

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP, POLITICAL SKILL, ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE, AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: A CASE FROM TOURISM COMPANY IN INDONESIA

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Abstract: Tourism industry has occupied a strategic position in the country's economic growth. The factors that trigger the high performance of companies engaged in this industry are very crucial. The purpose of this study is to test the correlation of transformational leadership (TL), political skill (PS), organizational culture (OC), and employee performance (EP), and to investigate the role of OC as a mediation variable. The samples consisted of 110 respondents from Tourism Company in Indonesia. The sample was determined by Slovin formula. The data were collected through questionnaire instruments. The current study employed quantitative method. To test the hypotheses, PLS (Partial Least Square) was applied in analyzing the data. This study found that TL and OC, PS and OC and EP were positive and significance. The mediation test also justified that OC could mediate TL on EP and PS on EP. However, it is also indicated that TL did not affect EP. This study has the important implications for managers such as encouraging high EP in the tourism sector by strengthening OC (such as adaptive, collaborative, flexible, and team oriented), by enhancing the PS (such as understanding others, having high social skill, and increasing an ability to influence others). These findings confirmed and contrasted to the previous studies conducted.

Key words: employee performance, organizational culture, transformational leadership, political skill, tourism company

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism as one of the strategic sectors in Indonesia has experienced an increase over the last few years (Idris et al., 2021a; Idris et al., 2021b; Purnomo et al., 2021; Purnomo et al., 2020; Wahyuningtyas et al., 2019; Wahyuningtyas et al., 2020). From 2018 to 2019, international tourist visitors increased by 296.649 and domestic tourists roused by 9 million. Thus, improving the quality of human resources (HR) also needs to be improved. The Ministry of tourism noted that there were already 107,591 out of 3,900,000 employees who had been certified as professional employees in the tourism sector (Kemenpar, 2019). Therefore, the quality of employees has a big role in organizational success (Nurlina et al., 2020). Although the number of employees who have been certified is not more than 3%, the tourism sector in Indonesia is proven to be able to continue to improve its performance. Since 2019, the tourism sector has succeeded in contributing to the country's fourth largest foreign exchange earnings after oil and gas, coal, and palm oil, amounting to IDR. 280 trillion (Kemenpar, 2019). This achievement is an interesting phenomenon because although the number of uncertified human resources is less than those who are certified, the tourism sector still has a good performance (Rhama, 2020). Productivity, in today's organizations, through improving EP has interested the focus of many scholars in human resource management and organizational behavior (Osland et al., 2015; Ngwenya and Aigbavboa, 2017; Colquitt et al., 2005). Organizational performance highly bases on the performance of its members. In other words, EP will make a positive contribution to improving organizational performance (Gibson et al., 2012). The term of EP refers to individual's work performance after exerting required effort on the job (Pradhan and Jena, 2017), which is beneficial to the organization such as assisting the organization in achieving its objectives effectively and efficiently (Woods, 2012; Sundaray et al., 2011) and as a resource in gaining competitive advantage and maintaining organizational viability in the long term (Wright and Snell, 2009). EP can also be used as an evaluation material for managers in making various human resource decisions such as promotion, transfer, training and development (Robbins and Judge, 2017). Therefore, it is important for the organization to be aware about what factors can encourage high EP. TL consisted of inspirational motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration has a pivotal role in encouraging employees to improve performance (Ng, 2017; Buil et al., 2019). TL is a leadership style that has a deep impact on its members in viewing work as

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something of value (Bass and Bass, 2008). Employees who are inspired by TL tend to have positive social behavior and do a better job (Lai et al., 2020). TL positively and strongly influences EP beyond other leadership types such as transactional leadership (Birasnav, 2014). This is inseparable from the role of TL that is able to encourage members to think creatively-innovatively and solve work problems with new perspectives than traditional ways (Bass and Riggio, 2006).

In addition to inspiring leadership, the ability of leader to understand his members, and influence his members also plays an important role. Ferris et al. (2005) indicated this ability as a leader's PS. Leaders who have good PS tend to have strong interpersonal influence, high emotional and social intelligence and good adaptability even in unfavorable conditions (Idris et al., 2020). PS is a very valuable resource, even for someone with a dark personality to use them to drive performance improvements (Templer, 2018). Munyon et al. (2013) elaborated that PS predict positively and significantly the task performance of employees. Leaders with influencing skills and tactical skills have a strong correlation with high EP (Mahajan and Templer, 2021). EP and high work involvement are strongly related to the leader's PS characteristics such as networking ability, social astuteness, apparent sincerity, and interpersonal influence (Kim et al., 2019).

Although previous studies have investigated the role of TL and leader's PS as predictors of EP, most of these studies were carried out in the education sector and government organizations (Idris and Adi, 2019; Munyon et al., 2013) and some in the hotel sector (Kim et al., 2019). Previous research has also not explored the OC role as a mediator of TL and leader's PS on EP in tourism sector organizations. However, previous research has proven that high EP is formed due to a strong OC such as a culture of acceptance, diversity and adaptation (Maamari and Saheb, 2018) and archetypes (Ababneh, 2020). OC is built by leaders and disseminates it (Marsick and Watkins, 2003), which ultimately has an impact on EP (Xenikou and Simosi, 2006). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship of TL, PS and EP and to investigate OC role in mediating TL and leader's PS on EP in the context of tourism sector organization in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee Performance

Performance is a crucial aspect for an organization. Organizations must improve employee performance to be able to achieve organizational goals. Performance is the output achieved from a person's efforts based on certain abilities conditions (Idris et al., 2020; Diana et al., 2021). Performance is a combination of effort, ability, and perception of the task. Employee performance (EP) is the quality and quantity of work achieved by an employee in carrying out in accordance with the responsibilities given (Kim and Chang, 2019). EP refers to a work result reached by an employee in carrying out the duties addressed to him based on the standards set by the organization (Mensah, 2015). Koopmans et al. (2013) stated that EP is a multidimensional concept that does not only refer to work results but also relates to behavior patterns and all actions of employees in accordance with organizational goals. To achieve organizational goals, leaders need to take care to the factors that affect EP in the workplace and therefore increase productivity (Ng, 2017). A dimensional approach was used in analyzing EP which involves contextual performance, duty performance, adaptive performance, and counter productive work behavior (Koopmans, 2014). First, contextual performance correlate to individual behavior that indirectly supports the psychological, social, and organizational environment while still carrying out their main tasks. Second, duty performance can be categorized as the expertise or competence possessed by a person in carrying out his main task. Third, adaptive performance is how well individuals adapt or adapt to new conditions or unexpected situations. Finally, counter productive work behavior refers to individual behavior that is negative and detrimental to organizational development (Koopmans et al., 2011).

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leaders inspire their subordinates and are able to alternate the attitudes, beliefs, and personal goals of each partisan to achieve goals, and transcend the personal interests of their subordinates (Bass and Bass, 2008). TL is defined as a leader focusing on reaching better changes in the attitudes, beliefs, values, behavior, emotions, and subordinates needs in the future (Bass and Riggio, 2006). It involves four core dimensions such as inspirational motivation, idealized influence, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation (Avolio and Bass, 2002). Inspirational motivation involves changing and convincing subordinates' views of the importance of organizational goals. Idealized influence correlates to the leader's charisma as a person who is admired and trusted by his members. Individualized consideration refers to the understanding and attention of leader to each subordinate's potential and abilities. Intellectual stimulation refers to encouraging its members to be rational and solve problems with new approaches rather than traditional methods (Burn, 1978). The relation of leader and each followers in the context of TL is more than an commodities exchange (economic exchange of rewards) (Avolio and Bass, 2002), but has addressed the awareness, emotional and trust aspects that ultimately have an impact on EP (Caillier, 2014). Previous studies have shown that TL is a strong predictor of EP (Ng, 2017; Buil et al., 2019). This type of leadership not only has an impact on EP at the individual level but also at the team, group and organizational level (Braun et al., 2013; Searle and Barbuto, 2013). TL with its characteristics also plays a pivotal role in the OC transformation (Avolio and Bass, 2002). OC such as adaptive, collaborative and team-oriented are convincingly influenced by TL (Pradhan et al., 2017; Khan et al., 2020).

H1: TL positively and significantly affect EP.

H2: TL positively and significantly affect OC.

Leader's Political Skill

Every organization is actually a political arena, so that political expertise is inherent and a must for a person (Mintzberg, 1983). The term "PS" was first used by Pfeffer (1981) which refers to an ability of manager to maximize resources and resolve conflicts within the organization. Ferris et al. (2005) mentioned PS as "understanding others and using that on influencing them to conduct in ways which expand personal or organizational objectives". PS is developed into four main components or characteristics. First, social astuteness refers to a high level of sensitivity to social reality. Second, interpersonal influence involves a strong influence in the environment and can use it according to the circumstances needed. Third,

networking ability refers to the skills to build and maintain a relationship with someone. Fourth, apparent sincerity refers to how high a person's integrity level, trust and sincerity (Ferris et al., 2005). Ferris et al. (2007) was characterized PS as an inclusive social skill that includes behavioral, cognitive, and affective skills that have direct implications for outcomes. Individuals who have high social skills tend to show good performance (Chelagat et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2019). Otherwise, individuals who have low PS tend to perceive their environment as threatening, thus potentially hindering their job success (García-chas et al., 2019). In addition to its important implications for EP, PS have a strong correlation with OC transformation. OC that continues to experience parallel changes with adaptability which is a characteristic of PSs (Bentley et al., 2015). PS characteristics are important social capital for leaders to create the desired values (Li et al., 2017). Marsick and Watkins (2003) supported the idea that OC is built by leaders and those with strong influence.

H3. PS positively and significantly affect EP.

H4. PS positively and significantly affect OC.

Organizational Culture

Pettigrew (1979) as the first person to write down the notion of OC, defined culture as an openly and collectively accepted system of meaning that applies to certain groups and at certain times. Culture in an organization is very possible in shaping the behavior of its members because this is a process of sharing values which then becomes a guide in behaving (Schein, 2010). Robbins and Judge (2017) categorized OC on seven main characteristics that distinguish it from other organizations such as risk-taking and innovation, attention to detail, outcome, people, and team orientation, stability, and aggressiveness. A healthy OC will lead to better organizational development (Robbins and Judge, 2017) because all aspects of the organization can be affected by culture, especially the behavior and perspective of employees about their work (Cameron and Quinn, 2011). A positive and longstanding OC directs its members to carry out positive work activities and becomes one of the drivers to improve the quality of work (Diana et al., 2021). The cultural aspect has been widely recognized as an important factor for organizations because it can drive EP (Maamari and Saheb, 2018). OC is critical predictor enhancing EP (Paais and Pattiruhu, 2020), because it drives employee to learn collectively and how to successfully cope with the problem (Hogan and Coote, 2014). Furthermore, we argue that OC can be a mediator between TL and EP and between leader's PS and EP. Previous research has explained that PS characteristics are important social capital for leaders to create the desired values (Li et al., 2017). Transformational leadership with its characteristics parallels OC such as adaptive, collaborative and team-oriented culture (Pradhan et al., 2017). Marsick and Watkins (2003) stated that leaders or people who have a strong influence are able to build their OC, which ultimately has an impact on the quality of EP (Hogan and Coote, 2014).

H5. OC positively and significantly affect EP.

H6. OC can mediate between TL and EP.

H7. OC can mediate between leader's PS and EP.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was classified as explanatory research. The sample consisted of employees who work in public company (PD. Jasa Yasa—which covers natural and historical places) in Malang, East Java, Indonesia. The number of 125 samples was calculated by using the Slovin's formula (Sugiyono, 2017; Sekaran and Bougie, 2016).

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2} \quad n = \frac{182}{1 + (182 \times 0.05^2)} \quad n = \frac{182}{1 + (182 \times 0.0025)} \quad n = \frac{182}{1.455} \quad n = 125.08$$

Information: *n* = number of samples; *N* = Total population; *E* = margin of error

The 110 responses were obtained after deleting 15 responses for incomplete responses reason. This number already meets the minimum sample size requirements in PLS (Hair et al., 2017) which is aimed to examine the proposed hypotheses. This study also used a 5-point Likert scale that included strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5). TL is assessed by four indicators (TL characteristics--inspirational motivation, idealized influence, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation) which were adapted from MLQ (Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire)(Podsakoff et al., 1990). Meanwhile, to measure PS, the PSI (Political Skill Inventory) was used that consisted of its PS characteristics (interpersonal influence, networking ability, social astuteness, and apparent sincerity) (Ferris and Treadway et al., 2005). In addition, OC was assessed by four items adopted from the questionnaire developed by Cameron and Quinn (2011). Finally, EP was measured based on two indicators consisting of contextual performance and task performance adapted from IWPQ (individual work performance questionnaire) (Koopmans et al., 2013). Regarding the demographic distribution of respondents, it is shown in Table 1.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Measurement Model

The model was determined by measurement model which was evaluated by convergent validity (CV) and discriminant validity (DV) as well as construct reliability. The value of CV can be seen by loading factor and AVE (Average Variance Extracted). CV in this study, as presented in table 2, has exceeded the minimum loading factor limit of 0.6 (Chin, 1998) and is also greater than the required AVE value of 0.5 (Ghozali, 2014). Therefore, all constructs in the study can be said to be convergently valid. Furthermore, to evaluate DV, the cross-loading value was used. The indicator is declared valid if the value of loading factor in the same corresponding variable is more than the value of indicator in other variables (Ghozali, 2014). Table 3 shows that overall, the indicators of each variable produce a loading factor more than the cross-correlation value in other variables. Thus, it indicates that all constructs have fulfilled the DV requirements. The last step to measure model is to evaluate the construct reliability. This is to assess whether the constructs used are consistent in measuring the latent variables (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Composite reliability values should be more than 0.7 and Cronbach Alpha (CA) exceed 0.6.

Table 4 shows that all the variables used in this study have composite reliability values that are in the 0.835-0.855 and CA is in 0.614-0.789. Thus, it can be concluded that each indicator can be indicated to be consistent in measuring its latent variables.

Table 1. The distribution of respondent demographic

Characteristics	Categories	Frequencies	Percentages
Gender	Male	60	55
	Female	50	45
Age	≤30-39	30	27
	40 - 49	50	46
Education	50 - ≥60	30	27
	Senior High School	5	4
	Bachelor's degree	90	82
Length of work	Master's degree	15	14
	1-5 (years)	14	13
	6-10 (years)	25	23
	11-15 (years)	41	37
	>15 (years)	30	27

Table 3. Discriminant validity (cross loading)

Indicators	TL	OC	EP	PS
X1.1	0.747	0.538	0.148	0.443
X1.2	0.694	0.532	0.184	0.208
X1.3	0.811	0.631	0.465	0.416
X1.4	0.833	0.563	0.199	0.356
X2.1	0.459	0.615	0.249	0.242
X2.2	0.590	0.786	0.258	0.202
X2.3	0.519	0.768	0.141	0.348
X2.4	0.500	0.786	0.563	0.47
X2.5	0.657	0.768	0.312	0.387
Y1	0.353	0.288	0.790	0.449
Y2	0.267	0.486	0.900	0.518
Z1	0.380	0.464	0.410	0.748
Z2	0.320	0.325	0.524	0.668
Z3	0.389	0.365	0.491	0.907
Z4	0.385	0.314	0.281	0.712

Table 4. The result of construct reliability

Variables	Composite Reliability	Cronbach Alpha	Conclusion
TL	0.855	0.784	Reliable
PS	0.835	0.756	Reliable
OC	0.850	0.789	Reliable
EP	0.847	0.614	Reliable

Table 2. Convergent validity (loading factor)

Variables	Indicators	Loading Factors	Cut off	AVE	Inf.
TL (X1)	X1.1	0.747	0.6	0.598	Valid
	X1.2	0.694	0.6		Valid
	X1.3	0.811	0.6		Valid
	X1.4	0.833	0.6		Valid
OC (X2)	X2.1	0.615	0.6	0.533	Valid
	X2.2	0.786	0.6		Valid
	X2.3	0.680	0.6		Valid
	X2.4	0.786	0.6		Valid
	X2.5	0.768	0.6		Valid
PS (Z)	Z.1	0.748	0.6	0.717	Valid
	Z.2	0.668	0.6		Valid
	Z.3	0.907	0.6		Valid
	Z.4	0.712	0.6		Valid
EP (Y)	Y.1	0.790	0.6	0.584	Valid
	Y.2	0.900	0.6		Valid

Table 5. The results of GOF model

Variables	R ²
EP	0.532
OC	0.357
Q ² = 1 - (1 - R1 ²) x (1 - R2 ²)	
Q ² = 1 - (0.468) x (0.643)	
Q ² = 1 - 0.300	
Q ² = 0.700	

Table 6. Hypothesis testing of structural model in partial least squares

Hypotheses	Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	Std. Error	T-Statistic	P-Value	Decision
1	X1 → Y	-0.101	0.133	0.846	0.398	Rejected
2	X1 → Z	0.272	0.125	2.163	0.031	Accepted
3	X2 → Y	0.332	0.110	2.975	0.003	Accepted
4	X2 → Z	0.299	0.117	2.435	0.015	Accepted
5	Z → Y	0.461	0.085	5.490	0.000	Accepted
6	X1 → Z → Y	0.126	0.065	1.964	0.050	Accepted
7	X2 → Z → Y	0.137	0.058	2.306	0.022	Accepted

Structural Model

Structural model serves to assess how well the proposed model. It can be evaluated by goodness of fit (GOF) model by assessing a Q-square predictive relevance or Q² (Ghozali, 2014). The results can be seen in Table 5. Table 5 shows that the value of R² of EP is 0.532 or 53.2%. This indicates that EP can be elaborated by TL and PS by 53.2%. Furthermore, 46.8% is other variables that are not part of this study. The value of R² of OC is 0.357 or 35.7%. This explains that OC can be affected by TL and PS by 35.7%. Meanwhile, the remaining 64.3% is other variables contribution outside this research. Furthermore, Q² is 0.700 or 70%. This means that EP can be affected by the model by 70%. In other word, TL variables, political expertise and OC can contribute to EP by 70%. While the remaining of 30% is other variables contribution which is not concerned on this study.

Hypotheses Testing

The next step is the assessment of the causal relationship developed in the structural model (hypothesis testing), the relationship among TL, PSs, OC, and EP. The bootstrapping method using 500 sub samples (Hair et al., 2017) was applied to analyze the causality among variables. The assessment of the hypothesis test used the t-statistic value, which it would be significant if t-statistic value is more than t-table (1.96). Figure 1 and table 6 show that except for hypothesis 1, all proposed hypotheses are accepted.

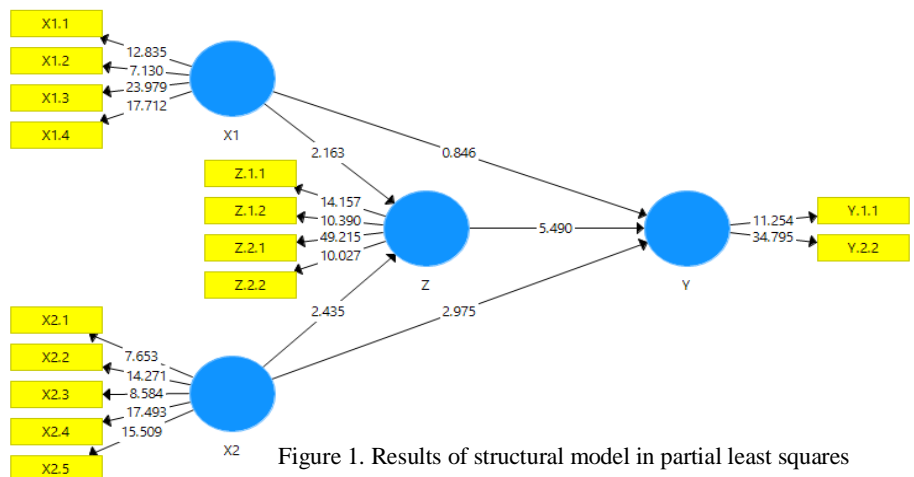


Figure 1. Results of structural model in partial least squares

Beyond the expectation, TL does not affect EP positively and significantly ($0.846 > 1.96$). Thus, H1 is rejected. However, TL and OC showed a positive and significant correlation by $2.163 > 1.96$. Therefore, H2 is accepted. In addition, PS affect EP ($2.975 > 1.96$) and OC ($2.435 > 1.96$) positively and significantly. Thus, H3 and H4 are also accepted. Furthermore, OC has a positive and significant influence on EP with $5.490 > 1.96$. Therefore, H5 is accepted. OC also mediates the effect of TL on EP ($1.964 > 1.96$) and PSs on EP ($2.306 > 1.96$). Therefore, H6 and H7 are accepted.

Regarding the assessment of TL on EP through OC (indirect effect), it can be classified as perfect mediation because the relationship between TL and EP is only significant when it involves mediating variables. Meanwhile, the role of OC as a mediator between PSs and EP is categorized as complementary or partial mediation, considering that those relationships (positive and significant direct or indirect effect) are in the same direction (Hair et al., 2017).

DISCUSSION

This study is designed to investigate OC role in mediating the influence of TL and PS on EP, which is not explored deeply by previous studies, especially in the context of tourism destinations in Indonesia. Based on the research findings, leader's PSs show a strong relationship with EP. This finding at the same time expands the results of Chelagat et al. (2021) as well as Munyon et al. (2013) that the leader's PS are convincingly able to contribute greatly in improving EP. As mentioned earlier, PS correlates to an ability in understanding others and influencing them to achieve certain goals such as improving performance (Ferris et al., 2005). Social skills as one of the main characteristics in influencing others, have a significant role to improve employees in their work quality (Kim et al., 2019). The high performance of employees is closely related to the leadership's expertise in influencing their subordinates through affective, cognitive and behavioral abilities (Ferris et al., 2007). This study also found that EP is also influenced by OC. This is supported the findings of Maamari and Saheb (2018) and Paais and Pattiruhu (2020) which were stated that OC is a predictor that plays an important role in encouraging EP. This theme is also supported Idris (2019) that OC has a strong correlation with EP. Culture in the organization has a function as a guide for employees to behave and carry out their responsibilities (Schein, 2010). Hogan and Coote (2014) stated that OC such as flexibility, cooperation, responsibility and risk-taking can help employees make decisions in various conditions and solve work problems, which in turn can improve their performance.

Not as expected, surprisingly, TL directly shows a negative coefficient value and has no effect on EP. This indicates that in the context of tourist destinations in Indonesia, TL does not have an impact on high EP. This results supported Eliyana et al. (2019) and Rachman et al. (2020) which revealed that TL does not play a significant role in motivating employees to encourage performance of employees. This finding is a unique considering that several previous studies reveal different findings that TL can influence the behavior of members to go beyond their personal interests for organizational goals (Bass and Bass, 2008), which is manifested through extra role behavior and increased performance (Lai et al., 2020; Buil et al., 2019). Zhu et al. (2013) also indicated similar findings that leaders who often motivate and inspire their employees and are good role models tend to be highly trusted, which is why they are willing to do a good job. Although TL has no significant effect on EP, TL has been shown to have a strong influence on building OC. Pradhan et al. (2017) stated that OC such as adaptive, collaborative and team-oriented is closely related to the role of TL. This is supported by Khan et al. (2020) that TL plays a vital role in building OC. In building OC, the leader's PSs also act as a strong predictor. Li et al. (2017) stated that PS with its characteristics is important social capital for leaders to influence others and create the desired values. Further important findings reveal that OC plays a role as a mediator for TL and EP. This mediating role can be categorized as a perfect mediation (Hair et al., 2017). This indicates that TL can improve EP by strengthening OC. Previous relevant study has revealed that TL plays a significant role in stimulating OC such as cooperation and adaptation to uncertain conditions (Lasrado and Kassem, 2021), which ultimately provides a higher level of performance (Maamari and Saheb, 2018). Finally, as hypothesized, OC also mediates the influence of leader's PSs on EP. This is acceptable considering that culture is built by leaders based on what they believe in and the influence they have (Bass and Avolio, 2007). The ability to influence others as a feature of PSs has a strong relationship to OC (Bentley et al., 2015), which leads to encouraging EP (Hogan and Coote, 2014). The present study contributes to enriching the literature and have important implications for managers. One of the most crucial implications is that to encourage high EP in the tourism sector, leaders must strengthen OC, such as adaptive, collaborative, flexible, and team oriented. In addition, OC has a strong correlation with EP (Hogan and Coote, 2014; Lasrado and Kassem, 2021). OC can mediate the relationship of leader's PSs and EP. These findings also contribute to filling the void in the literature, especially in the context of tourism industry sector, which previously had not been explored deeply. This study also advises managers on the importance of influencing other people and building OC, considering that OC can stimulate high EP.

CONCLUSION

Surprisingly, TL does not affect EP positively and significantly. This indicates that the role of TL, in the context of service organizations in the field of tourism, does not have a contribution in improving EP. As we expect, the leader's PSs play an important role in influencing EP. Furthermore, both TL and leader's PSs are convincingly able to encourage OC. In addition, OC is proven to be able to predict EP. Another important finding also confirms that OC perfectly mediates the relationship between TL and EP and acts as a complementary mediator between leader's PS and EP. The limitations of this study consist of; firstly, the samples are limited to tourism sector organization located in the Malang area. Thus, generalizations may only be made to organization that have similar characteristics. Secondly, this study only focuses on analyzing the correlation among TL, PS, OC, and their effect on EP. Therefore, further research is expected to add other variables that play a strong role in improving EP, such as transactional leadership which is not part of this study.

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