

# The Effect of Leadership Style on Improving Employee Performance

Arif Ainun Na'im, Angga Febrian, Luthfi Firdaus, Risda Marvinita,  
Nova Mardiana

Departement of Management, Universitas Lampung,  
Jl. Prof. Dr. Ir. Sumantri Brojonegoro, Gedong Meneng, Rajabasa, Kota Bandar Lampung, Lampung 35141, Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

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### Corresponding author:

Angga Febrian  
[angga.febrian@feb.unila.ac.id](mailto:angga.febrian@feb.unila.ac.id)

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Leadership style significantly impacts the organization's long-term viability, especially character-based leadership. On the other hand, leadership style can also affect an organization's reputation. This study intends to investigate the relationship between corporate reputation and leadership style, which has consequences for raising worker productivity. An online poll targeting employees in different work units and businesses in Indonesia was used to obtain the data. The study's findings can advance understanding, particularly in terms of the way that corporate reputation mediates the relationship between leadership style and employee performance. This research also has practical implications for management in an organization to be more aware of the role of organizational reputation that can influence employee performance. In addition, the quality of leaders is also one of the main drivers of organizational reputation, so a good reputation will create a climate of fair work competition for employees to improve their performance.

## SARI PATI

*Kepemimpinan memiliki dampak yang signifikan terhadap kelangsungan jangka panjang organisasi, terutama kepemimpinan berbasis karakter. Di sisi lain, gaya kepemimpinan juga dapat berdampak pada reputasi organisasi. Penelitian ini bermaksud untuk menyelidiki hubungan antara reputasi perusahaan dan gaya kepemimpinan, yang memiliki konsekuensi untuk meningkatkan produktivitas pekerja. Jajak pendapat online yang menargetkan karyawan di berbagai unit kerja dan bisnis di Indonesia digunakan untuk mendapatkan data tersebut. Temuan studi ini dapat memajukan pemahaman, khususnya dalam hal bagaimana reputasi perusahaan memediasi hubungan antara gaya kepemimpinan dan kinerja karyawan. Penelitian ini juga memiliki implikasi praktis terhadap manajemen di suatu organisasi agar lebih menyadari peran reputasi organisasi yang mampu memengaruhi kinerja karyawan. Selain itu kualitas pemimpin juga menjadi salah satu penggerak utama reputasi organisasi, sehingga dengan reputasi yang baik akan menciptakan iklim persaingan kerja yang sehat bagi karyawan untuk meningkatkan kinerjanya.*

## INTRODUCTION

Along with the times, leadership will always change, including in the current era, namely 5.0 (Muslimah, 2021). Basically, a leader has a strong influence on employees or subordinates in directing them to a goal to be achieved. A leader can influence his followers in various ways, including through legitimate authority, developing models or serving as role models, goal-setting, rewarding and punishing behavior, organizational restructuring, and disseminating a vision. (Kurniawan, 2022). As with character-based leadership styles, where this leadership style is based on positive character strengths that serve as a foundation for a broader leadership framework (Kiersch & Gullekson, 2021). Of course, this includes aspects of the leader's behavior, personality, and abilities that can affect company performance. Then with this leadership style will also be the main reason for the good or bad performance of members or employees in an organization.

Superior leadership capabilities are needed to answer the challenges of global competitiveness (Ngayo Fotso, 2021). This advantage can be seen in how the performance of employees in an organization (Liu & Gumah, 2020). The employee's performance is strongly influenced by the leadership style used by the leader (Dastane, 2020). Such as participative leadership and instrumental leadership positively impact employee performance (Chammas & Hernandez, 2019; Chan, 2019). In addition, leadership style can also encourage the quality and perception of society and its members towards the organization's Reputation (Conte, 2018; Men & Stacks, 2013; Nabella et al., 2022). So a good reputation will make employees improve their performance to keep working at the organization, considering that an organization with a good reputation will always be the top choice of job seekers.

Although many previous studies state that the influence of leadership style can improve employee performance and the reputation of an organization

or company (Conte, 2018; Men & Stacks, 2013; Nabella et al., 2022), research does not pay attention to the role of organizational reputation in mediating the relationship between leadership style and employee performance. The sustainability of an organization is strongly influenced by its Reputation (Dwiedienawati et al., 2021). So companies need to pay attention to the role of organizational reputation as part of achieving the leadership style carried out.

Employee performance will be better when they have competent, qualified, knowledgeable leaders with better skills in evaluating organizational reputation. Hence, employees with a good perception of organizational reputation tend to increase their involvement and are more enthusiastic at work (Mufti et al., 2020). Ultimately, this study will explore the effect of leadership style on increasing employee perceptions of organizational reputation, which has implications for improving employee performance.

### *Leadership style*

Leadership is a person's ability to use environmental influences or situations within the organization to produce meaningful effects and impact the organizational environment to achieve goals (Bakker et al., 2022). Part of a person's leadership capacity is to persuade others to support their objectives (Ruth Silaen et al., 2021). This is also consistent with other studies, which state that leadership style is a person's way (leadership) of influencing other people or their subordinates to be willing to do what they want to achieve organizational goals (Kuncoro, 2021). Different characteristics of a person make each individual's leadership style different.

A leader can use two leadership styles: participative leadership and instrumental leadership (Chammas & Hernandez, 2019; Chan, 2019). Participative leadership is based on employee compliance with guidelines or procedures in completing tasks and achieving specific goals. In contrast, instrumental leadership is based on clearly understanding

roles, responsibilities, policies, and directions for completing tasks for employees (Chammas & Hernandez, 2019; Chan, 2019). So it can be said that participative leadership is based more on employee involvement in the decision-making process, while instrumental leadership is based on giving detailed directions to employees.

#### *Character-Based Leadership*

In the current era, character is a very important aspect of a leader, because this character it can determine the direction of the goals of a company or organization. Based on research by (Do et al., 2023), states that in the face of daily situational pressures, character-based leadership emphasizes development and commitment to principles and values so that character-based leadership must be able to foster tolerance and build good relationships with employees. According to (Komari, 2022), character-based leadership is based on eighteen local characteristics which include religion, honest, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independent, democratic, curiosity, national spirit, love of the motherland, rewarding achievements, friendly/communicative, peaceful love, likes to read, care for the environment, social care, and responsibility. Of course, character-based leadership will be much more able to understand and establish good relationships with employees, so this will have a direct impact on the performance of the employees themselves.

#### *Employee's performance*

A positive relationship between leaders and their subordinates is needed to achieve organizational goals by creating solid morals and the right leadership style for a leader (Abasilim et al., 2019). Thus, a leadership style that is properly implemented will have an impact on increasing organizational productivity and creating effective and efficient employees as measured by how well these employees perform. Employee performance is the scope of several types of work, also includes several kinds of broader work behavior and reflects how the work is carried out (Sverke et al., 2019).

Performance is defined as the result of the entire work carried out during a specific period or usually in one period associated with work standards, targets, and goals or criteria to be achieved to be used as an evaluation and to find out the results of the implementation of work processes for one period (Juliati, 2021). Based on this, we think that: **H1: Leadership style positively and significantly affects employee performance.**

#### *Organizational Reputation*

Organizational reputation is an assessment of the ability of the organization collectively for some groups or interested parties to obtain beneficial results (Hiwa et al., 2021). Assessing or knowing an organization's reputation can be classified into two perceptions: based on the employee's perception of the organization where he works and the perception of relatives or people around him (Xie et al., 2015). So that in assessing the extent to which the organization has a good or bad reputation is based on each individual's assessment of the value of the perceived benefits of the product or service received from an organization.

When a leader effectively communicates the organization's vision and mission to staff members, they enable them to carry out their duties and fulfill their organizational commitments (Nashar & Manurung, 2019). So that if the organization's objectives are not achieved properly it will also cause a decrease in the Reputation of the organization. Meanwhile, leaders who are less competent and have weak influence will have an impact on decreasing employee performance which has implications for decreasing organizational Reputation (Conte, 2018). Enhancing employee performance will improve leadership, which will also improve organizational performance. If organizational performance increases it will also have an impact on increasing organizational Reputation. This is also consistent with earlier studies which state that the quality of leaders is one of the main drivers of organizational Reputation (Conte, 2018; Hiwa et al., 2021; Nabella et al.,

2022). Leadership has a significant impact on the internal environment of the organization, such as influencing employee attitudes and motivation which can generate positive word of mouth so that it will improve the organization's internal Reputation (Lee & Abdullah, 2024).

Organizations with a good reputation can strengthen and increase employee commitment to beliefs, values, and mission, as well as organizational goals (Men & Stacks, 2013). Increasing organizational identification and having a reputation as a good job-provider organization can encourage motivation, loyalty, and employee involvement, ultimately impacting superior performance and improving organizational effectiveness (Hiwa et al., 2021). Thus, organizational reputation is stated to be able to grow employee commitment which will also ultimately impact the employee's performance. Based on this, we think that:

**H2:** Leadership Style positively and significantly affects Organizational reputation.

**H3:** Organizational reputation positively and significantly affects Employee Performance.

*The role of organization reputation mediation*

Leadership style, organizational reputation, and employee performance are related. An effective leader will inspire employees to raise their performance levels, ultimately improving organizational performance and boosting the organization's reputation. On the other hand, an organization with a good reputation can also spur

people to work for the organization, so that when someone becomes an employee at an organization that many people covet, they will work seriously and improve their performance, so they don't lose a job at the organization (Nabella et al., 2022). Although it can almost be said that no other studies discuss the mediating role of organizational reputation on leadership style and employee performance, we still try to propose a mediating relationship.

**H4:** Organizational Reputation mediates the relationship between Leadership Style and Employee Performance.

**METHODS**

Quantitative survey methods are used to test the proposed model because it can save costs efficiently to obtain data from a large population (Hanaysha et al., 2022). In December 2022, the survey was conducted by randomly distributing online questionnaires to more than 100 employees at various levels of positions and different work units in several companies in Indonesia.

*Measurements*

This study uses two dimensions for leadership style variables, participative leadership, and instrumental leadership, by adopting eleven questionnaire items from (Mulki et al., 2015) to measure leadership style with  $\alpha = 0.883$ . Six things were also adopted from research (Mulki et al., 2015) to measure employee performance with  $\alpha = 0.839$ . Furthermore, this study also assumes two dimensions of analysis (Xie et al., 2015) to measure organizational reputation

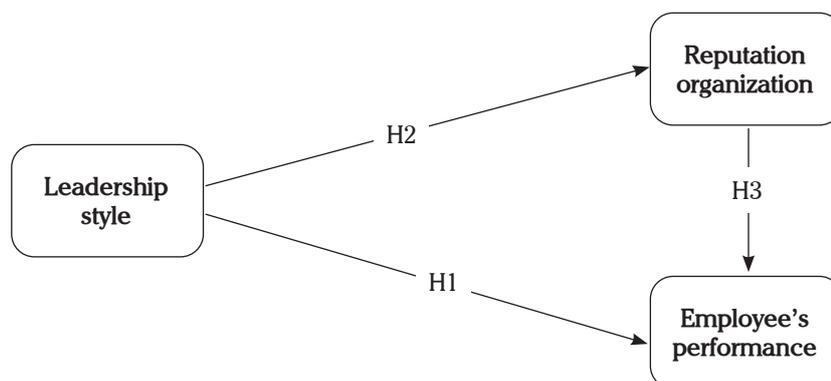


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

variables, which are based on personal opinions and the opinions of relatives or people around with  $\alpha = 0.939$ .

*Population and sampling*

This research covers various business units, such as mining companies, trading, services, property, agriculture, education, technology, etc. We reached 113 respondents who are employees in various companies. The survey was carried out by randomly distributing online questionnaires via personal chat or group chat by first ensuring the suitability of the respondents with the required criteria. Before asking about the variable responses, we inserted a lengthy consent statement describing the research's goal. We promised the respondents that their answers would only be used for academic study and that the data would be kept private.

There are numerous steps to the data collection process. The first stage involves gathering information about the respondents' workplace or company orientation and demographic details like age, gender, final educational attainment, and length of employment. The following phase also gathers information on the company's reputation, personnel performance, and leadership style.

*Data analysis*

Partially least squares equation (PLS-SEM) modeling, a statistical technique used in this work, is tested using SmartPLS. Because it is based on data characteristics or samples as well as moderation and mediation analysis, the PLS-SEM approach was chosen. This strategy has been frequently employed in research on marketing, human resources, and other areas (Iqbal et al., 2021). This approach can predict many equations simultaneously to establish connections between variables and the suggested research model (Davari & Rezazadeh, 2013). To forecast the impact of the dependent variable (Hair et al., 2021), advice utilizing SmartPLS. A data analysis technique called partial least square equation modeling (PLS-SEM) looks at theoretically constructed linear and additive causal correlations (Bryant, 2024).

So with this approach, the researcher can examine the relationship between one construct and another. In addition, this approach model is widely recognized as the best approach because it can analyze latent constructs that are difficult to examine and cannot be observed so that it can be used to measure indirect and direct paths, such as the relationship between dependent and

**Table 1. Respondent demographics**

Controls	Range	frequency	%
Age	18-22	75	66,37
	23-27	35	30,97
	28-32	3	2,65
Gender	Man	40	35,4
	Woman	73	64,6
last education	Senior High School	50	44,2
	Degree	62	54,9
	Post Degree	1	0,9
Business Fields of the Company	Mining company	4	3,5
	Trading Company	22	19,5
	Service Company	37	32,7
	Property Company	7	6,2
	Education	26	23
	Other companies	17	15,1
Length of work	Fewer than 1 year	9	7,96
	1-3 years	93	82,30
	Over 3 years	11	9,73

independent variables and the relationship between observed clues and latent constructs (Iqbal et al., 2021). Based on this, PLS-SEM was chosen in this study using SmartPLS, which supports this approach by focusing on the analysis of variance.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

*Measurement models*

This study uses a measurement model technique to evaluate the reliability of composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) of construction. We measure reliability using Cronbach’s alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR). We present in Table 2 to find out the results of CA and CR, with each having orientation values including leadership style (0.883; 0.906), employee performance (0.839; 0.851), and organizational reputation (0.939; 0.940). According to (Hair et al., 2021), CR and CA values must be more significant than 0.70 so that if related to the values produced in this study, they are still classified as acceptance criteria. So the construct has good reliability, or

in other words, the data used in this study which includes leadership style, employee performance, and organizational reputation shows adequate data consistency and achieves accuracy and accuracy in measurement.

In this study, we also used the Fornell and Lacker ratio and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) to test discriminant validity, which aligns with the statement (Fornell & Larcker, 2014) regarding discriminant validity testing. However, the HTMT ratio is more widely used than the Fornell and Lacker ratio (Henseler et al., 2016). The results of the discriminant validity test with the Fornell and Larcker ratios can be seen in Table 3, which shows a more excellent value than the correlation between variables. At the same time, testing discriminant validity using the HTMT ratio shows a value lower than the threshold of 0.090, which can be seen in Table 4. So based on the test results, it proves that all variables or constructs used in this study meet the discriminant validity test.

**Table 2. Measurement model**

Construct	Code Items	loading	Outer eights	CA	CR	AVE
Leadership Style (LS)				0.883	0.906	0.517
	LS1	0.683	0.161			
	LS2	0.684	0.165			
	LS3	0.758	0.153			
	LS4	0.655	0.136			
	LS5	0.729	0.160			
	LS6	0.722	0.144			
	LS7	0.802	0.188			
	LS8	0.757	0.144			
	LS9	0.672	0.137			
Employee Performance (EP)				0.839	0.882	0.556
	EP1	0.853	0.245			
	EP2	0.786	0.241			
	EP3	0.674	0.173			
	EP4	0.707	0.249			
	EP5	0.789	0.249			
	EP6	0.654	0.175			
Organizational Reputation				0.939	0.950	0.704
	OR1	0.870	0.159			
	OR2	0.810	0.139			
	OR3	0.726	0.155			
	OR4	0.863	0.150			
	OR5	0.864	0.152			
	OR6	0.847	0.138			
	OR7	0.853	0.149			
	OR8	0.868	0.159			

**Table 3. Discriminant validity (correlation of latent variables and square root of AVE)**

	LS	EP	OR
LS	0.719		
EP	0.597	0.746	
OR	0.632	0.589	0.839

Note: Leadership Style (LS); Employee Performance (EP); Organizational Reputation (OR)

**Table 4. HTMT (heterotrait-monotrait ratio)**

	LS	EP	OR
LS			
EP	0.682		0.651
OR	0.689		

**Table 5. Saturated model result**

Construct	R2	Adj. R2	VIF	Q2	F2	SRMR
OR	0.399	0.394	1,000	0.367	0.664	0.078
EP	0.432	0.421	1,664	0.321		

This study also analyses convergent validity to get the AVE value. The findings demonstrate that all variables have values more significant than the threshold (0.50), with each AVE value including 0.517, 0.556, and 0.704. Based on these results, it is in line with what was suggested by (Henseler et al., 2016), which can be seen in Table 2. So based on the test results, it proves that all variables or constructs used in this study meet the convergent validity test.

To evaluate the multicollinearity issue in the data, we also examined the variance inflation factor (VIF) in this study regarding the outcome criteria for the VIF value suggested by (Alita et al., 2021), namely a VIF value of less than 10. So in this study, a recommended VIF value was found. This indicates that the data do not have a multicollinearity issue (see Table 5).

#### *Structural model assessment*

The standardized root mean square (SRMR) value must be less than 0.08 if the sample size exceeds 100 (Henseler et al., 2016). So in this study, the SRMR value we found was 0.078 or less than 0.08, so it can

be said that it is by the required value. Furthermore, this study found that organizational reputation has a 39 percent variance explained by leadership style and employee performance. In comparison, employee performance and leadership style have a 43 percent variance. The variance value is by the necessary value, meaning the coefficient of determination (R2) value must be more than 0.1 (Chin et al., 1998). This study also has predictive relevance (Q2) as the required value, namely Q2, must be more than 0, with a Q2 value of 0.367 and 0.321. It can be said that this research is at a significant level.

Furthermore, this study's F2 (Size Effect) value is also 0.664, indicating that the larger the value, the more significant the difference between the control and experimental groups. So these numbers, 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35, which represent small, moderate, and severe impacts, comply with the standards. (Frey, 2022).

#### *Structural equation model*

Using PLS-SEM, we found that H1, H2, and H3,

each hypothesis having a p-value of less than 0.05 (see table 6), so based on these results, we accept a direct relationship from H1, H2, and H3. According to theory, the relationship between the independent variable (X) and the dependent variable (Z) is either mediated by or depends on the variable (Y). In this study, H1, H2, and H3 were shown to have a positive and significant direct effect. Besides that, the indirect effect (H4) also had a positive and significant effect with a p-value of 0.003 or according to the required value of less than 0.05. Concerning mediation, if the indirect relationship is declared insignificant and the direct relationship is declared significant, it is said to be full mediation. Meanwhile, suppose the indirect and direct relationship is both positive and significant. In that case, it is said to be partial mediation, so by referring to this, this research can be accepted as having partial mediation (H4).

*Discussion*

This study tries to demonstrate how organizational reputation mediates the effect of leadership style on employee performance in a corporation or organization. Although there hasn't been much research on the mediating effect of organizational reputation on leadership style and employee performance. However, after testing through PLS-SEM, the reliability test results are good and overall the results of the relationship between variables are positive and significant. The impact of leadership style on employee performance has been demonstrated in numerous prior research

on this topic that leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance (Abasilim et al., 2019). Moreover, a leader who has a character-based leadership style is also much more capable of fostering good relationships with employees it will have a direct impact on employee performance (Do et al., 2023; Kiersch & Gullekson, 2021; Komari, 2022). According to earlier studies (Conte, 2018; Hiwa et al., 2021; Lee & Abdullah, 2024; Nabella et al., 2022), leadership style also has a favorable impact on an organization's reputation. The findings also show that organizational reputation also influences employee performance. This is because organizations with a positive reputation among employees will motivate them to perform better to remain part of the organization or company (Hiwa et al., 2021; Mufti et al., 2020).

In the increasingly fierce work competition, employees continue to compete to improve performance and get a place or position in their organization or company. However, their reasons for being willing and settle in an organization or company are not just to get a job and make ends meet. Several things also affect the reasons for these employees or workers. One of the causes is due to how comfortable employees are with superiors or leaders and how well-known the business or organization is from the public's perspective. The performance of other employees, and particularly the performance of the organization or company itself, will be impacted because it is not uncommon for us to find in the field workers or employees

**Table 6. Hypothesis construction**

Effect	Connection	Beta	Means	(STDEV)	t -Value	p-Values	Decision
Direct relationship							
H1	LS → EP	0.597	0.621	0.067	8,944	0.000	Yes
H2	LS → OR	0.632	0.645	0.062	10.202	0.000	Yes
H3	OR → EP	0.353	0.351	0.108	3,277	0.001	Yes
Indirect Relations							
H4	LS → OR → EP	0.233	0.226	0.073	3,036	0.003	Yes

Note: Leadership Style (LS); Organizational Reputation (OR); Employee Performance (EP)

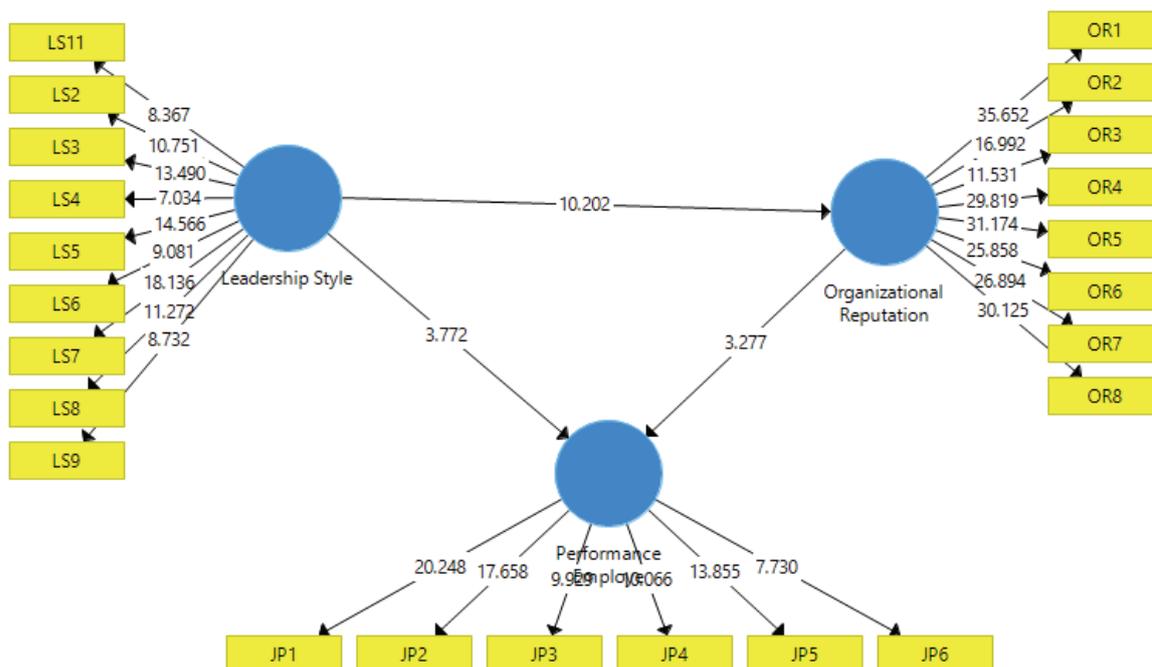


Figure 2. PLS-SEM shows a positive relationship in the variables

who resign from their jobs due to work pressure or less harmonious relationships with their leaders. Vice versa, if a leader can build a conducive work environment and support employees at work, or in this case, the leader applies a character-based leadership style, it is not impossible that the employee will feel comfortable and automatically improve performance in the company. It can be said that this is by the hypothesis in this study and the results of this study prove that leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Thus, an organization or company must pay attention and choose the right leadership style so as not to be the cause of decline or even decline for an organization or company. Especially by applying a character-based leadership style can have an impact on improving employee performance.

A leadership style can also impact the reputation of the organization. This is by the hypothesis in this study and the results of this study prove that leadership style has a positive and significant influence on organizational reputation. This is due to

the ability of a leader to shape a firm's environment and culture significantly impacts whether or not the organization or company outperforms its rivals due to the success of the organization or company under its leadership. This will also affect many people's perception regarding a company with a good reputation. This statement is in line with the hypothesis in this study and the results of this study prove that organizational reputation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. This can happen because people or job seekers tend to choose a workplace that has a good reputation. Of course, when these people become part of or become employees in a company or organization, their performance will increase, so that they do not lose their positions where they work.

This study also found that organizational reputation has a mediating effect in determining the relationship between leadership style and employee performance. The results showed that leadership style indirectly affects organizational reputation, or in other words in line with the hypothesis in this study and the results of this study

prove that organizational reputation mediates the relationship between leadership style and employee performance. This will affect the employee's perception of the company or organization where he works to improve his performance so as not to lose his job in a company or organization that has a good reputation. In the end, this study found that organizational reputation is indirectly involved in influencing the relationship between leadership style and employee performance, but has a positive and significant effect on the relationship between the two.

#### **MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The first theoretical contribution is to contribute to the literature on leadership styles, especially character-based leadership styles. This study found evidence of the influence on leadership style dimensions such as participative leadership style (involving employees in decision making, involving employees in contributing to problem-solving, and treating all employees equally) and instrumental leadership style (maintaining standardized employee performance standards, making specific and routine employee scheduling decisions, and making work procedures that employees must carry out in completing work) where both are the basis of the character of a leader and have a positive and significant influence on employee performance and organizational reputation. The second theoretical contribution is that the findings in this study can add knowledge that has rarely or never been studied before, especially in terms of the mediating role of organizational reputation in the relationship between leadership style and employee performance. So that it confirms previous findings which say that leader quality is one of the main drivers of organizational reputation (Conte, 2018; Hiwa et al., 2021; Lee & Abdullah, 2024; Mufti et al., 2020; Nabella et al., 2022), which with a good reputation will create a climate of healthy work competition for employees to improve performance.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the test results in this study, it has proven and accepted all the hypotheses in this study. So this research has many implications for organizational leaders and managers. First, leadership style especially character-based leadership has a significant indirect effect on organizational performance and a direct effect on employee performance. So organizations and businesses can use it to select the best leaders and encourage leaders to have a character-based leadership style because it will ultimately have an impact on employee performance and organizational reputation. Second, leaders must adjust their leadership style to create an organizational climate that can support and motivate employees to improve their performance. Finally, leaders must be aware of the role of organizational reputation in influencing employee performance. Therefore, it is necessary to boost leadership competence and quality to improve the organization's total performance. This will also impact the organization's reputation with the general public and enable internal (employee) performance improvement.

Like previous studies, this one has certain limitations as well. One limitation is using a sample that is only limited to employees. It would be better if it involved a leader's perspective in assessing leadership style and its influence on employee performance and organizational reputation. Future studies are anticipated to utilize a larger sample size and combine the opinions of employees and leaders inside a firm or organization to offer in-depth knowledge that will aid in examining the link between leadership style, organizational reputation, and employee performance. Future research is devoted to further exploring the impact of organizational reputation on employee performance and how leadership style can specifically have a strong influence on organizational reputation. This is because the research on the mediating role of Reputation in the relationship between leadership style and employee performance has not yet been fully explored. ■

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