

LEADERSHIP DYNAMICS AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT: ENHANCING AMIL PERFORMANCE IN ZAKAT INSTITUTIONS

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Received : 29 October 2025	Published : 28 December 2025
Revised : 20 November 2025	DOI : https://doi.org/10.54443/morfaiv6i1.4877
Accepted : 15 December 2025	Publish Link : https://radjapublika.com/index.php/MORFAI/article/view/4877

Abstract

This study investigates the influence of transformational and transactional leadership styles on the performance of zakat officers (amil) in zakat institutions in Medan City, with Total Quality Management (TQM) examined as a mediating variable. Utilizing a quantitative approach, data were collected from 31 amil zakat through a structured questionnaire, and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS to test direct and indirect relationships among variables. The results reveal that both transformational and transactional leadership significantly affect amil performance, but transformational leadership exerts a stronger impact in driving performance and supporting TQM implementation. TQM itself plays a critical mediating role, amplifying the influence of both leadership styles on performance outcomes. These findings suggest that leadership effectiveness in zakat institutions is not solely determined by leaders' behavior but also depends on the organization's ability to institutionalize comprehensive quality management practices. The study enriches the understanding that combining visionary, inspirational, and adaptive leadership with a quality-oriented organizational culture is key to fostering professionalism and accountability among amil zakat. This research contributes practically by highlighting the importance of prioritizing transformational leadership supported by consistent TQM application as a relevant strategy to enhance governance, transparency, and public trust in zakat institutions in Medan.

Keywords: *Transformational leadership; Transactional leadership; Total Quality Management; Amil performance; Zakat institute*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, zakat institutions in Indonesia and other developing countries have faced significant challenges in improving the efficiency and transparency of zakat management (Pramiswari et al., 2021; Qamaruddin et al., 2019; Widiastuti et al., 2018). The vast potential of zakat as an instrument of socio-economic empowerment remains underutilized, particularly in terms of effective management aligned with principles of sustainable quality. Although zakat institutions in Indonesia (Şencal, 2021; Wong & McGovern, 2022), play a crucial role in supporting communities, many continue to struggle to ensure that collected zakat funds are optimally and appropriately allocated. This issue is closely tied to the limited managerial and operational capabilities of zakat officers (amil), which affect overall institutional performance, especially regarding efficient resource management and equitable zakat distribution (Arwani et al., 2022; Muhamad Ali et al., 2016; Widiastuti et al., 2021). Deficiencies in innovation, strategic planning, and resource management further hinder the advancement of these institutions (Lisa, 2015; Syaikh, 2018). Numerous studies have highlighted that, despite increased awareness of zakat's importance, weaknesses in organizational management often prevent zakat funds from being managed efficiently and accountably (Alshehadeh et al., 2024; Hair et al., 2019). Leadership style is a key factor influencing amil performance. Both transformational and transactional leadership—widely discussed in the literature—are essential in motivating amil to enhance their performance. Transformational leaders tend to focus on empowerment, inspiration, and long-term motivation, while transactional leaders emphasize the achievement of measurable targets through incentives and rewards (Howell & Avolio, 1993; Koech & Namusonge, 2012; Purwanto et al., 2020). While both approaches have merits, few studies have comprehensively examined how these leadership styles directly influence amil performance, particularly with the mediating role of Total Quality Management (TQM) taken into

account (Dwiantoro, 2017). TQM, centered on continuous quality improvement, offers a structured approach for enhancing operational efficiency and service quality (Birhanu & Daniel, 2014; Iriani & Rahmana, 2010; Siregar, 2018). Its implementation can address existing managerial challenges by improving systems systematically, fostering organization-wide involvement, and promoting data-driven decision-making. Through TQM, zakat institutions can cultivate an environment that supports sustained innovation, operational efficiency, and enhanced service quality for mustahik. Nevertheless, the role of TQM as a mediator between leadership styles and amil performance remains underexplored, especially within the context of zakat institutions in Medan, Indonesia. This gap is significant, as TQM has been extensively studied in corporate and educational settings, but its mediating function in zakat management contexts is rarely discussed. Medan's unique socio-cultural and economic characteristics as a diverse urban center present distinct challenges and opportunities that may not be found elsewhere. Understanding how TQM functions as a mediator in this context is therefore crucial for developing appropriate and context-sensitive strategies to improve amil performance and enhance zakat management practices. This study aims to address this research gap by examining the influence of transformational and transactional leadership styles on amil performance, while exploring TQM's role as a mediating variable. By clarifying how these leadership styles shape TQM implementation and ultimately affect performance, this research seeks to offer practical insights for zakat institutions, particularly in their efforts to improve amil performance through more systematic and sustainable approaches. The novelty of this study lies in its examination of the relational model linking leadership styles, TQM, and amil performance, offering new and applicable insights for the managerial practices of zakat institutions in Medan and its surrounding areas.

LITERATURE REVIEW

a. The Relationship Between Transformational Leadership and the Implementation of TQM and the Performance of Zakat Management in Zakat Institutions

Transformational leadership plays a pivotal role in driving the successful implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) (Howell & Avolio, 1993; Urgessa Yadeta et al., 2022). A transformational leader does not simply guide members towards achieving short-term goals but also inspires them to prioritize the organization's interests (Novitasari & Janah, 2025; Purwanto, Primahendra, et al., 2020), often at the cost of personal interests in favor of a greater cause. In the context of zakat institutions, amil (zakat managers) led in this way are more likely to be driven not only to meet the quantity of zakat collected and distributed but also to enhance the quality of service provided to the mustahik (recipients of zakat). For example, transformational leaders focus on developing a vision that motivates members to innovate in their tasks and explore new ways to improve efficiency and the social impact of zakat. A leader who can inspire and drive positive change will motivate amil to become more engaged in the social mission of zakat, focusing on delivering better service quality (Urgessa Yadeta et al., 2022).

TQM, which aims to continuously improve quality, aligns closely with the transformational leadership approach. Transformational leaders encourage amil to keep innovating and enhancing quality across all levels of the organization, which helps facilitate the implementation of TQM (Handoko et al., 2016; Lestari & Darmawan, 2025; Muhammad & Rahardja, 2021). his approach focuses on long-term performance improvement, crucial for ensuring that zakat is managed efficiently and makes a tangible impact on society (Muthya et al., 2024; Pratiwi, 2019). Consistent with this, (Argia & Ismail, 2013) found that transformational leadership directly enhances the application of TQM within organizations, leading to higher effectiveness in public service. In the context of zakat institutions, a leader who provides a clear vision will motivate amil to adopt TQM principles and improve the quality of their zakat services.

The role of transformational leaders is also essential in establishing a culture of quality within zakat institutions. A leader who can inspire does not only emphasize achieving zakat targets but also instills values of integrity, transparency, and accountability. These values are crucial for creating a system that supports continuous improvement and innovation in zakat management (Birhanu & Daniel, 2014). The core principle of TQM continuous improvement can only be realized when a leader has the capability to create a work environment that encourages amil to innovate, ultimately enhancing their performance in managing zakat more efficiently and effectively (Siregar, 2018). In this context, transformational leadership serves not only as a driver for the implementation of TQM but also as the key connector that ensures the quality of zakat is not just achieved but continually improved over time.

b. The Relationship Between Transactional Leadership and the Implementation of TQM and the Performance of Zakat Managers in Zakat Institutions.

Transactional leadership focuses on the exchange between leaders and subordinates, playing a key role in driving the achievement of measurable short-term goals through rewards and punishments (Dwiantoro, 2017;

Purwanto, Asbari, & Hadi, 2020; Purwanto, Asbari, Prameswari, et al., 2020). This leadership style emphasizes the importance of achieving set targets, such as the amount of zakat collected and distributed to the mustahik (zakat recipients). Transactional leaders tend to concentrate on clear outcomes, often leading to quick and efficient results within a short time frame (Howell & Avolio, 1993). However, while this approach is effective in improving efficiency in the short term, the application of TQM—which focuses on continuous improvement and long-term quality enhancement—may not be fully realized within a transactional leadership framework (Pratiwi et al., 2019). Transactional leaders often prioritize numerical targets rather than fostering sustainable quality changes in zakat management (Muthya et al., 2024).

Nevertheless, despite its limitations in fostering innovation and creativity, transactional leadership can still positively contribute to the performance of zakat managers, particularly through offering rewards or incentives to amil who meet or exceed their targets. For example, the presence of clear rewards and a structured system can motivate amil to meet agreed-upon operational standards (Suwarno et al., 2020). application of TQM, which integrates principles such as continuous improvement and data-driven decision-making, can extend the positive effects of transactional leadership by ensuring that, in addition to achieving quantitative targets, zakat institutions also continuously prioritize the quality of zakat management (Purwanto, Asbari, & Hadi, 2020). However, transactional leadership is less effective in driving the necessary changes for sustainable quality improvements in zakat institutions. Research by (Urgessa Yadeta et al., 2022) revealed that while transactional leadership can deliver quick results, its impact on fostering a culture of quality change tends to be more limited compared to transformational leadership. Therefore, to enhance the long-term effectiveness of TQM, zakat institutions should consider adopting a more flexible and innovative leadership approach (Aida, 2024; Iriani & Rahmana, 2010; Koech & Namusonge, 2012; Siregar, 2018).

c. The Impact of TQM on Enhancing Amil Performance and Its Function as a Mediator

TQM plays a crucial role in mediating the relationship between leadership styles and the performance of zakat managers (amil) (Dwiantoro, 2017). As a managerial approach, TQM emphasizes the importance of continuous improvement in all operational aspects (Muthya et al., 2024; Septiani et al., 2024), which can enhance amil performance in zakat management. TQM focuses on improving the quality of zakat services by continuously refining processes and applying principles such as the involvement of all organizational members and data-driven decision-making (Siregar, 2018). In the context of zakat institutions, implementing TQM helps amil work more efficiently, more systematically, and with a stronger focus on quality, ultimately improving their performance in providing targeted and beneficial zakat services.

TQM also serves as a mediator linking leadership styles with the performance of amil within zakat institutions. Transformational leadership can strengthen the application of TQM by encouraging amil to focus on continuous quality improvement. A transformational leader who inspires and motivates amil to innovate will help ensure that TQM principles are effectively applied in every process of zakat management (Argia & Ismail, 2013). On the other hand, while transactional leadership tends to focus on quick results, the implementation of TQM can lead to sustainable quality improvement by providing a clearer structure for zakat management, focusing on long-term quality enhancement (Urgessa Yadeta et al., 2022). As a mediator, TQM ensures that despite the differences in leadership styles applied in zakat institutions, the desired outcomes in terms of zakat quality and amil performance can still be achieved. This demonstrates that TQM is not just a tool to improve operational efficiency but also a strategy that allows zakat institutions to adapt to changing needs of the mustahik (zakat recipients) and create lasting quality improvements (Amir et al., 2022). Therefore, TQM plays a key role in ensuring that zakat institutions continue to evolve and adapt while maintaining high-quality standards in zakat management.

METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative approach with a descriptive research design and variable relationships to examine the impact of transformational and transactional leadership styles on amil zakat performance, with TQM as a mediating variable. Data was collected through a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms (G-form) to 31 amil zakat working at various zakat management institutions in Medan City. Respondents were selected using purposive sampling, focusing on those directly involved in zakat management within their respective organizations. The questionnaire comprised several sections, including the measurement of transformational and transactional leadership styles, the application of TQM principles within zakat institutions, and the assessment of amil zakat performance in terms of efficiency and service quality to mustahik.

The data collection process was conducted through an online questionnaire distribution, allowing respondents to complete it at their convenience and preferred time. Subsequently, the collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to test the research hypotheses. The SmartPLS software was used to perform path analysis and examine the relationships between variables in the research model, as well as to assess TQM's role as a mediator between leadership styles and amil zakat performance. SmartPLS was chosen for its capability to handle complex models, especially when the data is non-normative and includes interrelated variables (Hair et al., 2019). This method also allows researchers to test models involving multiple latent variables simultaneously, making it more effective in illustrating both direct and indirect relationships in this study's context. Furthermore, PLS is well-suited for small samples, such as the 31 respondents in this study, and can provide stable estimates despite the relatively limited sample size (Chin, 2010).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

In this study, the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method was applied using SmartPLS version 4.0.9.9 to explore the relationships between transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM), and the performance of amil in zakat institutions. The analysis yielded several significant findings, which can be interpreted comprehensively to provide deep insights into how these various factors influence the performance of amil in zakat organizations.

Table 1. Outer Loading Value, Ave Value, CA, CR

Variabel	Code Indicator	Outer Loading Value Variabel	AVE Value	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
X1 Transformational Leadership	X1.1	0.792	0.687	0.908	0.929
	X1.2	0.791			
	X1.3	0.900			
	X1.4	0.761			
	X1.5	0.839			
	X1.6	0.880			
X2 Transactional Leadership	X2.1	0.808	0.670	0.836	0.890
	X2.2	0.848			
	X2.3	0.845			
	X2.4	0.773			
Z TQM	Z.1	0.719	0.627	0.960	0.964
	Z.2	0.722			
	Z.3	0.795			
	Z.4	0.803			
	Z.5	0.864			
	Z.6	0.810			
	Z.7	0.808			
	Z.8	0.741			
	Z.9	0.808			
	Z.10	0.837			
	Z.11	0.759			
	Z.12	0.786			
	Z.13	0.720			
	Z.14	0.875			
	Z.15	0.833			
	Z.16	0.768			
Y Amil Performance	Y.1	0.717	0.646	0.861	0.901
	Y.2	0.758			
	Y.3	0.855			
	Y.4	0.785			
	Y.5	0.891			

Table 1 demonstrates that the evaluation of the outer model confirms all indicators possess outer loadings exceeding the threshold of 0.70, signifying that each indicator is a valid representation of its underlying construct. Furthermore, the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values surpass 0.70, reflecting a high degree of internal consistency and affirming the reliability of the measurement instrument. The AVE values, which all exceed 0.50, indicate that the constructs exhibit satisfactory convergent validity by adequately capturing the variance of their associated indicators. Collectively, these findings substantiate that the measurement model adheres to established criteria for reliability and validity, thereby rendering it robust and appropriate for subsequent analytical procedures.

Table 2 Cross Loading Values of Each Variable

Indicator	X1 Transformational Leadership	X2 Transactional Leadership	Z TQM	Y Amil Performance
X1.1	0.792	0.607	0.732	0.720
X1.2	0.791	0.682	0.719	0.716
X1.3	0.900	0.868	0.874	0.887
X1.4	0.761	0.594	0.643	0.710
X1.5	0.839	0.702	0.714	0.758
X1.6	0.880	0.776	0.756	0.802
X2.1	0.677	0.808	0.702	0.736
X2.2	0.740	0.848	0.846	0.788
X2.3	0.716	0.845	0.782	0.812
X2.4	0.674	0.773	0.629	0.688
Z.1	0.713	0.713	0.719	0.713
Z.2	0.644	0.634	0.722	0.602
Z.3	0.714	0.637	0.795	0.741
Z.4	0.696	0.666	0.803	0.744
Z.5	0.793	0.827	0.864	0.874
Z.6	0.779	0.760	0.810	0.790
Z.7	0.655	0.638	0.808	0.757
Z.8	0.617	0.619	0.741	0.682
Z.9	0.750	0.801	0.808	0.801
Z.10	0.689	0.789	0.837	0.806
Z.11	0.689	0.703	0.759	0.708
Z.12	0.707	0.706	0.786	0.761
Z.13	0.600	0.690	0.720	0.632
Z.14	0.761	0.797	0.875	0.871
Z.15	0.753	0.745	0.833	0.831
Z.16	0.749	0.718	0.768	0.757
Y.1	0.712	0.711	0.690	0.717
Y.2	0.676	0.728	0.738	0.758
Y.3	0.791	0.737	0.813	0.855
Y.4	0.731	0.682	0.724	0.785
Y.5	0.810	0.839	0.791	0.891

Table 2 illustrates that the correlation values between each construct and its respective indicators exceed the correlations observed with other constructs, indicating that the indicators are appropriately associated with their designated variable blocks—specifically, Transformational Leadership Style, Transactional Leadership Style, Total Quality Management (TQM), and Amil Performance. The outer loadings of these indicators are consistently higher within their own constructs than across alternative constructs. Accordingly, it can be inferred that all latent constructs

exhibit satisfactory discriminant validity, as they demonstrate a superior capacity to explain variance within their corresponding indicator sets compared to indicators belonging to other constructs.

Table 3. Hypotheses test.

Hypothesis	Relationship Between Constructs	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics ((O/STDEV))	P Values	Remarks
Direct Effects					
H1	X1 Transformational Leadership -> Y Amil Performance	0.281	2.581	0.010	Significant Positive Effect
H2	X1 Transformational Leadership -> Z TQM	0.443	3.552	0.000	Significant Positive Effect
H3	X2 Transactional Leadership -> Y Amil Performance	0.228	2.236	0.025	Significant Positive Effect
H4	X2 Transactional Leadership -> Z TQM	0.529	4.178	0.000	Significant Positive Effect
H5	Z TQM -> Y Amil Performance	0.502	3.128	0.002	Significant Positive Effect
Indirect Effects					
H6	X1 Transformational Leadership -> Z TQM -> Y Amil Performance	0.223	2.478	0.013	Significant Positive Effect
H7	X2 Transactional Leadership -> Z TQM -> Y Amil Performance	0.266	2.331	0.020	Significant Positive Effect

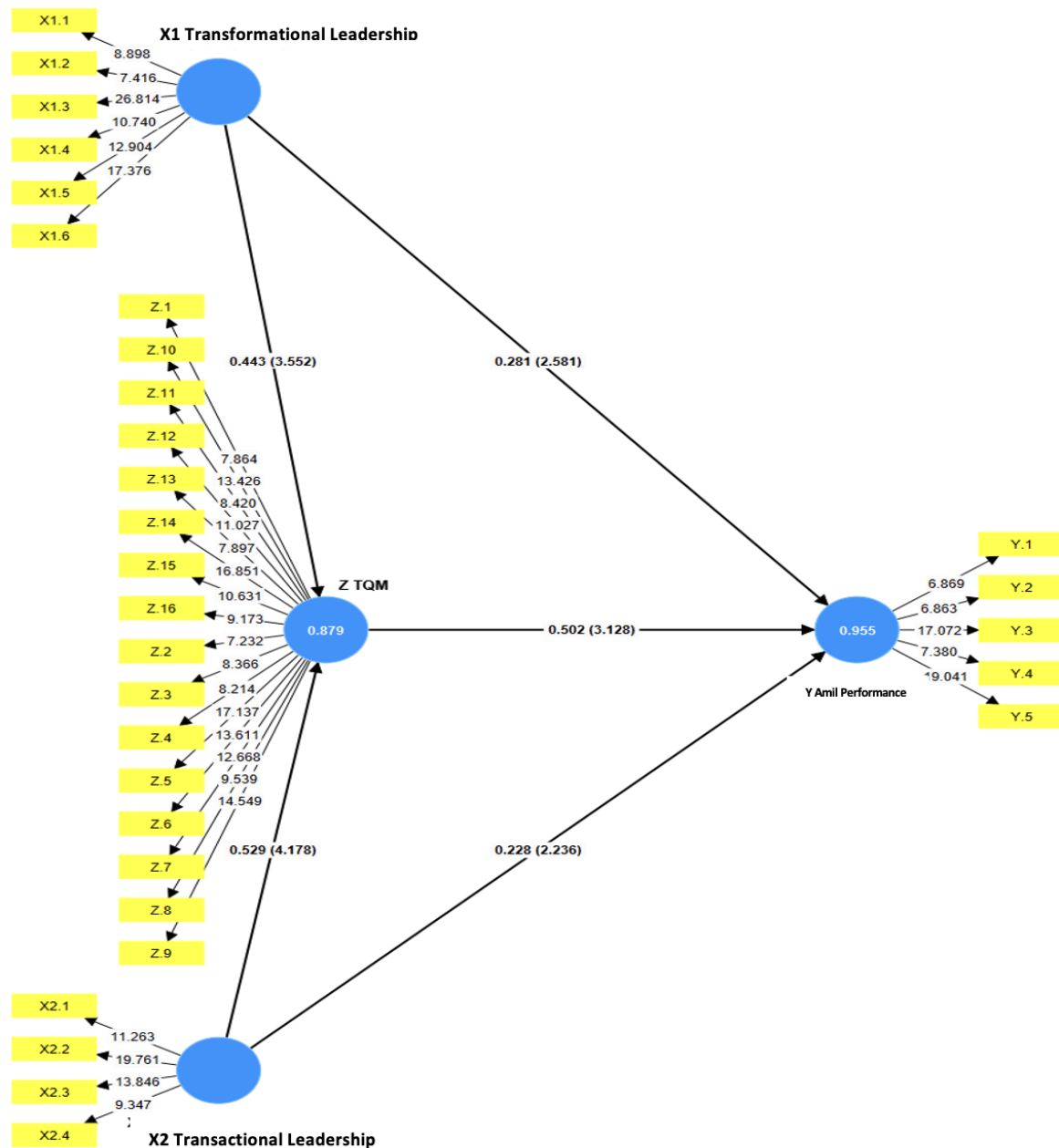


Figure 1. Path Coefficient Model and t-Statistics of the Research Model

Discussion

The findings of this study elucidate the intricate relationships among leadership styles, Total Quality Management (TQM), and the performance of amil (zakat officers) in zakat institutions in Medan City. Regarding the first hypothesis (H1), transformational leadership was found to exert a significant and positive influence on amil performance. This aligns with the theoretical propositions of Avolio and Bass, who asserted that transformational leaders inspire subordinates to exceed expectations and pursue sustainable long-term objectives (Howell & Avolio, 1993). Visionary, inspiring, and empowering leaders demonstrably enhance the professionalism and productivity of amil, reinforcing the crucial role of transformational leadership in fostering high levels of work commitment (Setiawan, 2019). The second hypothesis (H2) reveals that transformational leadership also significantly influences the implementation of TQM (Dawood et al., 2021; Qadir & Yeşiltaş, 2020). Transformational leaders cultivate an organizational culture committed to quality, encouraging member participation and continuous improvement initiatives. These findings reinforce perspective (Dwiantoro, 2017; Novitasari & Janah, 2025), which emphasized the role of transformational leaders in embedding a culture of continuous improvement and engaging all organizational members in TQM processes. Within zakat institutions, this leadership style strengthens TQM

practices, with a sustained focus on service quality enhancement. The third hypothesis (H3) indicates that transactional leadership also has a positive, albeit comparatively weaker, effect on amil performance (Northouse, 2018; Robbins & Judge, 2019). This leadership style emphasizes procedural compliance, work discipline, and effective operational control. The findings are consistent with theoretical perspectives that portray transactional leadership as goal-oriented and effective for achieving clear targets, though less adept at driving long-term quality improvement (Fok-Yew Oon *et al.*, 2021). Purwanto *et al* similarly highlighted that while transactional leadership is effective under circumstances requiring tight control, it falls short in fostering a sustainable quality culture—a critical dimension in zakat management (Purwanto, Asbari, Prameswari, *et al.*, 2020).

The fourth hypothesis (H4) demonstrates that transactional leadership significantly affects TQM implementation (Alkhajeh & Khalid, 2018). This influence stems from transactional leadership's focus on adherence to procedural standards and clear operational structures. Although this style predominantly centers on reward and punishment tied to measurable outcomes, it contributes to reinforcing TQM by establishing procedural clarity and standardization. While its impact may be comparatively limited, transactional leadership facilitates operational efficiency within zakat institutions, consistent with studies emphasizing the importance of clear quality control in TQM application (Dwiantoro, 2017; Purwanto, Asbari, & Hadi, 2020). The fifth hypothesis (H5) reveals that TQM implementation significantly enhances amil performance (Dawood *et al.*, 2021; Dwiantoro, 2017). TQM principles such as customer focus, continuous improvement, and employee involvement elevate amil's ability to deliver professional and accountable services. This finding concurs with prior studies underscoring TQM's relevance in nonprofit and social organizations like zakat institutions, as a mechanism to ensure operational excellence, transparency, and greater accountability (Fok-Yew & Kassim, 2025; Salih & Dolah, 2023).

The sixth hypothesis (H6) establishes that TQM mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and amil performance. This suggests that while transformational leaders inherently inspire and motivate, their impact on performance becomes fully realized when supported by a quality management system that channels this energy into structured, measurable frameworks. (Dwiantoro, 2017) noted that in public service organizations, the integration of value-based leadership and quality management systems is a key determinant of sustainable performance. Dawood also emphasized that TQM can serve as a pathway that strengthens the link between leadership behaviors and performance outcomes (Dawood *et al.*, 2021). The seventh hypothesis (H7) indicates that TQM also mediates the relationship between transactional leadership and amil performance. Transactional leadership, while effective at enforcing procedural compliance, achieves a more substantive influence on performance when enacted within a structured quality management context. Dwiantoro stressed that quality management systems help optimize the reward-punishment mechanisms inherent in transactional leadership, making its impact on performance more productive and sustainable (Dwiantoro, 2017).

Upon examining these relationships, several noteworthy comparisons emerge. Transformational leadership exerts a stronger influence than transactional leadership on both amil performance and TQM implementation, corroborating findings by Dawood, who emphasized that inspiration- and value-driven leadership more effectively cultivates a quality-oriented and committed organizational culture (Dawood *et al.*, 2021). In contrast, transactional leadership's strength lies in enforcing procedural compliance but is less effective in driving innovation and sustained active participation over the long term (Robbins & Judge, 2019). Moreover, indirect effects via TQM mediation exceed the direct effects of either leadership style on amil performance, a finding supported by Northouse P, who highlighted TQM's central role as an intermediary linking leadership behavior to organizational outcomes in public sector contexts (Northouse, 2018).

The theoretical implications of these findings extend the understanding of leadership effectiveness in nonprofit organizations, particularly zakat institutions. The study enriches transformational leadership theory by illustrating that leadership effectiveness is contingent not only on leaders' behaviors but also on the organizational readiness to institutionalize quality management systems that facilitate consistent and sustainable leadership outcomes. Additionally, this research underscores TQM's relevance not merely as an operational instrument but as a key mediator bridging the relationship between leadership and performance.

From a managerial perspective, the study offers concrete guidance for leaders of zakat institutions in Medan City. Transformational leadership should be prioritized as it proves more effective in fostering intrinsic motivation, loyalty, and an adaptive work culture—critical factors for strengthening public trust and the professional governance of zakat. Nevertheless, TQM must be embedded as an organizational culture to ensure that leadership values are operationalized in day-to-day activities. While transactional leadership retains relevance, particularly in ensuring procedural adherence and operational efficiency, transformational leadership coupled with comprehensive TQM practices offers a more profound and sustainable impact on amil performance within zakat institutions in Medan.

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