



Intrinsic-Extrinsic Motivation and Transformational Leadership on Job Performance Through Employee Creativity: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examines the relationships among intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, transformational leadership, employee creativity, and job performance through a synthesis of empirical literature, with employee creativity as a mediating variable and spiritual incentives as a moderating variable. Improving employee performance remains a key organizational challenge, making it important to understand how motivation and leadership foster creativity and performance.

Research Methodology: A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was conducted using peer-reviewed studies obtained from Google Scholar, Scopus, and other academic databases.

Results: The review indicates that intrinsic motivation positively influences employee creativity and job performance by encouraging achievement and self-development. Extrinsic motivation also contributes to creativity and performance when incentive systems are appropriately designed. Transformational leadership enhances employee creativity through intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and psychological safety. Employee creativity functions as a significant mediator linking motivation and leadership to job performance.

Conclusions: Intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, transformational leadership, and employee creativity form an integrated system that supports higher job performance, with creativity serving as the primary mechanism through which organizational conditions improve outcomes.

Limitations: The study is based on secondary literature and may be affected by publication bias, while differences in contexts and research designs limit direct comparison.

Contributions: This study develops a conceptual framework linking motivation, transformational leadership, employee creativity, and job performance, while providing research propositions for future empirical investigation in human resource management.

Keywords: *Employee Creativity, Extrinsic Motivation, Intrinsic Motivation, Job Performance, Transformational Leadership*

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1. Introduction

The quality of human resources is a critical organizational asset that serves as a primary driver of organizational effectiveness and competitive advantage in increasingly dynamic and technologically accelerated business environments (Hasibuan, 2008). As organizations face growing challenges arising from globalization, technological advancement, and changing workforce expectations, the ability to

maintain and improve employee job performance has become a strategic priority. High-performing employees contribute not only to organizational productivity and service quality but also to innovation, adaptability, and long-term sustainability. Therefore, organizations increasingly recognize that the effective management of human resources is essential for achieving organizational objectives and maintaining competitiveness in rapidly changing business environments.

Human resource management, defined as the science and practice of regulating organizational and workforce relationships to achieve effective and efficient human capital utilization, serves as the institutional mechanism through which employee performance can be developed and sustained (Nawawi, 2011). Through appropriate recruitment, training, performance management, leadership development, and motivational systems, organizations seek to create conditions that encourage employees to perform at their highest potential. Consequently, understanding the factors that influence employee performance has become a major concern in both academic research and managerial practice.

Among the various determinants of employee performance, work motivation, transformational leadership, and employee creativity have received considerable attention in contemporary management literature (Jackson, 2020; Van den Broeck et al., 2021). Work motivation provides the psychological energy that directs and sustains employee behavior toward organizational goals. Motivation consists of both intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions (Ladkin & Patrick, 2022; Lawrason et al., 2023; Sansone & Tang, 2021). Intrinsic motivation arises from internal factors such as personal interest, curiosity, enjoyment, and the desire for achievement, whereas extrinsic motivation is driven by external rewards, recognition, compensation, and promotion opportunities (Asbari, 2020; Elida, 1989; Robbins, 2001). Both forms of motivation influence employees' willingness to exert effort, persist in difficult tasks, and pursue high levels of performance.

In addition to motivation, transformational leadership has been identified as an important factor affecting employee attitudes and behaviors (Asbari et al., 2020; Lawrason et al., 2023). Transformational leaders inspire followers through a compelling vision, encourage innovation through intellectual stimulation, provide individualized consideration, and motivate employees to exceed normal performance expectations (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Cheung & Wong, 2011). By creating a supportive and empowering work environment, transformational leadership can strengthen employee commitment, enhance creativity, and improve overall job performance.

Employee creativity, defined as the generation of novel and useful ideas, products, services, or processes, has emerged as a critical capability in modern organizations (Carmeli et al., 2010; Shalley et al., 2004). In knowledge-based economies, creativity is no longer viewed merely as a desirable employee characteristic but as a strategic resource that enables organizations to solve problems, improve efficiency, respond to environmental changes, and develop innovative solutions. Creative employees contribute directly to organizational success by transforming knowledge and experience into valuable outcomes that enhance both individual and organizational performance (Eaton et al., 2024; Kwan, 2020; Siangchokyoo et al., 2020).

Based on these considerations, this study examines how intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and transformational leadership influence employee job performance through the mediating role of employee creativity. Furthermore, spiritual incentives are proposed as a moderating variable that may strengthen the relationships among these variables, particularly within the Indonesian organizational context where spiritual and cultural values often play an important role in shaping employee attitudes and behavior. By synthesizing existing literature, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive conceptual understanding of the mechanisms through which motivation and leadership contribute to employee creativity and ultimately enhance job performance.

2. Literature Review

2.1 *Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation*

Intrinsic motivation refers to the motivational drives that activate behavior from within the individual—arising from genuine interest, curiosity, enjoyment, and the desire for mastery—without requiring external stimulation (Locke & Schattke, 2019; Morris et al., 2022). Intrinsically motivated employees engage with their work tasks because the activity itself is inherently satisfying, creating sustained engagement and cognitive flexibility that support creative idea generation and performance excellence (Hubley et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2020; Ryan & Deci, 2020). In contrast, extrinsic motivation refers to motivational drives activated by external stimuli, including salary, bonuses, recognition, promotion, and social approval, where the behavioral objective is to obtain a reward or avoid punishment rather than satisfy intrinsic needs (Diseth et al., 2020; Sansone & Tang, 2021; Woody, 2021). Both types of motivation influence employee creativity and performance, but through different psychological mechanisms and under different boundary conditions (Van den Broeck et al., 2021; Zhou & Zhang, 2024).

2.2 *Transformational Leadership*

Transformational leadership is a leadership approach that influences followers to change, inspiring and motivating them to achieve outstanding performance and personal growth through participatory, vision-driven, and intellectually stimulating management practices (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Ohunakin et al., 2019; Tian et al., 2020). As a participatory leadership style, transformational leadership operates both vertically (through hierarchical influence) and horizontally (through peer motivation and organizational culture shaping), creating agile, innovative, and adaptive organizations (Moeins & Gunarso, 2018; Susanto, Agusinta, et al., 2023; Susanto, Syailendra, & Suryawan, 2023). Bass and Riggio (2006) and Sow et al. (2016) identify four dimensions of transformational leadership particularly relevant to creativity: idealized influence (modeling creative behavior), inspirational motivation (communicating an ambitious creative vision), intellectual stimulation (challenging assumptions and encouraging novel approaches), and individualized consideration (providing tailored developmental support).

2.3 *Employee Creativity and Job Performance*

Employee creativity refers to the generation of new and useful ideas by organizational members that may apply to products, processes, services, or organizational practices (Shalley et al., 2004). Creativity is both an organizational outcome and a performance mediator. It directly benefits organizations through innovation and problem-solving and mediates the relationship between motivational conditions and job performance by providing a creative pathway through which motivated employees translate their energy into novel and valuable work results. Job performance encompasses work results related to organizational goals, efficiency, and effectiveness, measured across quantity, quality, timeliness, and behavioral dimensions (Mangkunegara, 2011).

2.4 *Spiritual Incentive as Moderator*

Spiritual incentive refers to motivational reinforcement derived from religious values, moral principles, and a sense of meaning derived from work that aligns with a transcendent purpose. In the Indonesian organizational context, where Islamic, Christian, Hindu, and Buddhist values permeate organizational culture in diverse regions, spiritual incentives constitute a culturally specific motivational resource that may amplify the effects of both intrinsic motivation and transformational leadership on creativity and performance. Specifically, spiritual incentives may strengthen the intrinsic motivation–creativity relationship by providing a higher-order purpose framework that elevates the perceived meaningfulness of creative work and reinforces the developmental influence of transformational leadership by aligning leader behavior with followers' moral and spiritual identities.

3. Methodology

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology. An SLR is a structured process of identifying, assessing, and interpreting all available research evidence relevant to a specific research question or phenomenon in a transparent, reproducible, and comprehensive manner (**Kitchenham2009**). The SLR approach was selected because it enables evidence synthesis across multiple studies with varying methodological designs, organizational contexts, and national settings, generating a more robust and generalizable conclusion than any single study can produce.

Literature was identified through systematic searches of Google Scholar, Scopus, and related academic databases using keyword combinations including: 'intrinsic motivation AND job performance,' 'extrinsic motivation AND creativity,' 'transformational leadership AND employee creativity,' 'employee creativity AND performance mediating,' and 'spiritual incentive AND motivation.' The inclusion criteria required that sources: (1) address at least one of the five study constructs in an organizational or HRM context; (2) be published in peer-reviewed journals or academic books; and (3) be available in full-text. Articles addressing information technology performance, unrelated leadership styles, or non-organizational creativity contexts were excluded from the review. Following inclusion/exclusion screening, ten articles met the quality assessment criteria and were retained for synthesis.

Data extraction focused on each source's theoretical framework, variable configurations, research context, and key findings. Thematic synthesis was applied to identify convergent evidence on the five inter-variable relationships examined, with particular attention to the mediation and moderation mechanisms in the creativity-performance pathway.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 *Intrinsic Motivation, Creativity, and Job Performance*

The reviewed literature consistently documents a positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and creativity. [Shalley et al. \(2004\)](#) demonstrate that intrinsically motivated employees—who engage with tasks out of genuine interest and mastery orientation—demonstrate significantly higher creative output because their deep task engagement generates the cognitive exploration and analogical reasoning required for creative idea generation. The intrinsic motivation–creativity pathway is theoretically coherent: when employees find their work inherently interesting, they invest greater cognitive attention, persist through creative challenges, and are more willing to explore non-obvious solutions ([Carmeli et al., 2010](#); [Morris et al., 2022](#)). Intrinsic motivation also positively influences job performance directly: the sustained effort and high-quality attention that intrinsic motivation generates are the fundamental behavioral preconditions for superior performance outcomes ([Hubble et al., 2024](#); [Sansone & Tang, 2021](#)).

The literature further confirms that the effects of extrinsic motivation on creativity are more conditional. Well-designed extrinsic incentives—particularly those providing informational feedback, recognition for creative contributions, and developmental support—can complement intrinsic motivation by signaling the organization's valuation of creative effort. However, controlling or contingent extrinsic rewards that create performance pressure can suppress creative risk-taking, generating the “overjustification effect” documented by Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory. For Indonesian organizations, this finding implies that incentive system design should prioritize informational and recognition-based extrinsic rewards that complement intrinsic motivation rather than contingent financial rewards that may undermine it ([Ryan & Deci, 2020](#); [Zhou & Zhang, 2024](#)).

4.2 Transformational Leadership and Employee Creativity

[Cheung and Wong \(2011\)](#) provide the most directly relevant empirical evidence on the transformational leadership–creativity relationship, demonstrating that transformational leadership and leader support are significant positive predictors of employee creativity in Hong Kong’s organizations. Their findings confirm that intellectually stimulating leaders who challenge followers’ assumptions and encourage novel approaches generate the psychological safety and cognitive stimulation that enable creative idea generation. [Carmeli et al. \(2010\)](#) extend this finding by documenting that inclusive leadership—a dimension conceptually adjacent to transformational leadership’s individualized consideration—significantly predicts employee involvement in creative tasks through the mediating mechanism of psychological safety.

The mechanism through which transformational leadership enhances creativity involves three simultaneous processes. First, intellectual stimulation directly activates divergent thinking by challenging followers to question established assumptions and explore alternative methods. Second, individualized consideration provides tailored developmental support that builds the competency foundations on which creative risk-taking depends ([Liu et al., 2020](#); [Siangchokyo et al., 2020](#)). Third, inspirational motivation—the transformational leader’s articulation of an ambitious and meaningful organizational vision—provides the intrinsic motivational framing that elevates the perceived importance of creative work and the worthiness of sustained effort ([Avolio & Yammarino, 2013](#); [Van den Broeck et al., 2021](#)).

4.3 Employee Creativity as Performance Mediator

The reviewed literature supports the conceptualization of employee creativity as a significant mediating mechanism in the motivation–performance and leadership–performance relationships ([Chen et al., 2021](#); [Liu et al., 2020](#); [Nasifoglu Elidemir et al., 2020](#)). [Shalley et al. \(2004\)](#) and [Yu et al. \(2019\)](#) specifically identify the mechanisms through which personal and contextual characteristics—including motivational climate and leadership quality—influence creativity, pointing to creativity as the cognitive and behavioral pathway through which organizational inputs translate into innovative performance outcomes. When employees receive both motivational support (intrinsic/extrinsic) and leadership encouragement (transformational), their creative capacity is activated—and this activated creativity generates novel approaches to task completion, problem resolution, and service delivery that directly enhance measured job performance ([Cai et al., 2020](#); [Cheung & Wong, 2011](#); [Jia et al., 2024](#)).

The practical implication of this mediation architecture is that organizations seeking to improve job performance should invest simultaneously in motivational climate enhancement and transformational leadership development—not as separate HR initiatives but as integrated components of a unified performance-through-creativity management system. The synthesis evidence supports a model in which intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and transformational leadership collectively activate employee creativity (as a mediating variable), which in turn generates improved job performance ([Aldabbas et al., 2023](#); [Shafi et al., 2020](#)).

4.4 Spiritual Incentive as Moderator

The moderating role of spiritual incentives in the motivation–creativity–performance pathway represents the most context-specific theoretical contribution of this study. Although the international literature does not extensively address spiritual incentives as a distinct variable, the Indonesian organizational context—where religious values, community belonging, and transcendent purpose constitute meaningful motivational dimensions—provides a specific institutional setting in which spiritual incentives may amplify the effects of both intrinsic motivation and transformational leadership on creativity. Organizations that recognize and communicate the social and spiritual significance of employees’ creative contributions—within the moral framework of their religious values—may generate stronger intrinsic

motivation–creativity relationships than secular incentive systems alone can achieve. Future empirical research is recommended to test the moderating effect of spiritual incentives on the motivation–creativity and leadership–creativity pathways in Indonesian organizational samples (Kremer et al., 2019; Yang et al., 2021).

4.5 Conceptual Framework and Research Propositions

Based on the literature synthesis, three research propositions were generated for empirical testing.

- P_1 : Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation have significant positive effects on employee creativity, with intrinsic motivation having a stronger direct effect.
- P_2 : Transformational leadership has a significant positive effect on employee creativity, mediated by psychological safety and intellectual stimulation.
- P_3 : Employee creativity significantly mediates the effects of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and transformational leadership on job performance, with spiritual incentives moderating the strength of the motivation–creativity relationship.

Table 1. Summary of Key Literature Evidence: Motivation, Leadership, Creativity, and Performance

Study	Variables	Key Finding
Shalley et al. (2004)	Creativity, intrinsic motivation, performance	Personal and contextual characteristics (including motivation) significantly shape creativity; creativity mediates performance outcomes
Cheung and Wong (2011)	Transformational leadership, creativity	Transformational leadership and leader support positively predict employee creativity; psychological safety mediates
Carmeli et al. (2010)	Inclusive leadership, creativity, psychological safety	Inclusive leadership → psychological safety → creative task involvement; mediating role of psychological safety confirmed
Moeins and Gunarso (2018)	Transformational leadership, job performance	Transformational leadership significantly predicts employee performance in health polytechnic context
Hasibuan (2008)	Motivation, HRM, performance	Motivation is a foundational determinant of employee performance; both intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions relevant

Source: Authors' systematic literature review synthesis, 2023.

Table 1 summarizes the key findings from the reviewed literature, indicating that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, transformational leadership, and employee creativity play significant roles in enhancing employee job performance. The evidence also highlights the mediating role of creativity and psychological safety in strengthening the relationship between leadership, motivation, and performance outcomes.

5. Conclusions

This systematic literature review examined the relationships among intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, transformational leadership, employee creativity, and job performance, with spiritual incentives as a moderating variable. Four principal conclusions were drawn. First, intrinsic motivation has a consistent positive effect on employee creativity and job performance across the reviewed studies: internal drives toward mastery, curiosity, and achievement generate sustained cognitive engagement that enables creative idea generation and performance excellence. Second, transformational leadership—particularly through intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and psychological safety creation—significantly enhances employee creativity and, through this creative capacity, improves job performance across multi-

ple organizational contexts. Third, employee creativity functions as a meaningful mediating mechanism between motivational and leadership inputs on one hand and job performance outcomes. The synthesis confirms that organizations seeking performance improvements should invest in creative capacity development that translates motivational energy and leadership quality into tangible outcomes. Fourth, spiritual incentive represents a contextually specific moderator of particular relevance to Indonesian organizations, where religious values and transcendent purpose constitute dimensions of motivational design that may amplify the intrinsic motivation–creativity relationship and reinforce the developmental effects of transformational leadership. The three constructs examined in this study—motivation, transformational leadership, and employee creativity—constitute an integrated performance-enhancement system applicable across the HRM literature and deserve continued empirical attention in the Indonesian organizational context.

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Author Contributions

AD contributed to conceptualization, methodology, data analysis, and writing of the original draft. ZTR was responsible for literature review, validation, supervision, project administration, manuscript review and editing, and final approval of the manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this study. This research was conducted independently, and no financial or personal relationships influenced the results or interpretation of the findings.

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