplined, and be more productive in order to achieve organizational goals effectively and efficiently. It is emphasized that motivation is closely related to attitude and commitment to work, as well as performance.

Factors Influencing Work Motivation

Based on the findings of Bahasoan & Baharuddin (2023), there are three main groups of factors that influence employee work motivation:

- 1) Work Discipline
Employee compliance with organizational rules, ethics, time, and procedures. This discipline reflects a professional attitude that supports internal motivation and positive work behavior.
- 2) Workload
The level of tasks assigned to employees, both in terms of quantity and complexity. A balanced and reasonable workload can increase motivation, while an excessive workload or poor task management can reduce morale.
- 3) Organizational Environment and Management Support
Includes fair treatment, job security, commensurate compensation, recognition of achievements, and policies that facilitate employees. These conditions create a work atmosphere that supports sustained work motivation.

Work Motivation Indicators

Work Motivation Indicators according to Bahasoan & Baharuddin (2023):

- 1) Work Engagement
Refers to the extent to which employees feel emotionally, cognitively, and physically involved in their work.
- 2) Intensity of Effort / Hard Work
Describes the extent to which employees demonstrate maximum effort in carrying out their duties.
- 3) Job Satisfaction
The level of emotional satisfaction employees feel towards their work, facilities, and working conditions.
- 4) Employee Retention
Measures employees' intentions and desire to remain working in the organization for the long term.

Work Environment

Definition of Work Environment

Robbins & Judge (2021) define the work environment as the conditions in which individuals work, including physical aspects such as temperature, lighting, and noise, as well as psychological aspects such as organizational culture, social relationships, and work pressure.

Factors that Influence the Work Environment

Factors Influencing the Work Environment according to Robbins & Judge (2021):

- 1) Physical Factors
Factors related to the actual conditions of the environment that can affect employee health and comfort.
- 2) Psychosocial Factors (Social and Psychological)

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Factors related to social relationships, organizational culture, and individuals' perceptions and emotions toward their work environment.

Work Environment Indicators

Work Environment Indicators according to Robbins & Judge (2021):

- 1) Physical Work Environment Indicators:
 - Lighting: The level of brightness or dimness of the workroom.
 - Temperature and ventilation: The coolness and comfort of the air in the workspace.
 - Noise: Sound disturbances that affect concentration.
 - Work layout and facilities: Ergonomics of the space and ease of access to work tools.
 - Safety conditions: Availability of protective equipment and occupational safety and health policies.
- 2) Psychosocial Work Environment Indicators:
 - Interpersonal relationships: Interaction and communication among employees.
 - Management support: Management attention and participation in employee welfare.
 - Organizational culture: Shared values, norms, and beliefs in the work environment.
 - Organizational justice: Perceptions of fairness in task distribution, rewards, and promotions.
 - Job stress: Psychological burden or pressure in completing work.

Transformational Leadership

Definition of Transformational Leadership

Yukl (2020) defines transformational leadership as a process in which leaders change or transform the values, attitudes, and goals of organizational members by providing ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual attention.

Factors influencing Transformational Leadership

Factors influencing transformational leadership according to Yukl (2020):

- 1) Leader Characteristics
Refers to the personal traits and competencies of leaders that support their ability to inspire and influence.
- 2) Follower Characteristics
The psychological condition and background of followers also determine the effectiveness of transformational leadership.
- 3) Organizational Context
Organizational structure and work culture will determine the extent to which transformational practices can develop.
- 4) External Environmental Conditions
The environment outside the organization, such as market dynamics or technological changes, drives the need for a transformational leadership style.

Indicators of Transformational Leadership

Indicators of transformational leadership according to Yukl (2020):

- 1) Developing and Communicating a Vision
Transformational leaders create and communicate a clear and inspiring vision of the organization's future to their followers.
- 2) Encouraging Innovation and Learning
Leaders encourage followers to think creatively, question old habits, and continue learning for continuous improvement.
- 3) Providing Individual Support
Leaders pay attention to the needs, potential, and differences in character of each team member on a personal level.
- 4) Setting an Example in Values and Ethics
Leaders serve as role models in integrity, responsibility, and professional conduct.
- 5) Inspiring Enthusiasm and Motivation
Leaders inspire, give hope, and build confidence in the team to work beyond the usual standards.

Conceptual Framework

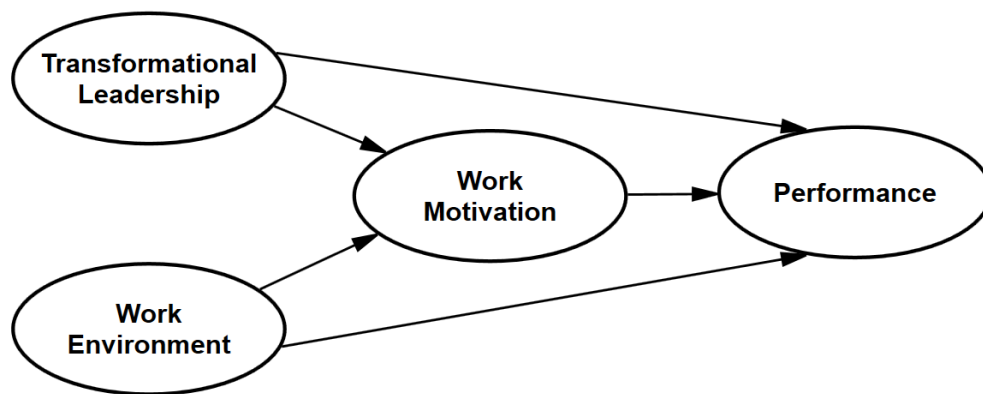


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Research Hypothesis

- H₁ : Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on the performance of neighborhood heads at the Medan Baru Subdistrict Office in Medan City.
- H₂ : Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on the work motivation of neighborhood heads at the Medan Baru Subdistrict Office in Medan City.
- H₃ : The work environment has a positive and significant effect on the performance of neighborhood heads at the Medan Baru Subdistrict Office in Medan City.
- H₄: The work environment has a positive and significant effect on the work motivation of the environmental head at the Medan Baru Subdistrict Office in Medan City.
- H₅: Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on the performance of environmental managers at the Medan Baru Subdistrict Office in Medan City.
- H₆: Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on the performance of environmental managers through work motivation at the Medan Baru Subdistrict Office in Medan City.
- H₇: The work environment has a positive and significant effect on the performance of neighborhood heads through work motivation at the Medan Baru Subdistrict Office in Medan City.

RESEARCH METHOD

Type of Research

The type of research used by the researcher is quantitative research. According to Sugiyono (2022), quantitative research can be defined as a method based on positivism philosophy, used to study a specific population or sample, with sampling techniques generally conducted randomly, data collection using research instruments, and quantitative/statistical data analysis with the aim of testing predetermined hypotheses. This type of quantitative research was conducted to create a study aimed at adjusting a study and analyzing the transformational leadership style of the sub-district head and the work environment on the performance of the neighborhood head with work motivation as an intervening variable at the Medan Baru Sub-district Office in Medan City.

Research Location and Time

The research location was at the Medan Baru Sub-District Office, located at Jl. Rebab No.34, Titi Rantai, Kec. Medan Baru, Medan City, North Sumatra. The research was conducted over a period of 3 months, from August to November 2025.

Population and Sample

According to Sugiyono (2022), the population is a generalization area consisting of objects or subjects that have certain qualities and characteristics determined by the researcher to be studied, and then conclusions are drawn. In this study, the population consists of neighborhood heads in the Medan Baru District, totaling 64 individuals. Since the population size is small (less than 100), the entire population was used as the sample, known as a saturated sample.

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Research Data Sources

The data source used in this study is primary data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Outer Model Analysis

Outer Model Analysis using the PLS Algorithm produced the following results:

Validity Test

Table 1. Outer Loadings Values

	Performance	Transformational Leadership	Work Environment	Work Motivation
X1.1		0.939		
X1.2		0.903		
X1.3		0.806		
X1.4		0.955		
X2.1			0.882	
X2.2			0.970	
X2.3			0.846	
X2.4			0.939	
Y.1	0.810			
Y.2	0.836			
Y.3	0.866			
Y.4	0.872			
Y.5	0.871			
Y.6	0.738			
Y.7	0.832			
Z.1				0.846
Z.2				0.896
Z.3				0.835
Z.4				0.861

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

Based on the values in Table 1 above, which show the results of outer model testing through loading factor/outer loadings values, all indicators in each variable have a loading value ≥ 0.70 . This indicates that each indicator is measured validly and strongly. Therefore, it can be concluded that all items in the questionnaire have met the validity criteria, as shown in the following figure.

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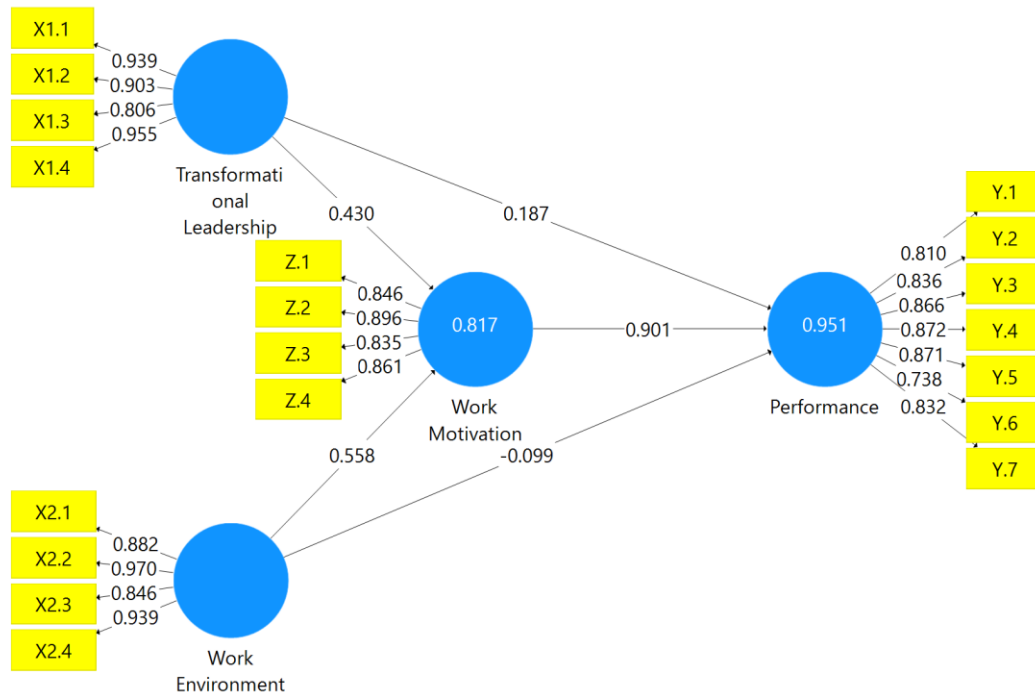


Figure 1. Outer Loading

In this study, there is an equation, and that equation consists of two substructures for substructure 1:

$$Z = \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + e_1$$

$$Z = 0.430X_1 + 0.558Z + e_1$$

For substructure 2:

$$Y = \beta_2 X_1 + \beta_3 X_2 + \beta_3 Z + e_2$$

$$Y = 0.187 X_1 - 0.099X_2 + 0.901Z + e_2$$

Reliability Test

Table 2. Construct Reliability and Validity Test

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Performance	0.926	0.928	0.941	0.695
Transformational Leadership	0.923	0.929	0.946	0.815
Work Environment	0.931	0.942	0.951	0.830
Work Motivation	0.882	0.883	0.919	0.739

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

From Table 2 above, the reliability test results show that the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values for all constructs are above 0.70. This indicates that all indicators have high internal consistency and are reliable in measuring their respective constructs. Thus, the research instrument is declared reliable and suitable for use in structural model testing.

Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

In assessing models with PLS, we begin by looking at the R-square for each dependent latent variable. The table below shows the results of Rsquare estimation using SmartPLS.

Table 3. R Square Results

	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Work Motivation	0.817	0.812
Performance	0.951	0.949

Source: Smart PLS, 2025

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Table 3 shows the R-squared values for both dependent variables. For the work motivation variable, the R-squared value is 0.817, meaning that the influence of transformational leadership and work environment is 0.817 or 81.7%, with the remainder attributable to other variables outside the model. The R-square value for performance is 0.951, meaning that transformational leadership, work environment, and work motivation account for 0.951 or 95.1%, with the remainder attributable to other variables outside the model.

Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

Hypothesis Testing

Direct Influence Between Variables

The direct effect between variables can be seen in the path coefficients. The data analysis results show the direct effect values in the following table.

Table 4. Path Coefficients (Direct Effects)

	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Conclusion
Transformational Leadership -> Performance	0.187	1.438	0.151	Rejected
Transformational Leadership → Work Motivation	0.430	4.295	0.000	Accepted
Work Environment -> Performance	-0.099	0.908	0.364	Rejected
Work_Environment -> Work_Motivation	0.558	6.385	0.000	Accepted
Work Motivation → Performance	0.901	5,699	0.000	Accepted

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

The results in Table 4 show the following direct effect values:

1. Transformational leadership has a positive but insignificant effect on performance with a t-statistic value of 1.438 below 1.96 and a significance of 0.151 above 0.05, meaning that transformational leadership has no real effect on performance because the significance value is above 0.05. The results of this study are not in line with the results of previous studies, which found that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on performance (Fadillah & Mesra, 2023).
2. Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on work motivation with a t-statistic value of 4.295 above 1.96 and a significance of 0.000 below 0.05, meaning that transformational leadership has a real effect on performance because the significance value is above 0.05. The results of this study are in line with previous studies, namely that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on work motivation (Yusup & Maulani, 2023).
3. The work environment has a negative and insignificant effect on performance with a t-statistic value of 0.908 below 1.96 and a significance of 0.364 above 0.05, meaning that the work environment has no significant effect on performance because the significance value is above 0.05. The results of this study are not in line with previous research findings, namely that the work environment has a positive and significant effect on performance (Shammout, 2021).
4. The work environment has a positive and significant effect on work motivation, with a t-statistic value of 6.385 above 1.96 and a significance of 0.000 below 0.05, meaning that the work environment has a significant effect on work motivation because the significance value is above 0.05. The results of this study are in line with previous studies, namely that the work environment has a positive and significant effect on work motivation (Parashakti et al, 2020).
5. Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on performance with a t-statistic value of 5.699 above 1.96 and a significance of 0.000 below 0.05, meaning that work motivation has a significant effect on performance because the significance value is below 0.05. The results of this study are in line with previous studies, namely that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on performance (Tarigan & Anwar, 2024).

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Indirect Influence Between Variables

The indirect effect between variables can be seen in the specific indirect effects value. The data analysis results show the indirect effect value in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Specific Indirect Effects

	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Conclusion
Transformational Leadership -> Work Motivation -> Performance	0.387	3.704	0.000	Accepted
Work Environment → Work Motivation → Performance	0.503	3.686	0.000	Accepted

Source: Smart PLS, 2025

Table 5 shows the indirect effects between variables, which will be explained as follows:

1. Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on performance through work motivation with a t-statistic value of 3.704 above 1.96 and a significance value of 0.003 below 0.05, meaning that work motivation acts as an intervening variable between transformational leadership and performance. The results of this study are also in line with the results of previous studies (Fadillah & Mesra, 2023).
2. The work environment has a positive and significant effect on performance through work motivation with a t-statistic value of 3.686 above 1.96 and a significance value of 0.003 below 0.05, meaning that work motivation acts as an intervening variable between transformational leadership and performance.

CONCLUSION

1. Transformational leadership has a positive but insignificant effect on the performance of neighborhood heads at the Medan Baru Subdistrict Office in Medan City.
2. Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on the work motivation of environmental heads at the Medan Baru Subdistrict Office in Medan City.
3. The work environment has a negative and insignificant effect on the performance of neighborhood heads at the Medan Baru Subdistrict Office in Medan City.
4. The work environment has a positive and significant effect on the work motivation of neighborhood heads at the Medan Baru Subdistrict Office in Medan City.
5. Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on the performance of neighborhood heads at the Medan Baru Subdistrict Office in Medan City.
6. Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on the performance of neighborhood heads through work motivation at the Medan Baru Subdistrict Office in Medan City.
7. The work environment has a positive and significant effect on the performance of neighborhood heads through work motivation at the Medan Baru Subdistrict Office in Medan City.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The performance with the lowest score was "I take the initiative to complete my work and take full responsibility for the results." Therefore, the recommendation that can be given is This recommendation means that employees at the Medan Baru Subdistrict Office need to be more active in taking the first step to complete tasks without always waiting for orders from their superiors (work initiative). In addition, they are also expected to have a high sense of responsibility for the results of their work, both in terms of timeliness and quality. To achieve this, leaders need to provide regular guidance such as coaching, weekly performance evaluations, and setting an example as role models. In addition, continuous work motivation—for example, through awards for outstanding employees or recognition of good performance—will help foster enthusiasm and a sense of ownership for the work being done.
2. Work motivation with the lowest value statement is "I am satisfied with my work results and my current work environment." In this case, the sub-district office needs to improve employee job satisfaction by improving the work environment and providing appreciation for work results in order to create a more comfortable and productive work atmosphere.
3. Work environment with the lowest score: "The lighting in my workspace is bright enough and does not cause eye strain while working." The Medan Baru Sub-District Office needs to repair and reorganize the lighting system in the workspace to meet work comfort standards and prevent eye strain. This suggestion indicates that the lighting in the work environment may not be optimal—too dim, too bright, or uneven—causing employees to feel tired or uncomfortable while working. Therefore, it is necessary to evaluate the lighting conditions by

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considering the intensity of the light, the direction of the light, and the placement of natural and artificial light sources.

4. Transformational leadership with the lowest value statement "My leader pays attention to the needs, potential, and development of each team member personally." The Medan Baru Sub-District Office needs to increase leadership attention and guidance regarding the needs and potential of individual employees so that career development and team performance can be optimized. This suggestion indicates that leadership attention to each employee still needs to be improved. Ideally, leaders should not only direct work but also understand the strengths, weaknesses, and development needs of each team member. By providing personal coaching, constructive feedback, and training or promotion opportunities in line with potential, employees will feel more valued and motivated.

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