

# LINKING TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT: INTERVENING ROLE OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND WORKPLACE SOCIAL SUPPORT

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## ABSTRAK

Perusahaan milik keluarga harus memanfaatkan seluruh potensi sumber daya manusianya dan menjaga loyalitas karyawan untuk mencapai tujuan perusahaan secara efektif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji pengaruh kepemimpinan transformasional terhadap komitmen karyawan melalui keseimbangan kehidupan kerja dan dukungan sosial di tempat kerja. Penelitian dilakukan pada bulan Agustus hingga Desember 2023 menggunakan kuesioner online yang dibagikan kepada karyawan di salah satu perusahaan keluarga di Medan, Indonesia. Data yang dikumpulkan kemudian dianalisis menggunakan PLS-SEM. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional berpengaruh signifikan terhadap komitmen karyawan, keseimbangan kehidupan kerja, dan dukungan sosial di tempat kerja. Namun, meskipun dukungan sosial di tempat kerja mampu memediasi hubungan antara kepemimpinan transformasional dan komitmen karyawan, keseimbangan kehidupan kerja tidak dapat memediasi hubungan tersebut. Selain itu, ditemukan bahwa keseimbangan kehidupan kerja tidak mempunyai pengaruh langsung terhadap komitmen karyawan. Dengan menggunakan analisis IPMA, penelitian ini menyoroti pentingnya kepemimpinan transformasional dan dukungan sosial di tempat kerja dalam lingkungan bisnis keluarga. Kepemimpinan transformasional juga terbukti memiliki kinerja dan pengaruh paling tinggi terhadap komitmen karyawan. Disarankan agar manajer memprioritaskan aspek-aspek ini untuk mengurangi tingkat stres karyawan, meningkatkan kesejahteraan psikologis, dan meningkatkan kepuasan kerja, yang pada akhirnya menghasilkan tenaga kerja yang lebih berkomitmen dan berkinerja tinggi.

**Kata Kunci:** kepemimpinan bisnis, loyalitas karyawan, kesejahteraan karyawan, perusahaan keluarga, sumber daya manusia

## ABSTRACT

Family businesses must harness the full potential of their human resources and maintain employee loyalty to achieve the companies' objectives effectively. This study examines the influence of transformational leadership on employee commitment through work-life balance and workplace social support. The research was conducted from August to December 2023 using an online questionnaire distributed to employees in a family firm in Medan, Indonesia. The data were then analyzed using PLS-SEM. The results show that transformational leadership significantly affects employee commitment, work-life balance, and workplace social support. However, although workplace social support mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and employee commitment, work-life balance fails to do so. It was also found that work-life balance has no direct influence on employee commitment. Using an IPMA analysis, this study highlights the importance of transformational leadership and workplace social support in the family business environment. Transformational leadership has also been shown to have the best performance and effect on employee commitment. Managers should prioritize these aspects to reduce employees' stress levels, improve psychological well-being, and increase job satisfaction, leading to a more committed, high-performance workforce.

**Keywords:** business leadership, employee loyalty, employee well-being, family company, human capital

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Background of Study

The relationship between work-life balance, workplace social support, and employee commitment, particularly in the context of family businesses, is a complex and crucial area of study. Research has shown that transformational leadership carries many important values such as improving

organizational behavior and innovation (Eko et al., 2023). Also, transformational leadership can moderate the impact of time pressure on work-life balance and exhaustion (Syrek et al., 2013). Additionally, supervisor support has been found to play a crucial role in organizational commitment, with work-life balance and job satisfaction being negatively linked to work-family conflict (Talukder, 2019). Furthermore, workplace and family support have been shown to have implications for individual psychological availability and energy at work, which are crucial for maintaining work-life balance and overall well-being (Russo et al., 2016). These findings underscore the importance of leadership and support systems in fostering a positive work environment and encouraging employees to manage their work-life balance, particularly in the unique context of family businesses where the boundaries between work and family life may be more intertwined.

This study examines the impact of transformational leadership on employee commitment within PT IHI, a family-owned manufacturing company known to produce powdered and non-powdered gloves, latex, and nitrile, located in Medan, North Sumatra. Initially established as a small-scale company in 1988, it has significantly expanded its production capacity over the years. The company's head in the Human Resources Management Department has highlighted concerns regarding employee commitment, which is particularly evident in the short tenure of most employees, indicating low commitment levels. As shown in Table 1, most employees stay in the company for less than a year, and only a few staff members are loyal for more than five years. Additionally, the manager noted occasional issues with the company's operational procedures. This underscores the significance of understanding the role of work-life balance, leadership, and social support in shaping employee commitment within the unique context of a family business.

Table 1. Data of Employees' Working Period  
 Source: PT IHI (2023)

Year	Number of Employees			Total Employees
	≤ 1 Year	1 – 4 Years	≥ 5 Years	
2020	50	15	3	68
2021	48	11	3	62
2022	51	17	2	70
2023	55	17	2	74

Existing works of literature have extensively explored the areas of transformational leadership, work-life balance, social support, and employee commitment in various settings. A recent study by Park et al. (2022) investigated the relationships among transformational leadership, organizational commitment, and job performance, highlighting the mediating role of employee engagement. Additionally, Nastavia & Lista (2022) examined the effect of transformational leadership on employee performance through job satisfaction and organizational commitment, revealing the complex pathways through which transformational leadership influences employee outcomes. In the context of family businesses, Hadžiahmetović et al. (2022) have studied the impact of leadership style on affective commitment at family businesses, emphasizing the positive influence of transformational leadership on organizational commitment. Moreover, Mahdi & Top (2021) investigated the impact of transformational leadership on affective commitment within family businesses, highlighting the role of family membership in influencing employees' commitment levels.

While some research has touched on aspects of work-family balance (Žnidaršič & Bernik, 2021), family-supportive leadership (Lee & Kim, 2023), and organizational commitment (Georgewill, 2023) in family or non-family companies, limited research has examined the mediating role of work-life balance and workplace social support between transformational leadership and employee commitment. Existing literature lacks comprehensive studies that investigate the interplay between leadership style, work-life balance, workplace social support, and employee commitment specifically in the context of family-owned businesses. Moreover, there is a need for research that delves into the specific mechanisms through which transformational leadership, work-life balance, and social support interact to influence employee commitment within family businesses, considering the potential differences in organizational culture, leadership styles, and support systems compared to non-family businesses. Therefore, research gaps in these areas within family businesses present opportunities for exploration.

Based on the discussion above, this study proposes a research model of how transformational leadership effects employee commitment, where work-life balance and workplace social support are predicted to serve as mediators. Therefore, seven research questions were posed in this study: (1) Is there a positive influence of transformational leadership on employee commitment in a family-owned company? (2) Is there a positive influence of transformational leadership on work-life balance in a family-owned company? (3) Is there a positive influence of work-life balance on employee commitment in a family-owned company? (4) Can work-life balance mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee commitment in a family-owned company? (5) Is there a positive influence of transformational leadership on workplace social support in a family-owned company? (6) Is there a positive influence of workplace social support on employee commitment in a family-owned company? and (7) Can workplace social support mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee commitment in a family-owned company?

This research contributes to the existing literature on leadership and organizational commitment by examining the correlation between transformational leadership and employee commitment, particularly in the family business environment. It explores the relationship between these variables and investigates two mediator variables: work-life balance and workplace social support. This empirical study is among the few to examine this research model in the context of family business settings, providing theoretical and practical value for academics and family-owned companies. Additionally, it offers practical insights for family firm owners, leaders, managers, and employees to understand the factors influencing employee commitment, whether the employees are family or non-family members.

### **Hypotheses Development**

A family business can be defined as a company governed and/or managed by members of the same family that is potentially sustainable across generations (Amanda & Kaban, 2022). It is crucial to prioritize employees' well-being and commitment to family-owned firms because of their willingness to remain with the organization, which contributes to the profitability of family companies, particularly during succession. In addition, family ownership and leadership play a significant role in the overall economic performance of family firms.

### **Transformational Leadership and Employee Commitment**

A study by Abasilim et al. (2019) found a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership style and employees' commitment in Nigeria, highlighting the importance of transformational leadership in fostering commitment. Another study by Mesu et al.

(2015) investigated the impact of transformational leadership on organizational commitment in manufacturing and service small and medium enterprises. Further, transformational leadership positively influences performance through various mediating mechanisms in diverse organizational settings (Edward & Kaban, 2020), leading to improved employee commitment.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Transformational leadership positively influences employee commitment in a family-owned company

**Work-Life Balance as a Mediator**

Several studies have highlighted the intervening role of work-life balance in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee commitment. A study by Hayati (2022) specifically addressed the relationship between transformational leadership and work-life balance among employees in the banking sector. Talukder (2019) has also indicated that work-life balance and job satisfaction positively relate to organizational commitment. Furthermore, Sani & Adisa (2024) discussed the impact of transformational leadership on work-life balance and its influence on employee commitment.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Transformational leadership positively influences work-life balance in a family-owned company

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Work-life balance positively influences employee commitment in a family-owned company

**H<sub>4</sub>:** Work-life balance is the intervening factor between transformational leadership and employee commitment in a family-owned company

**Workplace Social Support as a Mediator**

Research by Xu et al. (2022) has shown that transformational leadership is associated with workplace social capital among nurses, highlighting its role in nurturing a supportive work environment. Moreover, a study by Rasminingsih et al. (2022) has linked transformational leadership to workplace spirituality, which subsequently impacts the commitment and performance of employees. A study by Gerards et al. (2018) considered social interaction in the workplace and transformational leadership as potential mediators to influence work engagement and the study by Jiatong et al. (2022) confirmed that transformational leadership positively affects employee engagement, leading to increased organizational commitment and job performance.

**H<sub>5</sub>:** Transformational leadership positively influences workplace social support in a family-owned company

**H<sub>6</sub>:** Workplace social support positively influences employee commitment in a family-owned company

**H<sub>7</sub>:** Workplace social support is the intervening factor between transformational leadership and employee commitment in a family-owned company

The proposed hypothesis is summarized in a research model as shown in Figure 1.

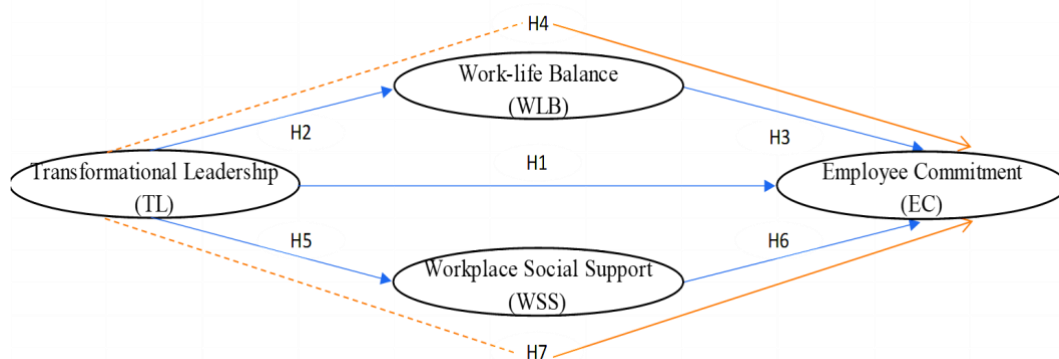


Figure 1. Research Model

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

The data were obtained by distributing an online survey that broke down each construct item in the conceptual model. Since it is essential to involve every individual who works in this company, the census approach was used to gather the data. The questionnaire was sent to all employees over two weeks in September 2023 using Google Forms and 74 respondents participated. More than half of the respondents were men and the remaining were women. Approximately 30% of the workers were between the ages of 30 and 40, 58% were under the age of 30, and 12% were 41–60 years old.

Measurement of the variables was accomplished through the use of a five-point Likert scale in the questionnaire ranging from 1 to 5 as shown in Table 2. Several earlier research instruments were used to create the questionnaire. There were eight items to measure Transformational Leadership as the independent variable (Francisco, 2019) and six items for Employee Commitment as the dependent variable (Meyer & Allen, 1997). As for the mediating variables, both Work-Life Balance and Workplace Social Support used six items from Putri & Amran (2021) and Guo & Chen (2022). Before the survey began, thirty employees of other family enterprises participated in a pre-test to make sure the questionnaire was ready for use and no significant changes were required. The responses to the pre-test were then analyzed using SPSS for validity and reliability.

Table 2. Five-point Likert Scale

Response Category	Numerical Value
Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	2
Neutral	3
Agree	4
Strongly Agree	5

The PLS-SEM analysis was employed in this study as a comprehensive multivariate statistical tool that can simultaneously examine each link between components in the conceptual framework, involving measurements and structural aspects. The PLS-SEM analytic literature was followed in a two-step approach that involved evaluating the measurement and structural model. While the measurement model was assessed by gauging the reliability and validity of reflecting constructs, the structural model was assessed using  $R^2$ ,  $f^2$ ,  $Q^2$ , and path coefficients (Hair et al., 2021).

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Measurement Model

Determining the level of accuracy and consistency are the purposes of the initial validity and reliability tests. The basis for assessing internal consistency reliability is the composite reliability (CR) value. According to Hair et al. (2019), the reliability value is considered satisfactory to good when it is within the range of 0.70 and 0.90. The CR values for the study were found to vary from 0.775 to 0.909. The test findings showed that each variable's average variance extracted (AVE) value was higher than the 0.5 thresholds required for convergent validity (Hair et al., 2022). Table 3 shows that the reliability and validity constructs are satisfied by the values of CR and AVE, which indicate a sufficient level of internal consistency and accuracy.

Table 3. Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Construct	CR Value	AVE Value
Transformational Leadership	0.909	0.558
Work-Life Balance	0.775	0.537
Workplace Social Support	0.875	0.542
Employee Commitment	0.838	0.512

Next, it is crucial to assess the reflective measurement model's discriminant validity to make sure each construct in the research model is distinct from the other variables. The heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) evaluation was used in this study to measure construct similarity; a value of less than 0.90 is recommended (Henseler et al., 2015). As can be seen in Table 4, the results obtained were found to be below the threshold value, proving the discriminant validity and uniqueness of the reflecting variables.

Table 4. Heterotrait-monotrait Ratio

Construct	TL	WLB	WSS	EC
Transformational Leadership (TL)				0.822
Work-Life Balance (WLB)	0.762			0.656
Workplace Social Support (WSS)				
Employee Commitment (EC)	0.742	0.847		0.852

### Structural Model

Prior to assessing the structural model, it is essential to evaluate the variance inflation factor (VIF) for the inner model with a value of less than three to ascertain collinearity. A higher VIF score implies that there may be a problem with the variables' collinearity, according to Becker et al. (2013). Table 5 indicates that the inner VIF values were found to be below the predefined limit, indicating that there was no collinearity issue in the investigation.

Table 5. Collinearity Statistics

Construct	TL	WLB	WSS	EC
Transformational Leadership (TL)		1.000	1.000	1.911
Work-Life Balance (WLB)				1.686
Workplace Social Support (WSS)				2.030
Employee Commitment (EC)				

A bootstrap technique with 5,000 iterations was used to evaluate the importance of items, direct effects, and indirect effects in the structural model. To examine the hypothesis, a one-tailed test with a significance level of 0.05 was used. According to Hair et al. (2022), the model quality is assessed using the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) value, effect size ( $f^2$ ), and cross-validated redundancy ( $Q^2$ ).

$R^2$  is regarded as weak, moderate, and significant when the value is assessed at 0.25, 0.50, and 0.75, respectively (Hair et al., 2019). Table 5 displays the  $R^2$  values for work-life balance, workplace social support, and employee commitment are 0.316, 0.432, and 0.600, respectively. This suggests that the variables are influenced by predictor constructs with moderate requirements. Hair et al. (2019) state that modest, medium, and large effect sizes are often indicated by  $f^2$  values greater than 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35. Table 6 shows that the biggest effect size related to the influence of employee commitment is found in workplace social support (0.279), followed by transformational leadership (0.238) and work-life balance (0.009).

The  $Q^2$  values should ideally be greater than zero for each endogenous variable to show how well the structural model predicts the construct. For the PLS-path model,  $Q^2$  values greater than 0, 0.25, and 0.5 typically indicate small, medium, and high predictive importance (Hair et al., 2019). The study shows that all  $Q^2$  values are within the small to medium predictive power range.

Table 6. Structural Model Evaluation

Relationship	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Adjusted	f <sup>2</sup>	Q <sup>2</sup>
Transformational Leadership				
TL -> EC			0.238	
TL -> WLB			0.462	
TL -> WSS			0.760	
Work-Life Balance	0.316	0.307		0.146
WLB -> EC			0.009	
Workplace Social Support	0.432	0.424		0.204
WSS -> EC			0.279	
Employee Commitment	0.600	0.583		0.260

To examine each of the research's hypotheses, a one-tailed test was employed. Table 7 presents the findings where all the hypotheses are supported except for H3 and H4. Transformational leadership is found to have a direct significant influence on employee commitment ( $\beta = 0.426$ ,  $t = 2.479$ ), work-life balance ( $\beta = 0.562$ ,  $t = 3.711$ ), and workplace social support ( $\beta = 0.657$ ,  $t = 7.719$ ), thus H1, H2, and H5 are accepted. Employee commitment is also found to be significantly influenced by workplace social support ( $\beta = 0.476$ ,  $t = 2.977$ ) confirming that H6 is justified. Lastly, workplace social support is confirmed to mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee commitment ( $\beta = 0.312$ ,  $t = 2.966$ ), supporting H7. Figure 3 shows the relationship between the variables tested.

Table 7. Hypotheses Results

Path	Direct Effect			Indirect Effect			Total Effect			Supported
	$\beta$	t-value	p-value	$\beta$	t-value	p-value	$\beta$	t-value	p-value	
H1: TL -> EC	.426	2.479	.007	.270	2.415	.008	.696	6.647	.000	Yes
H2: TL -> WLB	.562	3.711	.000				.562	3.711	.000	Yes
H3: WLB -> EC	-.076	.700	.242				-.076	.700	.242	No
H4: TL - WLB - EC				-.043	.604	.273				No
H5: TL -> WSS	.657	7.719	.000				.657	7.719	.000	Yes
H6: WSS -> EC	.476	2.977	.001				.476	2.977	.001	Yes
H7: TL - WSS - EC				.312	2.966	.002				Yes

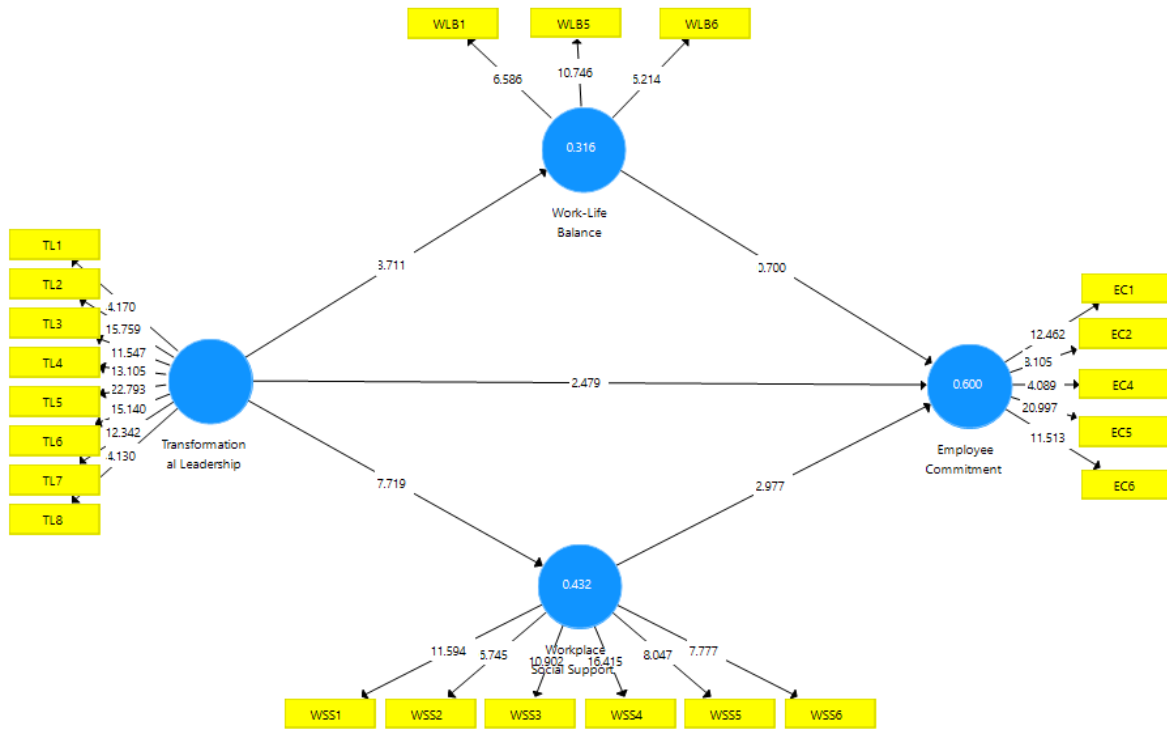


Figure 2. Result Model

**Importance-Performance Map Analysis**

Importance-Performance Map Analysis (IPMA) is a technique that visualizes the relationship between each provided attribute's effect and performance, as well as the discrepancy between these qualities' actual results and expectations (Ringle & Sarstedt, 2016). Finding the structures that perform poorly but are still somewhat relevant for the target variable is the aim of IPMA. All of the factors used in this study to support employee commitment perform relatively well, as seen in Figure 3, where the corresponding values for transformational leadership, work-life balance, and workplace social support are 77.561, 75.907, and 75.879. It proves that PT IHI as a family-owned enterprise has utilized all the contributing factors used in this study where transformational leadership is shown as the most significant factor influencing employee commitment.

Figure 3. IPMA of Employee Commitment (Constructs)

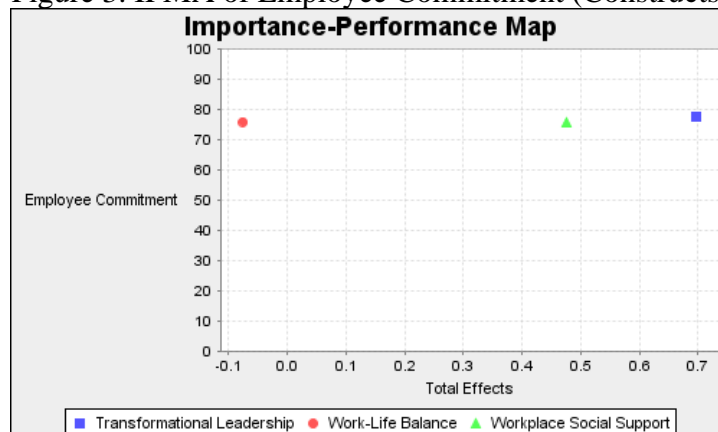




Table 8 provides the indicator of total effects and performances for employee commitment where item TL2 “The leaders at this company consider the ethical and moral implications of choices” holds the biggest importance (0.145) and performance (86.486) among all other indicators used in this study. From variable work-life balance, item WLB5 “I am fulfilled with my job position” performs the highest (81.419) although the construct itself has a weak effect on employee commitment. From variable workplace social support, item WSS5 “I receive incentives for my achievement in work” displays the highest importance (0.125), while WSS6 “Some coworkers show care and interest when I face problems in the workplace” has the highest performance (82.095) within the construct.

Table 8. IPMA of Employee Commitment (Indicators)

Construct	Indicator	Total Effect	Performance
Transformational Leadership	TL1	0.094	83.108
	TL2	0.145	86.486
	TL3	0.120	84.459
	TL4	0.101	68.243
	TL5	0.137	65.541
	TL6	0.107	77.477
	TL7	0.124	78.378
	TL8	0.095	78.829
Work-Life Balance	WLB1	-0.030	76.351
	WLB5	-0.042	81.419
	WLB6	-0.030	69.595
Workplace Social Support	WSS1	0.084	64.865
	WSS2	0.097	66.216
	WSS3	0.110	79.730
	WSS4	0.124	79.054
	WSS5	0.125	81.532
	WSS6	0.105	82.095

This research investigates how transformational leadership in a family business influences the commitment among employees through work-life balance and workplace social support. The results of this study complement the past findings where that transformational leadership has a direct and favorable impact on employee commitment (Abasilim et al., 2019), work-life balance (Hayati, 2022), and workplace social support (Xu et al., 2022). Workplace social support in a family-run company has also shown a significant effect on employee commitment (Gerards et al., 2018; Jiatong et al., 2022) and can mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee commitment, which is in line with the previous studies by Rasminingsih et al. (2022).

The impact of transformational leadership in a family business on employee commitment, work-life balance, and workplace social support is important for organizational success and employee well-being. By exhibiting transformational leadership behaviors, leaders in family businesses can enhance employee commitment, leading to higher retention rates, improved performance, and job satisfaction (Faizal & Kaban, 2021). The positive relationship between transformational leadership and work-life balance indicates that leaders prioritizing employee well-being can help employees achieve a better balance between their professional responsibilities and personal lives (Mesu et al., 2015). In addition, the impact of transformational leadership on workplace social support underscores the importance of fostering a supportive and inclusive work culture. Transformational leaders can create a sense of belonging and community within the organization, leading to

increased social support among employees (Steinmann et al., 2018). This supportive environment can enhance collaboration, communication, and teamwork, ultimately contributing to a positive work environment and improved organizational outcomes.

This study highlights that work-life balance has no direct impact on employee commitment and does not function as a mediator in the setting of a family-owned business. This observation can be interpreted in multiple ways. In a family business, work-life balance may not be as important for employee commitment as in other types of organizations due to the unique dynamics and characteristics of family-run enterprises. Family businesses often have distinct organizational cultures, where familial relationships and values play a significant role in shaping the work environment. In such settings, employees may feel a stronger sense of loyalty and commitment to the family business based on personal connections and shared values rather than solely on work-life balance considerations (Soomro et al., 2018). Additionally, the integration of work and family life is often more seamless in family businesses, where family members may be involved in both business operations and personal relationships. This integration can blur the lines between work and personal life, making the concept of work-life balance less distinct and potentially less critical for employee commitment (Schnettler et al., 2018).

#### 4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examines the antecedents that influence employee commitment in the environment of a family enterprise. It assesses how transformational leadership effects employee commitment by including work-life balance and workplace social support as mediators. Three important conclusions emerged from the testing of the proposed research model. First, transformational leadership plays an important role, both directly and indirectly, through workplace social support in improving employees' commitment. Second, transformational leadership also influences both work-life balance and workplace social support in a family business. Third, workplace social support was found to have a significant impact on employee commitment.

Finally, a few shortcomings in this study offer potential for further research. The company chosen for this research has a small number population of employees. Therefore, the generalization of the conclusion of this study is constrained by this specific data. Subsequent research is required to address the challenge of limited sample size by incorporating more family-owned companies from diverse industries. Moreover, this study only uses two intervening variables in the research model. Future studies can test other antecedents and explore the roles of different mediators and moderators influencing employee commitment.

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