

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE AND INNOVATIVE WORK BEHAVIOR: THE MODERATING ROLE OF AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Diterima: 02 Februari 2026 Direvisi: 21 Februari 2026 Disetujui: 14 Maret 2026 Tersedia Daring: 30 April 2026 Keywords: <i>Innovative Work Behavior, Affective Commitment, Transformational Leadership Style</i>	<i>The problem of employee work behavior in public organizations is a classic problem that has been widely complained about by the public. This study tries to solve this problem by analyzing how transformational leadership influences innovative work behavior and how the moderating role of affective commitment improves innovative work behavior. Data were collected from 786 employees in local governments of districts/cities in the province of North Sumatra. Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). The results showed that transformational leadership has a significant effect on innovative behavior, affective commitment has a significant effect on moderating the relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior.</i>
	ABSTRAK
Kata Kunci: <i>Perilaku Kerja Inovatif, Komitmen Afektif, Gaya Kepemimpinan Transformasional</i>	Permasalahan perilaku kerja pegawai pada organisasi publik merupakan permasalahan klasik yang selama ini banyak dikeluhkan oleh masyarakat. Penelitian ini mencoba memecahkan permasalahan tersebut dengan menganalisis bagaimana pengaruh kepemimpinan transformasional untuk meningkatkan perilaku kerja inovatif serta bagaimana peran moderasi dari komitmen afektif untuk meningkatkan perilaku kerja inovatif. Data dikumpulkan dari 786 pegawai pada pemerintah daerah Kabupaten/Kota di wilayah provinsi Sumatera Utara. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan model persamaan struktural (SEM). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional berpengaruh signifikan terhadap perilaku inovatif, komitmen afektif berpengaruh signifikan untuk memoderasi hubungan kepemimpinan transformasional dan perilaku kerja inovatif.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Innovation is a crucial component for organizational success and sustainability. Innovation plays a crucial role in organizations by helping them adapt to environmental changes, increase efficiency, and achieve competitive advantage. Innovation can occur at both the organizational and individual levels (Pratiwi et al., 2022). Organizational and individual innovations differ in their manifestations and implications. Organizational innovation tends to be structured and involves new policies, strategies, and processes that are implemented broadly within the organization. Individual innovation, on the other hand, focuses more on creative ideas and innovative behaviors emerging from

organizational members, which can contribute to improved individual, group, or organizational performance (Prasetyo & Anwar, 2021).

This study focuses on innovation at the individual level, namely innovative work behavior displayed by individuals within organizations. This study was conducted to fill the limited research *gap* on innovation at the individual level. Innovation displayed by individuals within organizations is one of the important factors in achieving organizational goals. Innovative work behavior makes employees pursue proactive behavior in forming personal initiatives and new ideas that are directly related to effective performance within the organization (Saingo, 2023). This is in accordance with Demircioglu and Audretsch, (2017) that innovative and creative work behavior is considered very important for organizations because it motivates employees to improve their performance.

According to De Jong and Den Hartog (Setiawan, 2014) there are four indicators of innovative work behavior, namely: (1) idea exploration (employees are able to find opportunities or problems), (2) idea generation (employees are able to develop innovative ideas by creating and suggesting ideas for new processes), (3) *idea championing* (employees are expected to be encouraged to seek support in realizing the new innovative ideas they have produced), and (4) idea implementation (employees have the courage to apply these new ideas into their usual work processes) (Rahmi, 2022).

Based on several previous studies, the most important factor for increasing innovative work behavior is the application of transformational leadership style. Transformational leadership style is a leadership style model that is able to bring organizations to change quickly, has extraordinary potential, survive under pressure, and innovation within the organization (Shunlong & Weiming, 2012). However, despite this, research on the influence of transformational leadership on innovative work behavior is still limited and from several studies show inconsistent results (Jahidi & Hafid, 2020) stated that transformational leadership style influences employee innovative work behavior and on the other hand, some of their research results also show that there is no influence of transformational leadership style on employee innovative work behavior. This contradictory finding becomes a *gap* in this study by involving affective commitment as a moderator that can strengthen the prediction of the relationship between transformational leadership style and innovative work behavior which has never been done in previous studies.

Based on the background description that has been explained, it is necessary to conduct research to reduce the gap between theory and practice by empirically examining how transformational leadership style, affective commitment strengthens innovative work behavior, and in turn improves employee performance itself.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Innovative Work Behavior

Behavior Work innovative is behavior purposeful individuals For reach deliberate initiation and introduction (in role work, group or organization) regarding useful ideas related with process, product or procedures. Zhou and George (Rosita & Iskandar, 2022) define innovative work behavior as behavior that emphasizes the presence of a creative attitude so that the process of changing attitudes from traditional to modern, or from an attitude that is not yet advanced to an attitude that is advanced. According to Yuan and Woodman (2010) innovative work behavior is the desire of organizational members to introduce, propose and apply new ideas, products, processes, and procedures into their work, work units or the organization where they work. Kleysen and Street (Armiyanti et al., 2023) define innovative work behavior as the totality of individual actions that lead to the emergence, introduction, and application of something new and profitable at all levels of the organization. According to Zhou and George (2001) the characteristics of individuals who have innovative work behavior are: (1) seeking out new technologies, processes, techniques and new ideas, (2) generating creative ideas, (3) offering and championing ideas to others, (4) researching and providing the resources needed to realize new ideas, and (5) developing a well-thought-out plan and schedule to realize these new ideas.

Behavior innovative own Lots definition operational, and in study This used from Kanter and Scot and Bruce, De Jong and Den Hartog (2008) namely consists of from 4 (four) dimensions namely : (1) *Opportunity exploration*, namely at the beginning a individual will capable find problem or opportunities. Identification problem can done on a pattern work that has been ongoing, needs consumers who have not fulfilled, as well as indication current trend change ; (2) *Idea generation*, namely ideas will appear based on exploration at the stage later beginnings the concept combined and reorganized with what has been there is. The idea furthermore used For solve problems and/ or increase performance ; (3) *Idea championing*, namely behavior someone who makes an effort realization idea creative. In addition to trying support, a innovators must also believe that the idea will successful ; (4) *Idea implementation*, namely the final process refers to courage somebody For applying ideas to processes/ activities routine work (Windasari et al., 2022).

Transformational Leadership Style

Leadership style is the behavioral norm used by a leader when he influences the behavior of his subordinates. one leadership style that is applied leader is a leadership style transformational. Yukl (Restu Rahayu & Sofyan Iskandar, 2023) stated that leadership style transformational often defined through the impact to How leader strengthen attitude each other cooperation and trust, efficacy collective self, and learning team. Here are the leaders transformational make his followers become more realize interests and values from work as well as persuade follower For No prioritize interest personal on interest organization. According to Robbins (Kuswaeri, 2016) leadership style transformational is a leadership style that is capable inspire his followers For put aside interest personal they and have ability influence the outside normal. Luthans (2014), stated that leadership transformational more based on shift values and beliefs

leaders, and need his followers. Next in study this, measurement of leadership style transformational done through dimensions put forward by Robbins (2018). Robbins proposed four dimensions of transformational leadership style in a person's leadership level, namely: Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual *Stimulation* (*Stimulation*), Individualized *Consideration*. Fourth dimensions this, used in study This.

Commitment Affective

Hartmann and Bambacas (Imaduddin et al., 2025) define that affective commitment refers to a feeling of belonging, feeling bound to the organization and having a relationship with personal characteristics, organizational structure, work experience such as salary, supervision, role clarity, and various skills. Allen and Meyer (1990) explain that there are three aspects that describe the existence of an individual's affective commitment to the organization, namely: (a) Emotional attachment, namely the individual's strong feelings towards the organization so that it will be easy to become emotionally attached to the organization. The individual will feel that he is part of the organizational family which is shown by positive affection and a high *sense of belonging* to the organization; (b) Identification, namely the individual's belief and acceptance of the organization's goals and values; (c) Participation, namely the individual's desire to be seriously involved in the interests of the organization. The desire to be seriously involved in every activity or organizational activity is reflected in the individual's acceptance to accept and carry out various tasks and obligations assigned (Adrian Bagus Satriatama, 2020).

Furthermore, from the various foundations of affective commitment measurement tools in this study, the aspects formulated by Allen & Meyer (1990) are emotional attachment, identification, and participation. This selection was made with the consideration that these aspects have been used to compile an affective commitment measurement tool called ACS (*Affective Commitment Scale*) which is used as a measure of affective commitment in this study. organizational values based on the psychological bond between the individual and the organization.

Transformational Leadership Style Towards Innovative Work Behavior

Study about influence style leadership transformational to behavior Work innovative refers to several study that is among others, research conducted by Saeed et al. (Yulianti et al., 2023). The results of this study indicate that there is an influence of transformational leadership style on innovative work behavior. Furthermore, research by Afsar and Umrani (2019) found that Transformational leadership style emerges with inspiring drive, comprehensive mission, courage, attention to purpose, energize vision, stimulate intellectual inspiration, intrinsic motivation, support innovation and employee creativity.

Afsar et al.'s (2016) research found that transformational leadership style has a positive relationship with innovative work behavior, is able to be interconnected with each other (integrated) and leads to the emergence of innovative work behavior in employees, that innovative work behavior comes from the desires of the employees

themselves (Pieterse & Knippenberg, 2010). Research by Kim and Kang (2016) shows that transformational leadership style has a warm personality, always tries to treat employees fairly, is able to motivate employees to be innovative and become more productive and creative, so that the hypothesis can be put forward:

H1: there is an influence of the application of transformational leadership style on employee innovative work behavior.

The Moderating Role of Affective Commitment on the Relationship between Transformational Leadership Style and Innovative Work Behavior

The role of affective commitment as a moderator in the relationship between transformational leadership style and innovative work behavior was put forward by Hannah (Devinta & Santosa, 2022). ng commitment to the services they provide. Affective commitment can be explained as a form of emotional connection, identification, and involvement of employees within the organization, so that employees with high affective commitment will be more easily involved in innovative work behavior. The moderating role of affective commitment on the relationship between transformational leadership style and innovative work behavior is that the effectiveness of transformational leadership style on innovative work behavior will depend on the level of employee affective commitment to the targets determined by the organization (R et al., 2023). So it can be hypothesized,

H2 : Affective commitment moderates the relationship between the application of transformational leadership style and employee innovative work behavior.

Framework

Based on the literature review explained previously, the following is the framework of thought in this research :

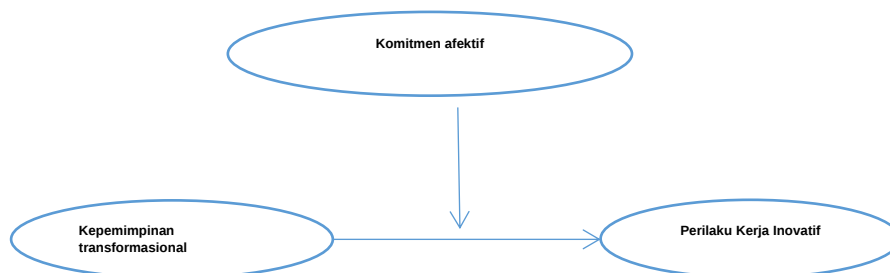


Figure 1. Research Framework

2. METHOD

Type Study

This type of research uses a quantitative, causal approach by measuring the strength of the relationship between two or more variables. The approach used in this research is a *survey approach*, namely the activity of collecting as much data as possible regarding facts that support the research with the aim of determining the status, symptoms, and finding similarities in status by comparing it with a predetermined or selected standard (Sukayana et al., 2019).

Population and Sample

According to Sugiyono (Asbari, 2019) population is region generalization consisting of objects that have quality and characteristics certain For studied and then withdrawn conclusion. Population in study This is all over employees in the region government area Regency / City in Province Sumatra North totaling 167,018 people (National Civil Service Agency of Sumatra North, 20 24). While the target population is all government ASN area Good regency and city which consists of groups II (two) and III (three).

The sampling technique that will be used in this research is carried out several stages of sampling (*multistage*) as follows:

- Stage 1: All districts and cities in North Sumatra Province are grouped based on Regional Clusters
- Stage II: Based on the grouping, samples of districts/cities were selected from each region or area that had high, medium and low local revenue (PAD) (*Stratified Random Sampling*).
- Stage III: From each selected Regency or City, the target population is obtained, namely all ASN in group III who work as administrative staff (*purposive sampling*). Then, from the target population, the number of employee samples will be determined using the Slovin formula (2001), with a sampling error rate of 5%, so the number of samples is as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where:

- e = Level error in taking sample
N = Number Population
n = Size Sample

Based on formula above, with level 5% error, then size samples obtained is as following :

Table 1. Sample data of ASN targets based on groups from Regency/City

No	Regency /City	Group		Total
		II	III	
1	South Tapanuli	22	21	43
2	Mandailing Natal	30	28	58
3	Nias	19	15	34
4	Padang Lawas	19	17	36
5	West Nias	10	10	20
6	North Nias	17	12	29
7	Samosir	15	16	31

8	Simalungun	50	38	88
9	Karo	24	25	49
10	Toba	19	18	37
11	Pakpak Bharat	15	12	27
12	Medan	42	59	101
13	Deli Serdang	46	49	95
14	Serdang Bedagai	21	24	45
15	High Cliff	11	14	25
16	North Labuhan Batu	16	17	33
17	Binjai	13	22	35
TOTAL		389	397	786

Source : Primary data (Processed), 2026

Analysis Statistics Descriptive

According to Sugiyono (2011) analysis descriptive is analysis that used analyze data with method describe or describe the data that has been collected as existence without intend to make applicable conclusions For general or generalization.

Analysis Statistics Inferential – Partial Least Square (PLS)

Inferential statistics is a data analysis technique used to determine the extent of similarity between the results obtained from a sample and the results obtained in the population as a whole. *Structural Equation Models* (SEM) are grouped into two approaches. The first approach is called *Covariance-Based SEM* (CBSEM) and the other is *Variance-Based SEM*, better known as *Partial Least Squares* (PLS). The analysis method used in study This is *Partial Least Squares* (PLS) (Rasool et al., 2021).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis Statistics Descriptive

Descriptive statistical analysis is conducted to describe or explain respondents' responses (answers) to various research variables by providing numbers, either in the form of the number of people (respondents) or percentages (Citra et al., 2025). The description is described below in Table 2.

Table 2. Profile Respondents

No	Characteristics Respondents	Number of people)	Percentage (%)
1	Education		
	Gender :		
	Woman	416	27.86
	Man	370	30.41
	Total	786	100
2	Age		
	1. <35 years	379	48.22
	2. 35-45 years old	300	38.17

No	Characteristics Respondents	Number of people)	Percentage (%)
	3. 45-55 years old	64	8.14
	4. > 55 years	43	5.47
	Total	786	100
3	Years of service		
	1. Class II		
	0-10 years	251	64.52
	11-20 years	125	29
	21-55 years	8	17.5
	> 55 years	5	11
		100	100
	Group III		
	0-10 years	141	35.52
	11-20 years	182	45.84
	21-55 years	30	4
	> 55 years	44	11.08
	Total	786	100

Inferential Statistical Analysis

Evaluation Outer Model (*Measurement Model*) : Validity and Reliability Testing

Convergent validity is part from *measurement model* (model measurement) SEM-PLS is called as *outer model* whereas in *covariance-based SEM* called *confirmatory factor analysis* (CFA) (Budiono & Yasin, 2020). The criteria for assessing *the outer model* (measurement model) meets the convergent validity requirements for reflective constructs, namely (1) *the loading* must be above 0.7 and (2) the *p- value* is significant (<0.05) (Hair et al; 2013). The following is validity based on the factor loading value

Table 3. Validity based on loading factor values

Indicator	Factor Loading Value (P<0.05)	Validity
KT1	0.777	Valid
KT10	0.882	Valid
KT11	0.712	Valid
KT12	0.801	Valid
KT2	0.783	Valid
KT3	0.767	Valid
KT4	0.887	Valid
KT5	0.881	Valid
KT6	0.883	Valid
KT7	0.879	Valid
KT8	0.891	Valid
KT9	0.883	Valid
KA1	0.814	Valid
KA2	0.881	Valid
KA3	0.897	Valid
KA4	0.787	Valid
KA5	0.906	Valid

KA6	0.901	Valid
KA7	0.921	Valid
KA8	0.913	Valid
PKI1	0.729	Valid
PKI10	0.938	Valid
PKI11	0.918	Valid
PKI12	0.942	Valid
PKI13	0.924	Valid
PKI14	0.936	Valid
PKI15	0.908	Valid
PKI16	0.903	Valid
PKI17	0.924	Valid
PKI18	0.901	Valid
PKI19	0.932	Valid
KIN1	0.778	Valid
KIN9	0.913	Valid

Then testing reliability based on composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha (CA) served in the table 4 following :

Table 4. Reliability Testing based on Cronbach's Alpha (CA)

	Cronbach's Alpha
Composite Reliability	0.817
Cronbach's Alpha	0.882

Based on the recommended CR value, it is above 0.7 (Mahfud and Ratmono, 2013). It is known that all CR values are > 0.7, which means they have met the reliability requirements based on CR. Next, reliability testing is based on the Cronbach's alpha value. Recommended CA is above 0.7 (Saimun & Rambe, 2022). It is known that all over mark CA > 0. 7, which means has fulfil condition reliability based on Cronbach's alpha (Andala et al., 2021).

Test Hypothesis

The results of the hypothesis testing conducted in this study are presented in Table 5, as follows:

Table 5. Test Significance Influence Directly Between Variables

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
KT -> PKI	0.21 5	0.211	0.04 7	4.39 1	0.000
KA moderates	0.303	0.307	0.04 8	6.1 8 0	0.000

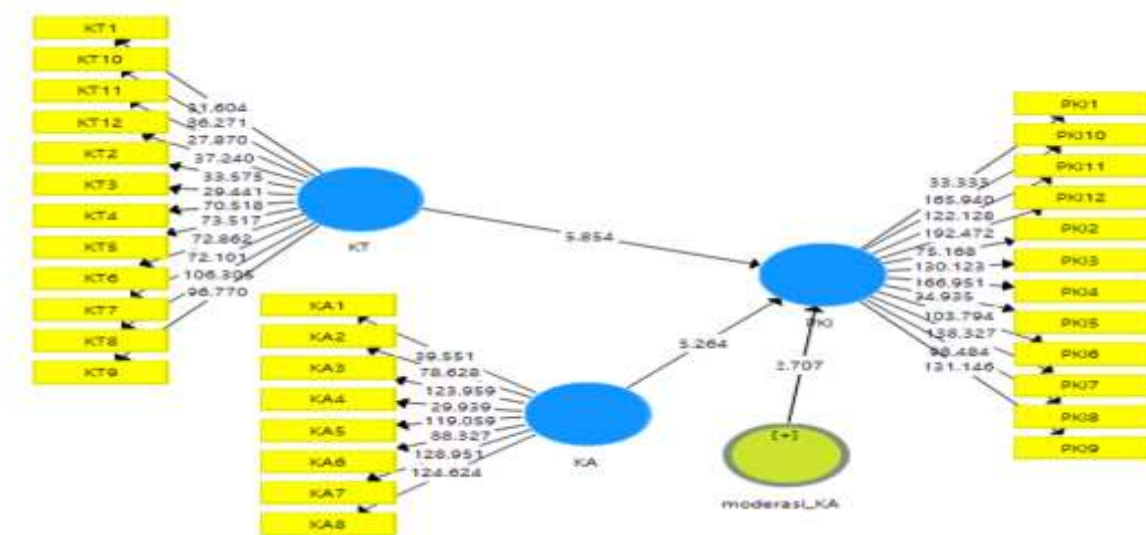


Figure 1. Significance Model Between Variables

Test results on the hypothesis First based on data processing shows that mark t-statistic of $5,054 > 1.96$ so that from results This stated t- statistic significant because >1.96 and with P- Values $0.000 < 0.05$ so hypothesis First accepted. Based on the test results, it can be stated that there is an influence of transformational leadership style on innovative work behavior. Furthermore, the second hypothesis test shows that the t-statistic value is $2.707 > 1.96$ with a P-Value of $0.000 < 0.05$ so that the second hypothesis is accepted and it can be stated that there is a moderating influence of affective commitment on the relationship between transformational leadership style and innovative work behavior.

The results of the first hypothesis test indicate that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on innovative work behavior among local government employees in North Sumatra Province. Transformational leadership is closely related to innovative work behavior, meaning that if transformational leadership is implemented or used by local government leaders in North Sumatra Province, innovative work behavior can also be increased and vice versa. The results of this study are supported by the results of research by Jong & Hartog (2007), Seed et.al (2019). Several of these studies state that transformational leadership has a significant effect on innovative work behavior. Transformational leadership is believed to be one of the determining factors for increasing innovative work behavior of employees at work, namely through effective leadership.

The role of leaders in encouraging subordinates to behave innovatively can be enhanced through the leader's efforts to intensively encourage their subordinates in carrying out their duties, main tasks, and functions by giving their subordinates trust and freedom to their employees in carrying out their work and solving problems in the work. This will encourage the initiative and creativity of individual subordinates. The responsibility, freedom, and independence of each employee are based on how much authority a person is given in carrying out their duties, how heavy the responsibility must be borne according to their authority and how broad the freedom to make decisions.

Although leaders always encourage the individual initiative of subordinates, more aggressive, innovative, and willing to face risks in carrying out their work, however, it is still followed by the leader's actions to monitor the implementation of regulations and direct supervision that is used to see the overall behavior of employees. With these steps, leaders can simultaneously understand the differences in potential possessed by their subordinates, providing opportunities for their subordinates to be able to learn and develop (Khan et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the results of the second hypothesis test indicate that affective commitment significantly moderates the influence of transformational leadership on innovative work behavior of local government civil servants in the province of North Sumatra. This means that high affective commitment can increase the influence of transformational leadership in improving innovative work behavior. This condition indicates that if local government employees feel integrated with the organization, then the organization will have a very big meaning for employees and employees will have a strong sense of belonging to the organization. This condition will enable local government employees to be willing to do their best for the benefit of the organization, care about the organization's goals, values within the organization, and organizational goals, their existence is more than just membership because it includes an attitude of loyalty to their organization by trying according to their abilities for the benefit of the organization and helping to achieve the achievement of organizational goals. These various conditions will further enhance the effectiveness of the role of transformational leadership style in improving innovative work behavior.

Building and maintaining employee affective commitment, especially on indicators that have a strong role, will be a crucial factor in encouraging the role of transformational leadership, which is certainly a long process and cannot be formed instantly. Local governments must maintain, nurture, and improve this affective commitment continuously by continuing to provide the right treatment from the beginning of ASN joining, thereby creating a positive perception of the organization. Research conducted by Biggs (Dash & Gatharia, 2023) states that employee affective commitment is influenced by employee status which consists of various aspects including employee status, level of job security, career orientation, and length of service (tenure). Several of these aspects need to be given attention to create a high affective commitment that has implications for strengthening the role of transformational leadership styles in increasing innovative work behavior (Breevaart & Bakker, 2021).

Furthermore, improvements must be made starting from the organization's vision and mission, improvements to the system and career patterns, training patterns, creation and inheritance of organizational culture (build the tradition), events to build togetherness (get together), policies to improve employee status and others. For this reason, managerial improvements, especially HR management, must be an important concern (Deci et al., 2020). Affective commitment that is built continuously through organizational attention to employees that focuses on their needs to develop in the context of career and work, will facilitate the application of transformational leadership

styles to improve innovative work behavior transformational leaders on innovative work behavior of local government employees (Judijanto et al., 2024).

4. CONCLUSION

Results study This can help government area For understand that behavior Work innovative is something a comprehensive and integrated concept, between strong leadership supported by commitment high affective from the employees For realize capacity organization to help development knowledge, development of ideas and concepts new supported with give room for development creativity and innovation as well as design conducive organization For creation behavior innovative work for the sake of ASN performance is increasing tall. Government area need maintain and improve practice style leadership transformational that is capable become role model, respected by employees and have a clear vision that will enable employee For take decisions and in settlement work and problems. Subordinates will be inspired to behave in an innovative way through the exemplary behavior of the leader, a vision that can motivate employees. The results of this study encourage that in leadership practice it is very important to give sufficient dependence to subordinates in carrying out their work through the leader's efforts to intensively encourage subordinates in carrying out their duties, main points and functions by giving trust to subordinates and freedom to employees in carrying out their work and solving problems in the work. This will encourage individual initiative of subordinates to show their enthusiasm for ideas and creativity. Delegation of authority to subordinates can be done by recognizing each subordinate's potential.

Affective commitment has a role in strengthening the relationship between transformational leadership style and innovative work behavior so that the local government needs to maintain and improve the affective commitment of employees through various implementations of regional policies such as (1) *Justice and support*, namely the local government is able to fulfill its obligations to ASN and comply with humanitarian values. (2) *shared values*, namely the local government must have values related to ASN values and the ASN believes in it, because it will make them comfortable and motivate them to stay in the organization; (3) *trust*, namely the local government must have trust in ASN through the delegation of authority in working, namely the belief that ASN is able to carry out its duties and responsibilities without intense supervision, in the sense that they must be sure that working together will produce good results in risky situations; (4) *Organizational comprehension*, in the sense that ASN must understand the organization and stay up to date on organizational events, organizational strategies, have good relationships with colleagues, understand the history of the organization and future plans; (5) *Employee involvement*, trust to let ASN participate in decision-making regarding the future of the local government, this has been done through bureaucratic reform and must be further improved. This makes ASN feel like they are part of the local government organization.

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