Int. j. adv. multidisc. res. stud. 2026; 6(3):1322-1326

Received: 21-04-2026
Accepted: 01-06-2026

International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies

ISSN: 2583-049X

The Influence of Situational Leadership Style on Personnel Performance: A Quantitative Study in a Uniformed Services Organization

Jonathan Hasudungan Hutagalung
Indonesian National Police Staff and Leadership College, Education, and Training Institute, Indonesia

DOI: https://doi.org/10.62225/2583049X.2026.6.3.6429 Corresponding Author: **Jonathan Hasudungan Hutagalung**

Abstract

This study investigates the influence of situational leadership style on personnel performance in a uniformed services organization in Indonesia. Grounded in Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory [1], the study conceptualizes four leadership dimensions: Telling (S1), Selling (S2), Participating (S3), and Delegating (S4). A quantitative cross-sectional survey design was employed, drawing a proportionate stratified random sample of 120 active personnel. Data were collected using a structured Likert-scale questionnaire comprising 26 items. Instrument validity was assessed through item-total correlation (all $r > 0.65$), and reliability was confirmed via Cronbach's alpha (range: 0.777–0.867). Classical assumption tests confirmed residual normality (Jarque-Bera $p = 0.355$), absence of multicollinearity (VIF range: 1.007–1.021), and homoscedasticity (Glejser $p = 0.967$). Multiple linear regression analysis revealed that all four leadership styles jointly and significantly explained 29.3% of the variance in personnel performance (Adj. $R^2 = 0.269$; $F(4,115) = 11.926$; $p < 0.001$). Selling ($\beta = 0.274$; $p < 0.001$), Participating ($\beta = 0.250$; $p < 0.001$), and Delegating ($\beta = 0.174$; $p = 0.002$) each demonstrated significant positive effects, while Telling also contributed significantly ($\beta = 0.178$; $p = 0.005$). Practical implications for leadership development programs in uniformed services contexts are discussed.

Keywords: Situational Leadership, Personnel Performance, Uniformed Services, Hersey and Blanchard, Quantitative Research

1. Introduction

Leadership effectiveness is widely recognized as a critical determinant of organizational performance, particularly in hierarchical and mission-critical environments such as police and military organizations [2-3]. Unlike private-sector organizations, uniformed services institutions operate under strict command structures, where a leader's ability to adapt their behavioral style to the readiness level of their subordinates can directly affect operational outcomes, morale, and organizational commitment [4-5].

Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory (SLT) offers a compelling framework for understanding adaptive leadership in such contexts [1]. SLT posits that there is no single optimal leadership style; rather, effective leaders must diagnose the developmental readiness of their followers and flexibly apply four behavioral styles—Telling (S1), Selling (S2), Participating (S3), and Delegating (S4)—each matched to a corresponding follower readiness level [6-7]. Despite its widespread application in management training worldwide, empirical validation of SLT in Southeast Asian security and defense settings remains limited [8-9].

In Indonesia, the National Police (POLRI) and Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) employ over 800,000 uniformed personnel across diverse operational environments. The performance of these personnel is critical not only for institutional goals but also for broader national security objectives [10-11]. Organizational performance in these institutions has been studied primarily through structural and procedural lenses; leadership style as a behavioral determinant of individual performance has received comparatively less empirical attention.

This study addresses this gap by empirically examining the relationship between each of the four situational leadership style dimensions and the performance of uniformed personnel. Specifically, the study seeks to answer: (1) Do the four situational leadership styles (Telling, Selling, Participating, Delegating) each exert a significant partial effect on personnel performance? (2) Do the four styles jointly exert a significant simultaneous effect on personnel performance? The study contributes to the

SLT literature by providing context-specific evidence from a non-Western, uniformed services setting.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Situational Leadership Theory

Situational Leadership Theory, originally developed by Hersey and Blanchard [12] as the Life-Cycle Theory of Leadership and later refined [1], remains one of the most widely applied leadership frameworks in organizational training and development [6]. At its core, SLT argues that leadership effectiveness depends on the leader's ability to adapt their style to the developmental level—defined by competence and commitment—of the follower. The four styles are: Telling (S1: high task, low relationship), appropriate for followers with low competence but high commitment; Selling (S2: high task, high relationship), appropriate for followers with low competence and low commitment; Participating (S3: low task, high relationship), for followers with competence but variable commitment; and Delegating (S4: low task, low relationship), for highly competent and motivated followers [7, 13].

2.2 Personnel Performance

Personnel performance in organizational contexts is broadly conceptualized as the degree to which an individual fulfills the responsibilities and objectives of their role [14]. In uniformed services organizations, performance encompasses task proficiency, disciplinary adherence, collaborative behavior, and initiative under pressure [15-16]. The measurement of performance in these settings typically integrates supervisor ratings, behavioral observations, and self-reports against standardized evaluation criteria [17].

2.3 Situational Leadership and Performance: Prior Evidence

A growing body of empirical literature links situational leadership to performance outcomes in diverse organizational contexts. Vecchio [18] conducted one of the earliest empirical tests of SLT and found partial support for the model's predictions in a school setting. Thompson and Vecchio [7] confirmed that leaders who appropriately matched their style to follower readiness achieved higher team performance. In an Indonesian public-sector context, Susanto [19] found that participative leadership styles were positively associated with employee performance, while Pratiwi and Simanjuntak [20] demonstrated significant effects of delegating behaviors on performance in a regional military unit. Most studies, however, examine individual style dimensions in isolation; this study contributes by simultaneously modeling all four SLT dimensions.

2.4 Hypotheses

Based on the theoretical framework and prior empirical evidence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: The Telling style (X1) has a significant positive influence on personnel performance (Y).
- H2: The Selling style (X2) has a significant positive influence on personnel performance (Y).
- H3: The Participating style (X3) has a significant positive influence on personnel performance (Y).
- H4: The Delegating style (X4) has a significant positive influence on personnel performance (Y).
- H5: The four situational leadership styles simultaneously have a significant positive influence on personnel performance (Y).

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey design. Data were collected at a single point in time from a sample of uniformed personnel using a structured, self-administered questionnaire. The study follows a causal-explanatory approach, seeking to determine the directional influence of independent variables (leadership styles) on a dependent variable (personnel performance).

3.2 Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

The study population comprised active uniformed personnel of a regional operational unit, totaling approximately 350 individuals. A sample of 120 respondents (34.3% of the population) was selected using proportionate stratified random sampling, stratified by rank category: Private/Tamtama (40%), NCO/Bintara (40%), and Officer/Perwira (20%). This sampling approach ensured adequate representation across all rank levels. The minimum sample size for multiple regression with four predictors, following Hair *et al.*'s [21] recommendation of 10 observations per variable, is 50; the obtained sample of 120 substantially exceeds this threshold, ensuring sufficient statistical power ($1-\beta > 0.80$ at $\alpha = 0.05$).

3.3 Instruments and Measurement

The questionnaire comprised 26 items measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Leadership style was assessed using a modified version of the Leadership Effectiveness and Adaptability Description (LEAD) instrument [1], adapted to the uniformed services context: Telling (X1, 5 items), Selling (X2, 5 items), Participating (X3, 5 items), and Delegating (X4, 5 items). Personnel performance (Y) was measured using a 6-item scale adapted from Bernardin and Russell's [22] performance appraisal dimensions, covering quality of work, quantity of output, timeliness, initiative, teamwork, and professional competence. The conceptual framework of the study is presented in Fig 1.

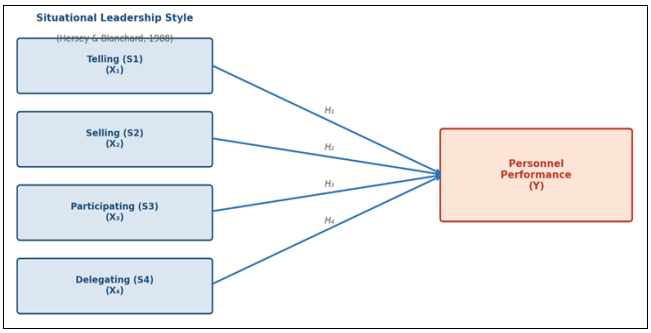

Fig 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

3.4 Validity and Reliability Testing

Content validity was established through expert review by three senior researchers in the field of organizational behavior and leadership. Construct validity was assessed using item-total correlation (Pearson r); items with $r > 0.30$ were retained. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, with a threshold of $\alpha \geq 0.70$ [23]. Table 1 presents the reliability statistics for all constructs.

Table 1: Validity and Reliability Statistics

Construct	N Items	r Range	Cronbach's α	Status
Telling (X1)	5	0.773 – 0.792	0.841	Valid & Reliable
Selling (X2)	5	0.655 – 0.766	0.777	Valid & Reliable
Participating (X3)	5	0.718 – 0.811	0.840	Valid & Reliable
Delegating (X4)	5	0.795 – 0.824	0.867	Valid & Reliable
Performance (Y)	6	0.687 – 0.787	0.823	Valid & Reliable

All items met the validity threshold ($r > 0.30$, $p < 0.001$) and reliability threshold ($\alpha > 0.70$).

3.5 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using Python (v3.11) with the statsmodels, scipy, and scikit-learn libraries, equivalent to SPSS analysis procedures. Analysis proceeded in the following sequence: (1) descriptive statistics; (2) classical assumption tests including normality of residuals (Jarque-Bera test), multicollinearity (Variance Inflation Factor, VIF < 10), heteroscedasticity (Glejser test, $\alpha = 0.05$), and autocorrelation (Durbin-Watson statistic, acceptable range: 1.5–2.5); (3) multiple linear regression analysis; (4) hypothesis testing using t-tests (partial effects, H1–H4) and F-test (simultaneous effect, H5); and (5) coefficient of determination (R^2) to quantify explained variance.

4. Results

4.1 Respondent Profile

Of the 120 respondents, 40.0% were in the Private/Tamtama rank category, 40.0% in NCO/Bintara, and 20.0% in the Officer/Perwira category. The majority had 5–10 years of service tenure (45.0%), followed by fewer than 5 years (30.0%) and more than 10 years (25.0%). In terms of educational background, 45.0% held bachelor's degrees, 25.0% high school, 20.0% diplomas, and 10.0% postgraduate qualifications. The demographic distribution is illustrated in Fig 2.

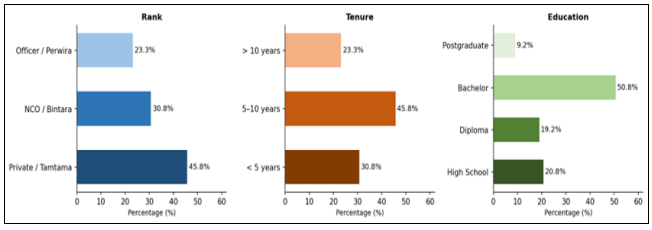

Fig 2: Respondent Demographic Profile (n = 120)

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for all study variables. Mean scores for all leadership style dimensions were above the scale midpoint (3.0), indicating that respondents perceived their supervisors as applying all four situational leadership behaviors to a moderate-to-high degree. Selling (M = 3.795) obtained the highest mean score, followed by Participating (M = 3.617), Delegating (M = 3.468), and Telling (M = 3.407). Personnel performance (M = 3.335, SD = 0.498) also exceeded the scale midpoint. The distributional profiles are depicted in Fig 3.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Median	Max
Telling (X1)	3.407	0.631	1.600	3.400	4.800
Selling (X2)	3.795	0.557	2.400	3.800	5.000
Participating (X3)	3.617	0.584	2.000	3.600	5.000
Delegating (X4)	3.468	0.715	1.800	3.500	5.000
Performance (Y)	3.335	0.498	1.833	3.333	4.833

Note. All scores measured on a five-point Likert scale (1–5); n = 120.

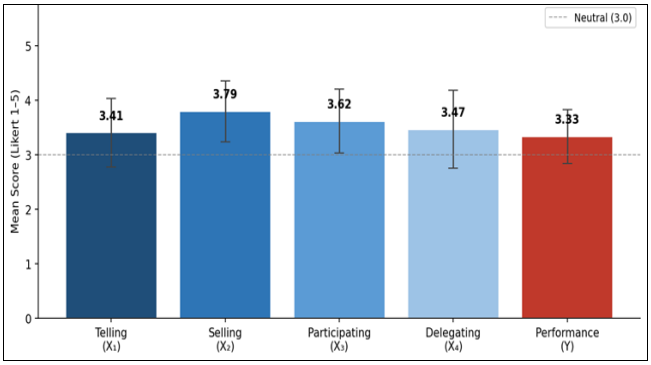

Fig 3: Mean Scores of All Study Variables (±SD)

4.3 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlations among all study variables are presented in Table 3 and visualized in Fig 4. Selling (r = 0.343), Participating (r = 0.312), and Delegating (r = 0.216) exhibited significant positive correlations with personnel performance. Telling showed a weaker but positive correlation (r = 0.189). The four predictor variables showed very low inter-correlations (range: −0.090 to 0.127), supporting the assumption of predictor independence.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Matrix

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Telling (X1)	1.000				
2. Selling (X2)	0.004	1.000			
3. Participating (X3)	-0.050	0.127	1.000		
4. Delegating (X4)	-0.090	-0.007	-0.038	1.000	
5. Performance (Y)	0.189*	0.343***	0.312***	0.216**	1.000

Note. * p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001; n = 120.

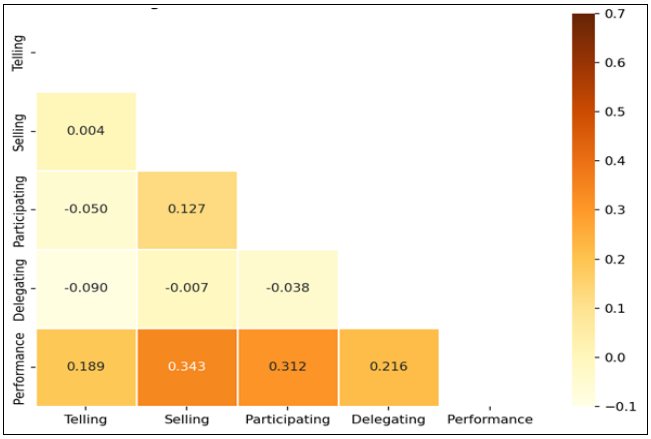

Fig 4: Pearson Correlation Heatmap

4.4 Classical Assumption Tests

All classical OLS regression assumptions were tested prior to hypothesis testing. Results are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Classical Assumption Test Results

Assumption	Test	Statistic / Value	Conclusion
Normality of Residuals	Jarque-Bera	stat = 2.070; p = 0.355	Residuals normally distributed
Multicollinearity	VIF	VIF range: 1.007–1.021	No multicollinearity (VIF < 10)
Heteroscedasticity	Glejser test	F p-value = 0.967	Homoscedastic
Autocorrelation	Durbin-Watson	DW = 1.907	No autocorrelation (1.5–2.5)

Note. All classical OLS assumptions are satisfied; regression results are reliable.

Residual normality diagnostics (histogram and Q-Q plot) are presented in Fig 5. The histogram reveals a near-symmetrical distribution centered near zero, and the Q-Q plot shows data points closely following the theoretical normal line, confirming that the normality assumption holds.

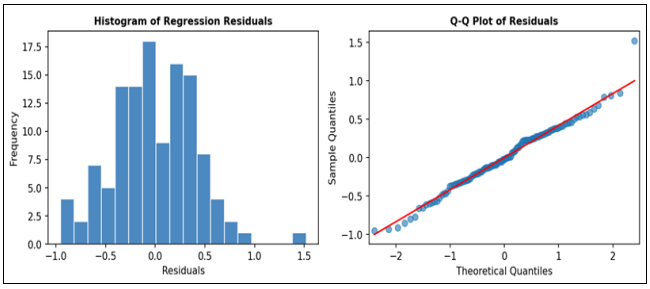

Fig 5: Residual Normality Diagnostics

4.5 Multiple Linear Regression and Hypothesis Testing

The multiple linear regression equation estimated is:

$$\hat{Y} = 0.181 + 0.178X_1 + 0.274X_2 + 0.250X_3 + 0.174X_4$$

Full regression results, including unstandardized and standardized coefficients, standard errors, t-values, and significance levels, are reported in Table 5. The coefficient of determination (R^2 = 0.293) indicates that the four leadership styles collectively explained 29.3% of the variance in personnel performance. The adjusted R^2 of 0.269 accounts for model complexity. The omnibus F-test was statistically significant ($F(4, 115) = 11.926$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the rejection of H5's null hypothesis.

Table 5: Multiple Linear Regression Results

Predictor	β (Unstd.)	SE	β (Std.)	t	p	Decision
Constant	0.181	0.462	—	0.391	0.696	—
Telling (X1)	0.178	0.062	0.112	2.852	0.005**	H1 Supported
Selling (X2)	0.274	0.071	0.152	3.880	< 0.001***	H2 Supported
Participating (X3)	0.250	0.068	0.146	3.704	< 0.001***	H3 Supported
Delegating (X4)	0.174	0.055	0.124	3.168	0.002**	H4 Supported

Note. R^2 = 0.293; Adj. R^2 = 0.269; $F(4, 115) = 11.926$; $p < 0.001$. Dependent variable: Personnel Performance (Y). ** p < .01 *** p < .001.

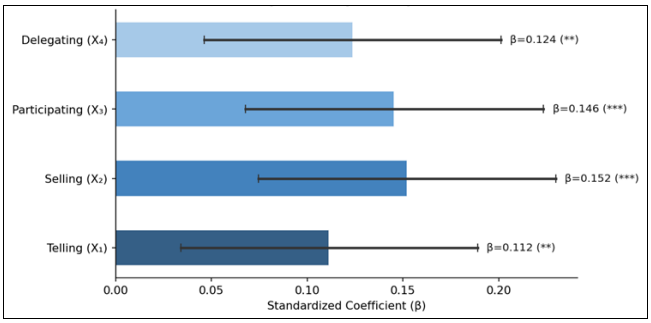

Fig 6: Standardized Regression Coefficients with 95% Confidence Intervals

5. Discussion

5.1 Partial Effects of Leadership Style Dimensions

The results confirm that all four situational leadership dimensions—Telling, Selling, Participating, and Delegating—exert significant positive effects on personnel performance, lending full support to SLT in this uniformed services context. Selling (β = 0.274) and Participating (β = 0.250) emerged as the strongest predictors, suggesting that combining directive guidance with motivational support (Selling) and collaborative decision-making (Participating) are particularly effective for improving performance of uniformed personnel at intermediate competence levels. This is consistent with the findings of Thompson and Vecchio [7] and Pratiwi and Simanjuntak [20].

Delegating (β = 0.174, p = 0.002) also contributed significantly, indicating that empowering high-readiness personnel with greater autonomy enhances their performance. This aligns with Self-Determination Theory [24], which posits that autonomy support is a key driver of intrinsic motivation and sustained high performance. The significant effect of Telling (β = 0.178, p = 0.005), while the smallest standardized effect, confirms that clear task-directive behavior remains important—particularly for new recruits or personnel in unfamiliar operational roles.

5.2 Simultaneous Effect and Explained Variance

The simultaneous F-test result ($F(4,115) = 11.926$, $p < 0.001$) confirms that the four leadership styles jointly and significantly predict performance, supporting H5. The adjusted R^2 of 0.269 indicates that approximately 26.9% of the variance in personnel performance is explained by the four leadership style dimensions. This magnitude of explained variance is consistent with prior leadership-performance meta-analytic estimates [25-26], where leadership accounts for 25–35% of individual performance variance when measured behaviorally. The remaining variance can be attributed to factors not included in this study, such as individual competence, organizational climate, resource availability, and operational stress.

5.3 Practical Implications

The findings carry several practical implications for leadership development in uniformed services organizations. First, training programs should emphasize situational awareness—the capacity to accurately diagnose the readiness level of subordinates and select the appropriate

leadership style. Given the particularly strong effects of Selling and Participating, training curricula should prioritize developing leaders' coaching and collaborative skills alongside traditional command-and-control competencies. Second, career progression systems should incorporate assessment of adaptive leadership behaviors. Third, organizational mentoring structures should pair experienced leaders who demonstrate strong Delegating behaviors with high-performing NCOs and junior officers, fostering a culture of autonomy and professional growth.

5.4 Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design precludes causal inference; longitudinal or experimental designs would strengthen causal claims. Second, the single-unit sampling approach limits generalizability. Third, self-reported performance measures may be susceptible to social desirability bias; future studies should incorporate official performance appraisal records or supervisor ratings as objective criteria. Fourth, potential moderating variables—such as organizational climate, follower readiness levels, and unit cohesion—were not included. Addressing these limitations in future research would advance understanding of situational leadership dynamics in security and defense organizations.

6. Conclusion

This study provides empirical support for Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory [1] in a uniformed services context in Indonesia. Using a quantitative cross-sectional design with a sample of 120 active personnel, the study demonstrates that all four situational leadership style dimensions—Telling, Selling, Participating, and Delegating—exert statistically significant positive influences on personnel performance, both individually and jointly. The four-variable model explained 29.3% of the variance in performance ($F(4,115) = 11.926$, $p < 0.001$), with Selling and Participating emerging as the strongest predictors. These findings underscore the importance of behavioral flexibility and follower-centered leadership in security and defense organizations. Leadership development initiatives that prioritize adaptive style repertoires over uniform command approaches are recommended.

7. References

1. Hersey P, Blanchard KH. Management of organizational behavior: Utilizing human resources. 5th ed. Englewood Cliffs (NJ): Prentice-Hall, 1988.
2. Bass BM, Riggio RE. Transformational leadership. 2nd ed. Mahwah (NJ): Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006.
3. Northouse PG. Leadership: Theory and practice. 9th ed. Thousand Oaks (CA): SAGE Publications, 2021.
4. Burke CS, Stagl KC, Klein C, Goodwin GF, Salas E, Halpin SM. What type of leadership behaviors are functional in teams? A meta-analysis. Leadersh Q. 2006; 17(3):288-307.
5. Yukl G. Leadership in organizations. 8th ed. Upper Saddle River (NJ): Pearson Education, 2013.
6. Graeff CL. Evolution of situational leadership theory: A critical review. Leadersh Q. 1997; 8(2):153-170.
7. Thompson G, Vecchio RP. Situational leadership theory: A test of three versions. Leadersh Q. 2009; 20(5):837-848.
8. Silverthorne C, Wang TH. Situational leadership style as a predictor of success and productivity among Taiwanese business organizations. J Psychol. 2001; 135(4):399-412.
9. Avery GC, Ryan J. Applying situational leadership in Australia. J Manag Dev. 2002; 21(4):242-262.
10. Kumorotomo W. Kinerja aparatur negara dan reformasi birokrasi di Indonesia. J Kebijak Adm Publik. 2015; 19(1):1-14.
11. Haryanto I. Reformasi birokrasi kepolisian dan kinerja organisasi. J Adm Publik. 2018; 15(2):47-62.
12. Hersey P, Blanchard KH. Life-cycle theory of leadership. Train Dev J. 1969; 23(5):26-34.
13. Blanchard KH, Zigarmi D, Nelson RB. Situational leadership after 25 years: A retrospective. J Leadersh Stud. 1993; 1(1):21-36.
14. Campbell JP, McCloy RA, Oppler SH, Sager CE. A theory of performance. In: Schmitt N, Borman WC, editors. Personnel selection in organizations. San Francisco (CA): Jossey-Bass, 1993, 35-70.
15. Borman WC, Motowidlo SJ. Task performance and contextual performance: The meaning for personnel selection research. Hum Perform. 1997; 10(2):99-109.
16. Viswesvaran C, Ones DS. Perspectives on models of job performance. Int J Sel Assess. 2000; 8(4):216-226.
17. Murphy KR, Cleveland JN. Understanding performance appraisal: Social, organizational, and goal-based perspectives. Thousand Oaks (CA): SAGE Publications, 1995.
18. Vecchio RP. Situational leadership theory: An examination of a prescriptive theory. J Appl Psychol. 1987; 72(3):444-451.
19. Susanto AB. Gaya kepemimpinan partisipatif dan dampaknya terhadap kinerja pegawai instansi pemerintah. J Ilmu Adm Organ. 2016; 23(1):1-12.
20. Pratiwi A, Simanjuntak R. Pengaruh gaya kepemimpinan situasional terhadap kinerja anggota satuan TNI. J Manaj Pertahanan. 2020; 6(2):88-102.
21. Hair JF, Black WC, Babin BJ, Anderson RE. Multivariate data analysis. 8th ed. Mason (OH): Cengage Learning, 2019.
22. Bernardin HJ, Russell JEA. Human resource management: An experiential approach. New York (NY): McGraw-Hill, 1993.
23. Nunnally JC, Bernstein IH. Psychometric theory. 3rd ed. New York (NY): McGraw-Hill, 1994.
24. Deci EL, Ryan RM. The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. Psychol Inq. 2000; 11(4):227-268.
25. Judge TA, Piccolo RF, Ilies R. The forgotten ones? The validity of consideration and initiating structure in leadership research. J Appl Psychol. 2004; 89(1):36-51.
26. DeRue DS, Nahrgang JD, Wellman N, Humphrey SE. Trait and behavioral theories of leadership: An integration and meta-analytic test of their relative validity. Pers Psychol. 2011; 64(1):7-52.