

Leadership Styles and Employee Performance in the Public Sector: A Systematic Literature Review

Ridzky Nugraha Hardjawanata*, Dyah Rachma Angraini

Badan Pemeriksa Keuangan Republik Indonesia, Indonesia

Email: ridznhard@gmail.com*, dyah.rachma.angraini@gmail.com

Keywords	Abstract
Leadership Style; Employee Performance; Civil Servants; Public Sector; Systematic Literature Review.	Public commentary on the performance of Indonesian civil servants (Aparatur Sipil Negara [ASN]) has grown louder in recent years, particularly regarding the achievement of key performance indicators (KPIs) and the need to remain competitive with employees in the private sector. Leadership style is often identified as one of the contributing factors, especially considering the frequent changes in leadership within government agencies over relatively short periods. This study aims to systematically examine how leadership styles influence public-sector employee performance and to identify the dominant leadership styles implemented in the public sector. A systematic literature review was conducted using the SINTA Portal, Google Scholar, and ScienceDirect databases, resulting in 20 articles published between 2016 and 2026 that met the inclusion criteria. The analysis revealed that 14 of the 20 studies (70%) reported a positive and significant effect, with transformational leadership being the most frequently identified as the primary driver of employee performance. The remaining studies demonstrated more varied findings; some reported no significant effect, while one identified a negative impact, which was generally associated with mediating factors such as work motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational culture. These findings indicate that leadership style cannot be considered an independent determinant of performance. Its effectiveness is highly dependent on organizational context and must be supported by stronger employee motivation and organizational culture, particularly during leadership transitions. This study recommends that government agencies enhance work motivation and organizational culture alongside leadership development initiatives and encourages future researchers to conduct quantitative meta-analyses to measure the effect sizes of different leadership styles on ASN performance.

INTRODUCTION

The performance of the State Civil Apparatus (Aparatur Sipil Negara [ASN]) is currently receiving considerable attention. As reported by the detik.com news portal (2026), Commission II of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia has requested improvements in the quality of ASN work outcomes through enhanced key performance indicators (KPIs), including aspects related to ASN mentality and professionalism. The article states that ASN employees are considered less competitive than private-sector employees; therefore, the implementation of appropriate sanctions for ASN employees who fail to achieve predetermined KPIs has been proposed. Employee performance (job performance) is one of the critical determinants of organizational success because optimizing performance is essential for improving productivity, organizational efficiency, and maintaining competitiveness (Gazi et al., 2025).

Leadership style plays a crucial role in the workplace by inspiring employees, fostering engagement, and supporting the achievement of organizational goals (Gazi et al., 2025). Similarly, Rizki et al. (2026) stated that in the public sector, leadership serves as one of the primary driving forces in delivering public services and achieving organizational objectives. Leaders perform various functions, including determining policy directions, managing administrative processes, and shaping the work culture and productivity patterns of their subordinates (Rizki et al., 2026).

In practice, the State Civil Apparatus (Aparatur Sipil Negara [ASN]) is subject to various laws and regulations established by the government, including regulations concerning personnel transfers as stipulated in the Regulation of the State Civil Service Agency (Badan Kepegawaian Negara [BKN]) Number 5 of 2019, as well as regulations regarding civil servant management under Government Regulation Number 11 of 2017, which governs, among other matters, the appointment and dismissal of Government High Leadership Positions.

Leadership changes inevitably produce different impacts because the vision, strategies, and priorities implemented by new leaders may differ from those of previous leaders. When leadership transitions occur too frequently or within a short period, they may disrupt ongoing work programs. At the executive level, ASN employees also require time to adjust themselves and align organizational goals with new management directions, which may become an obstacle to achieving an integrated and sustainable development process (Rizki et al., 2026). A leader with strong organizational commitment and a clear focus on achieving goals can facilitate effective organizational transformation, which subsequently influences organizational performance quality and employee dedication (Gazi et al., 2025).

Based on these research questions, the objectives of this study are: (1) to identify and map various leadership styles implemented in the public sector; (2) to analyze the influence of leadership styles on public-sector employee performance based on empirical findings from previous studies; and (3) to formulate recommendations for addressing performance challenges arising from differences in leadership styles, particularly during leadership transition periods within government agencies. This literature study is expected to provide practical and theoretical insights for ASN institutions and future researchers in developing performance adjustment strategies during leadership transition periods.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative research design, allowing the researcher to provide a comprehensive and in-depth description of the phenomena under investigation and present findings based on the actual conditions observed (Aminudin et al., 2024). The study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to collect and evaluate previous studies related to leadership styles and employee performance (Lusiana & Suryani, 2014).

The data collection process was conducted using several academic databases, namely the SINTA Portal, Google Scholar, and ScienceDirect. The literature selection criteria included: (1) empirical journal articles rather than review articles; (2) publications from 2016 to 2026; (3) studies containing empirical evidence regarding the relationship between leadership styles and employee performance; (4) articles indexed by Scopus or SINTA; and (5) studies using the keywords leadership styles, employee performance (job performance), and public services.

Based on these criteria, the researcher collected and screened previous studies through several stages, including identification, screening, and eligibility assessment, following the PRISMA framework (Figure 1). As a result, 20 articles that met all inclusion criteria were selected and further analyzed in this study.

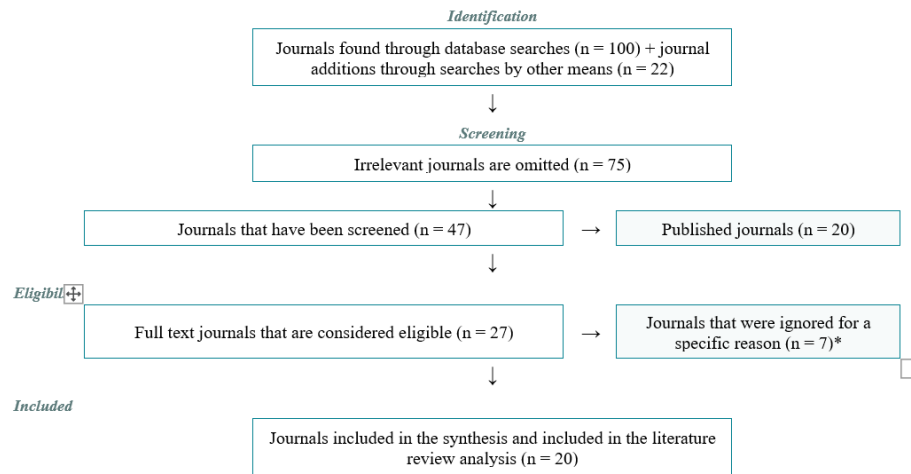


Figure 1. PRISMA Diagram of the Article Selection Process
Source: Author's own work based on PRISMA guidelines (2026)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

Based on the results of the selection of journal articles and screening using the PRISMA diagram, as many as 20 journals were obtained. The journal articles that have been collected are then analyzed by the author, and the results are obtained that leadership style can have a positive or negative influence on employee performance. Of the 20 journal articles analyzed (Table 1), as many as 14 articles (70%) showed that the results of the study showed that leadership style had a positive and significant effect on employee performance; 1 article (5%) showed a positive but insignificant influence; 4 articles (20%) showed that leadership style had no significant effect on employee performance; and 1 article (5%) showed a negative influence on employee performance.

Table 1. Distribution of Results of Previous Research

Result Categories	Number of Studies	Percentage
Positive and significant	14	70%
Positive, insignificant	1	5%
No significant effect	4	20%
Negatives	1	5%
Total	20	100%

Source: Processed from 20 articles reviewed by the author (2026)

Table 2. Results of Previous Research

No.	Researcher Name, Year	Research Title	Country	Results	Findings
1	Al Ghashar, Ioannou, &	Hybrid leadership and its impact on organisational	Bahrain	Hybrid leadership is a dynamic integration of	Leaders at Bahrain's General Sports Authority are

No.	Researcher Name, Year	Research Title	Country	Results	Findings
	Tzani-Pepelasi (2026)	performance and innovation: Evidence from Bahrain's public sector		behavior, not just a change in leadership style. The research presents qualitative evidence from the context of reform-driven non-Western governance.	blending transformational, transactional, and participatory behaviors to align hierarchical demands with the needs of innovation and Bahrain's 2030 vision.
2	López-Cabarcos, Vázquez-Rodríguez, & Quiñoá-Piñeiro (2022)	An approach to employees' job performance through work environmental variables and leadership behaviours	Spain	The variables that most affect employee performance are transformational leadership and social support, while employee empowerment ranks next.	In the task-oriented sector, the application of HR-oriented management practices through transformational leadership can be the optimal formula to encourage employee performance.
3	Gazi, Al Masud, Alhebri, Amin, Islam, Hasan, Senathirajah, & Ólah (2025)	The mediating role of organizational commitment and corporate social responsibility in the relationship between leadership style and job performance: An empirical study	Bangladesh	Transformational and transactional leadership has a positive effect on organizational commitment, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and employee performance.	Transformational leadership inspires through personal vision and involvement; Transactional leadership improves performance through a structured reward and accountability system.
4	Black & Eve (2020)	Can Public Leadership Increase Public Service Motivation and Job Performance?	China	Accountability, compliance with rules, political loyalty, and government leadership networks have a positive effect on public service motivation and employee performance.	The multilevel model shows that leadership in government networks is most strongly related to public service motivation and employee performance.
5	Maulida et al (2026)	Transformational leadership, organizational support, and employee performance: The mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior in the public sector	Indonesia	Transformational leadership and perception of organizational support have a positive effect on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) and employee performance; OCB mediated partially.	A supportive organizational environment and transformational leadership are related to employee performance both directly and indirectly through OCB.
6	Lu et al (2026)	The Relationship Between Leadership Decision-Making Styles and Employee	Europe	Leadership style has a strong direct or indirect impact on performance; The	The impact of leadership styles on performance depends on the organizational

No.	Researcher Name, Year	Research Title	Country	Results	Findings
		Performance in Government Public Sector		combination of transformational decision-making and inclusive communication has proven to be very effective.	context and is mediated by psychological and structural processes.
7	Nirmayani et al (2022)	The Influence of Leadership Style, Communication, and Organizational Culture on ASN Performance at the Kendari Job Opportunity Expansion Center of the Ministry of Manpower	Indonesia – Kendari	Leadership style had no significant impact on employee performance in the sample population.	These findings support the results of previous research that leadership style does not always have a significant positive influence on employee performance.
8	Effendi & Marnisah (2019)	Leadership Style and Work Discipline on the Performance of Members of the National Police and ASN at the South Sumatra Regional Police Directorate	Indonesia – South Sumatra	Leadership style and work discipline have a significant positive effect on the performance of the National Police and ASN in the Directorate of Criminal Investigation.	Organizations at every managerial level need to develop an appropriate leadership style to have an impact on performance improvement.
9	Sappara dkk (2022)	The Influence of Leadership Style, Organizational Culture, and Motivation on Job Satisfaction and Performance of State Civil Apparatus (ASN) in the Jeneponto Regency Government	Indonesia – Jeneponto	Leadership style has a positive but not significant effect directly on the performance of ASN.	Leadership style has a significant and positive influence when mediated by job satisfaction.
10	Prakoso & Khajar (2026)	Leadership Style to Human Resource Performance: Organizational Culture Moderation	Indonesia – West Kotawaring in	Leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.	In addition to developing leadership styles, government leaders must also actively build organizational culture as a strategic foundation for the sustainability of ASN.
11	Djunaid, Mahirun, & Satrio (2024)	The Influence of Transformational Leadership, Organizational Culture, and Employee Commitment on Employee Performance	Indonesia – Pekalongan	There is a significant and positive influence of transformational leadership on employee performance.	The application of transformational leadership, for example through rewards to outstanding subordinates, can have a significant influence on employee performance.

No.	Researcher Name, Year	Research Title	Country	Results	Findings
12	Permatasari & Dompak (2023)	The Influence of Leadership Style and Work Facilities on the Performance of State Civil Apparatus in Batam City District	Indonesia – Batam	There is an influence of leadership style on the performance of ASN.	Along with the variables of work facilities, leadership style has an influence on the performance of ASN.
13	Gunawan & Syarif (year must be completed)	The Influence of Leadership Style and Work Ethic on the Performance of ASN at the South Sumatra Provincial Archives Office	Indonesia – South Sumatra	Leadership style does not have a positive and significant effect on the performance of ASN in the sample population.	In the same sample population, ASN's work ethic has a positive and significant influence on their performance.
14	Jakfar (2024)	Leadership Style and Work Culture as a Performance Predictor of ASN in Kanigaran District, Probolinggo City: Motivation as a Mediator	Indonesia – Probolinggo	Leadership style and work environment have a significant effect on employee motivation, which ultimately has a positive impact on performance.	Leadership style does not have a significant effect directly on employee performance, but with motivational mediation, performance can be improved.
15	Supriyatno et al (2025)	Analysis of the Influence of Transformational Leadership Style on the Performance of State Civil Apparatus Employees of South Meruya Village, West Jakarta	Indonesia – West Jakarta	Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on the performance of civil servants, especially in the dimensions of individual attention and inspirational motivation.	The importance of the role of leaders, especially capacity development as transformational leaders, to create positive changes in the work environment of ASN.
16	Azizah & Nurdin (2024)	The Influence of Leadership Style on ASN Satisfaction and Performance at the Human Resources and General Affairs Bureau of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia	Indonesia	Leadership style has a positive effect on the performance of ASN in the sample population.	The leadership style in the sample population is authoritarian; The performance shown is high, but the job satisfaction rate is low.
17	Nasution & Rizky (2024)	The Influence of Leadership, Communication, and Workload on ASN Performance with Motivation as an Intervening Variable at the Population and Civil Registration Office of South Labuhan Batu Regency	Indonesia – South Labuhan Batu	Leadership style affects employee performance.	Several aspects of leadership have a positive impact on employee productivity, such as constructive feedback, decision-making, and clear direction.
18	Harefa et al (2025)	Participatory, Transformational, and Delegative Collaborative Leadership Style in	Indonesia – North Nias	The imbalance in the application of leadership style has a negative impact on	Obstacles can arise in the implementation of collaborative leadership styles due to internal and

No.	Researcher Name, Year	Research Title	Country	Results	Findings
		Supporting ASN Performance (Case Study in the Tapem and Welfare Section of the North Nias Regency Regional Secretariat)		the performance of ASN.	external factors, such as hierarchical bureaucracy and weak delegation.
19	Squirt (2024)	The Influence of Organizational Culture, Work Motivation, and Leadership Style on Employee Performance	Indonesia – Papua	Leadership style partially and simultaneously has a significant effect on improving the performance of ASN in the sample population.	Leaders need to adopt a leadership style that is motivating, inclusive, and adaptive as part of efforts to improve the performance of ASN.
20	Hidayat & Prabowo (2023)	The Influence of the Principal's Democratic Leadership Style and Teachers' Work Motivation on the Performance of ASN Teachers at SMAN 1 Cikalongwetan	Copyright © 2019 Cikalongwetan. All Rights Reserved.	The democratic leadership style has no effect on employee performance.	The democratic leadership style in the sample population does not show any influence because the level of motivation in the sample population is already very high.

Source: Processed from 20 articles reviewed by the author (2026)

Discussion

The results of the synthesis of 20 articles show that the majority of studies (70%) confirm the positive and significant influence of leadership style on employee performance, especially transformational leadership style. These findings are consistent with the theoretical framework of transformational leadership that emphasizes idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Gemeda & Lee, 2020). Studies such as Gazi et al. (2025), Maulida et al. (2026), Prakoso & Khajar (2026), Djunaid et al. (2024), and Supriyatno et al. (2025) have consistently shown that leaders who communicate vision, reward achievements, and pay individual attention are able to significantly boost ASN performance.

However, as many as 30% of studies showed insignificant or even negative results, indicating that the influence of leadership style on performance is contextual and highly dependent on mediation and moderation variables. Sappara et al. (2022) and Jakfar (2024) found that new leadership styles have a significant effect on performance when mediated by job satisfaction or work motivation. In line with that, Prakoso & Khajar (2026) and Nirmayani et al (2022) emphasize the importance of organizational culture as a reinforcing variable (moderator) in the relationship between leadership style and performance. Meanwhile, Harefa et al. (2025) found a negative influence due to the imbalance in the application of collaborative leadership styles in the midst of a hierarchical bureaucracy, and Hidayat & Prabowo (2023) showed that democratic leadership styles do not have a significant effect when employee work motivation is already at a very high level from the beginning — indicating a ceiling effect where leadership style is no longer the main differentiating factor.

These findings answer all three research questions asked. First, the leadership styles used in the public sector are quite diverse, including transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, hybrid, collaborative-participatory, delegative, democratic, and authoritarian styles, with the

most dominant transformational style associated with positive outcomes. Second, the impact of leadership styles on employee performance varies depending on the organizational context as well as the presence or absence of mediating variables such as motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational culture — the same leadership style can produce different impacts in different contexts. Third, as a solution suggestion, public sector organizations need to combine the application of transformational leadership styles with strengthening work motivation and a supportive organizational culture, especially during the leadership transition period, as mentioned in the findings of Rizki et al. (2026) that too rapid a change of leader can disrupt the sustainability of work programs and demand adjustments in direction from the implementing ASN. Strengthening the motivation mechanism and organizational culture is a bridge that can maintain the stability of ASN performance even though the leadership style changes following the change of leadership.

Table 3. Summary of the Influence Pattern of Leadership Style on Employee Performance

Leadership Style	Patterns of Influence Found
Transformational	The most consistent has a positive and significant effect (e.g. Gazi et al., 2025; Maulida et al., 2026; Supriyatno et al, 2025)
Transactional	Positively influence through a structured reward and responsibility system (Gazi et al., 2025)
Collaborative-participatory / Delegative	Potentially negative if applied unbalanced in a hierarchical bureaucracy (Harefa et al., 2025)
Democratic	The effect is not significant if the employee's work motivation is high from the beginning (Hidayat & Prabowo, 2023)
Authoritarian	High performance, but low job satisfaction (Azizah & Nurdin, 2024)

Source: Processed from 20 articles reviewed by the author (2026)

CONCLUSION

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to analyze 20 articles in order to map leadership styles in the public sector and examine their influence on employee performance. The findings showed that leadership styles implemented in the public sector were diverse, with transformational leadership being the style most frequently associated with positive and significant employee performance outcomes (reported in 70% of the reviewed studies). However, some studies (30%) indicated that the influence of leadership styles was either insignificant or negative, confirming that the effectiveness of leadership styles on ASN performance was highly contextual and influenced by mediating factors such as work motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational culture.

As a practical implication, government agencies are advised not only to focus on selecting or modifying leadership styles but also to strengthen employee motivation and develop a supportive organizational culture, particularly during leadership transition periods that may disrupt the continuity of ASN work programs. Strengthening these aspects is expected to maintain employee performance stability amid leadership changes within government agencies.

This study had several limitations, including the relatively small number of reviewed articles (20 articles), the descriptive qualitative nature of the analysis without quantitative meta-analysis, and the fact that most studies focused on the context of local governments in Indonesia. Therefore, generalization of the findings to international contexts should be

approached with caution. Future studies are recommended to conduct quantitative meta-analyses to measure the effect sizes of leadership styles on ASN performance and to specifically examine the mediating and moderating roles of relevant variables within the context of leadership transitions among Indonesian ASN.

REFERENCES

- Al Ghashar, A., Ioannou, M., & Tzani-Pepelasi, K. (2026). Hybrid leadership and its impact on organisational performance and innovation: Evidence from Bahrain's public sector.
- Aminudin, M. I., Sawiji, H., & Rapih, S. (2024). Literature study: The impact of social media on student achievement.
- Azizah, & Nurdin. (2024). The influence of leadership style on the satisfaction and performance of civil servants at the Human Resources and General Affairs Bureau of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia.
- detik.com. (2026, July 20). The chairman of Commission II of the House of Representatives highlighted the mentality of some ASN, absentee, coffee, and home. <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-8575586/ketua-komisi-ii-dpr-soroti-mentalitas-sebagian-asn-absen-ngopi-pulang>
- Djunaid, Mahirun, & Satrio. (2024). The influence of transformational leadership, organizational culture, employee commitment on employee performance.
- Effendi, & Marnisah, L. (2019). Leadership style and work discipline on the performance of members of the National Police and ASN at the South Sumatra Regional Police Directorate.
- Gazi, M. A. I., Al Masud, A., Alhebri, A., Amin, M. B., Islam, M. T., Hasan, M. M., Senathirajah, A. R. bin S., & Ólah, J. (2025). The mediating role of organizational commitment and corporate social responsibility in the relationship between leadership style and job performance: An empirical study.
- Gemeda, H. K., & Lee, J. (2020). Leadership styles, work engagement and outcomes among information and communications technology professionals: A cross-national study. *Heliyon*.
- Gunawan, & Syarif. (Year needs to be completed). The influence of leadership style and work ethic on the performance of ASN at the South Sumatra Provincial Archives Service.
- Harefa, et al. (2025). Participatory, transformational, and delegative collaborative leadership style in supporting ASN performance: Case study in the Tapem and Kesra Section of the North Nias Regency Regional Secretariat.
- Hidayat, & Prabowo. (2023). The influence of the principal's democratic leadership style and teachers' work motivation on the performance of ASN teachers at SMAN 1 Cikalongwetan.
- Jakfar. (2024). Leadership style and work culture as predictors of ASN performance in Kanigaran District, Probolinggo City: Motivation as a mediator.
- López-Cabarcos, M. Á., Vázquez-Rodríguez, P., & Quiñoá-Piñeiro, L. M. (2022). An approach to employees' job performance through work environmental variables and leadership behaviours.
- Lu, dkk. (2026). The relationship between leadership decision-making styles and employee performance in government public sector.
- Lusiana, & Suryani, M. (2014). SLR method to identify issues in software engineering. *SATIN Journal – Information Science and Technology*, 3(1).
- Maulida, dkk. (2026). Transformational leadership, organizational support, and employee performance: The mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior in the public sector.

- Nasution, & Rizky. (2024). The influence of leadership, communication, and workload on ASN performance with motivation as an intervening variable at the Population and Civil Registration Office of South Labuhan Batu Regency.
- Nirmayani, et al. (2022). The influence of leadership style, communication, and organizational culture on the performance of civil servants at the Kendari Job Opportunity Expansion Center of the Ministry of Manpower.
- Permatasari, & Wallet. (2023). The influence of leadership style and work facilities on the performance of the State Civil Apparatus in Batam City District.
- Prakoso, & Khajar. (2026). Leadership style towards human resource performance: Organizational culture moderation.
- Rizki, Asmiari, C., & Daulay, M. T. (2026). The effect of accelerated leadership change on the motivation and performance of ASN within the North Sumatra Provincial Government.
- Sappara, et al. (2022). The influence of leadership style, organizational culture, and motivation on job satisfaction and performance of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) in the Jeneponto Regency Government.
- Supriyatno, et al. (2025). Analysis of the influence of transformational leadership style on the performance of employees of the State Civil Apparatus of South Meruya Village, West Jakarta.