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## Business Owner Commitment Mediates the Relationship Between Leadership and MSME Performance

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### Abstract

*In the midst of business dynamics, leaders who integrate these values tend to create a positive work environment, enhance business owner commitment, and drive better performance in MSMEs. This study aims to analyze the impact of value-based leadership on business owner commitment and MSME performance in Purwakarta Regency. The study identifies the extent to which the integration of ethical and moral values in leadership style can enhance the dedication, loyalty, and motivation of business owners. The research population consists of 6,324 MSMEs, with a sample size of 221 MSME owners in Purwakarta Regency, West Java, determined using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error. The analysis was conducted using SmartPLS. The results indicate that value-based leadership does not affect MSME performance but does influence business owner commitment, which in turn affects MSME performance.*

**Keywords:** Value-Based Leadership, Business Owner Commitment, MSME Performance.

### Introduction

In the dynamic world of business, value-based leadership has garnered significant attention, particularly in the management of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) (Hidayat-ur-Rehman & Alsolamy, 2023). This leadership style emphasizes integrating ethical, moral, and strong principles into decision-making processes (Alexander et al., 2024). Leaders who embody these values tend to foster a positive work environment, enhance business owner commitment, and drive better MSME performance (Ismadi, 2019). In Purwakarta Regency, value-based leadership is crucial for addressing competitive challenges and ensuring business sustainability.

Business owner commitment influences dedication, loyalty, and motivation in achieving business goals (Hekmatullah et al., 2021). Value-based leaders are expected to build strong, trust-based relationships with business owners, inspire them, and create a conducive work environment (Yang & Jo, 2022). This, in turn, improves commitment, innovation, productivity, and work effectiveness, positively impacting MSME performance. MSME performance reflects operational success and market competitiveness (Eman et al., 2023).

The primary issue of this study is the low commitment and performance of MSMEs in Purwakarta Regency, which affects business sustainability and growth. Many MSME owners face challenges in maintaining motivation and loyalty, often due to ineffective leadership (Srimulyani et al., 2023). The absence of ethical and moral values in leadership leads to

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dissatisfaction, reduced dedication, and decreased productivity (Ismadi, 2019). Additionally, suboptimal MSME performance indicates obstacles in implementing effective and adaptive business strategies. This situation calls for solutions to enhance commitment and performance through value-based leadership (J. Y. Lee et al., 2024).

This study is significant as value-based leadership has the potential to address these issues effectively. By prioritizing ethical, moral, and strong principles, leaders can create a harmonious and supportive work environment, thereby improving business owner commitment and MSME performance (Siyal et al., 2023). The research aims to provide empirical evidence on the impact of value-based leadership on commitment and performance, offering practical guidance for MSME leaders in Purwakarta to adopt more effective and meaningful leadership practices, ultimately contributing to better business performance and advancing humane, value-oriented leadership theory and practice (Hameed et al., 2023).

The urgency of this research lies in the need to enhance MSME commitment and performance in Purwakarta through effective leadership. In the face of intense business competition and changing market dynamics, MSMEs require leadership that can inspire, motivate, and provide clear direction (Younis & Hussain, 2023). Value-based leadership, integrating ethical and moral principles into daily decision-making and interactions, can create a productive and harmonious work environment (Saif et al., 2024). By boosting business owner commitment, MSMEs can achieve better performance, enhance competitiveness, and make a significant contribution to the local economy (Mo et al., 2023).

This study also addresses inconsistencies in previous research findings. While some studies (Pertiwi et al., n.d.) suggest that value-based leadership significantly impacts performance, others (Srimulyani et al., 2023) indicate the opposite. To bridge this research gap, the study examines business owner commitment as a mediating variable. Transformational Leadership Theory explains how charismatic, visionary, and inspirational leaders can motivate and transform followers to achieve higher performance (Waltré et al., 2023). Transformational leadership focuses on developing strong leader-follower relationships based on trust, individual appreciation, and commitment to shared goals (Mao et al., 2024). This theory helps explain how leadership values affect business owner commitment and MSME performance. By understanding and applying transformational leadership principles, MSME leaders in Purwakarta can create a dynamic, innovative, and results-oriented work environment (J. Y. Lee et al., 2024).

The objective of this study is to analyze the impact of value-based leadership on business owner commitment and MSME performance in Purwakarta Regency. This research aims to identify the extent to which integrating ethical and moral values into leadership styles can enhance business owner dedication, loyalty, and motivation. Additionally, the study measures the influence of value-based leadership on MSME operational effectiveness and competitiveness. Through this approach, it is hoped that effective leadership strategies will be identified, which can be implemented by MSME leaders to improve overall business performance and contribute significantly to the local economy (Pertiwi et al., n.d.).

### **Value Based Leadership**

Value-based leadership emphasizes ethical values, morals, and strong principles in decision-making and interactions with team members (Mathori et al., 2022). Leaders who use this

approach focus on achieving business goals with integrity and social responsibility (Purwanto et al., 2020). Values such as honesty, fairness, empathy, and social responsibility are the basis for leading and building a healthy and ethical organizational culture. Value-based leadership creates a work environment that supports individual and collective growth and encourages behavior that is aligned with the organization's positive values (Fahmi et al., 2021).

By adopting a leadership style based on ethical and moral values, MSME leaders can build strong and trusting relationships with business actors (Hou, 2024). This is expected to increase the dedication and loyalty of business actors to the company, which ultimately improves overall business performance (Moon, 2024). Through understanding and implementing the concept of value-based leadership, MSMEs in Purwakarta are expected to achieve sustainable growth and high competitiveness.

Research by Pertiwi et al. (n.d.) shows that value-based leadership has a significant impact on company performance. Research by Ismadi (2019) also explains that value-based leadership has an impact on business actor commitment.

H1: Value-based leadership has an impact on MSME performance.

H2: Value-based leadership has an impact on business actor commitment.

### **Business Actor Commitment**

Entrepreneur commitment refers to the level of dedication, loyalty, and involvement of business owners and managers in running business operations (Nelly et al., 2024). This commitment reflects the extent to which they are willing to fully contribute to achieving company goals, even when facing challenges and difficulties (Pham et al., 2024). Entrepreneur commitment is divided into three main dimensions: affective commitment (strong emotional feelings towards the company), continuance commitment (awareness of the costs associated with leaving the company), and normative commitment (feelings of obligation to stay with the company) (C.-C. Lee et al., 2023). High levels of entrepreneur commitment are usually associated with increased productivity, loyalty, and business sustainability (Nuzulla & Mubarak, n.d.). Value-based leadership, which emphasizes integrity, ethics, and social responsibility, is expected to increase entrepreneur commitment by creating a more supportive and inspiring work environment (Hou, 2024). Leaders who adopt these values can build better relationships with business actors, provide a sense of purpose and meaning in their work, and encourage them to contribute more to achieving business goals (Hidayat-ur-Rehman & Alsolamy, 2023). By understanding this relationship, it is hoped that more effective leadership strategies can be found to improve the commitment and performance of MSMEs in Purwakarta.

Research by Yang & Jo (2022) shows that commitment affects company performance. In addition, research by Ismadi (2019) also explains that commitment affects performance.

H3: Business actor commitment affects MSME performance.

### **MSME Performance**

MSME performance shows the ability of micro, small, and medium enterprises to achieve business goals through indicators such as increased sales, profitability, operational efficiency, and competitiveness in the market (Hekmatullah et al., 2021). MSME performance is measured from the aspects of revenue growth, cost management, productivity, and the quality of products

or services produced (Eman et al., 2023). In addition, performance includes non-financial aspects such as customer satisfaction, employee loyalty, and innovation (Waltré et al., 2023). Good performance indicates that MSMEs are able to operate effectively and efficiently, face market challenges, and take advantage of opportunities for sustainable growth (Tseng et al., 2024). Leadership that emphasizes ethical, moral, and social responsibility values creates a conducive work environment for improved performance (Mathori et al., 2022). With a higher commitment from business actors, it is hoped that they will be more motivated to innovate, increase productivity, and manage business operations more efficiently (Hameed et al., 2023).

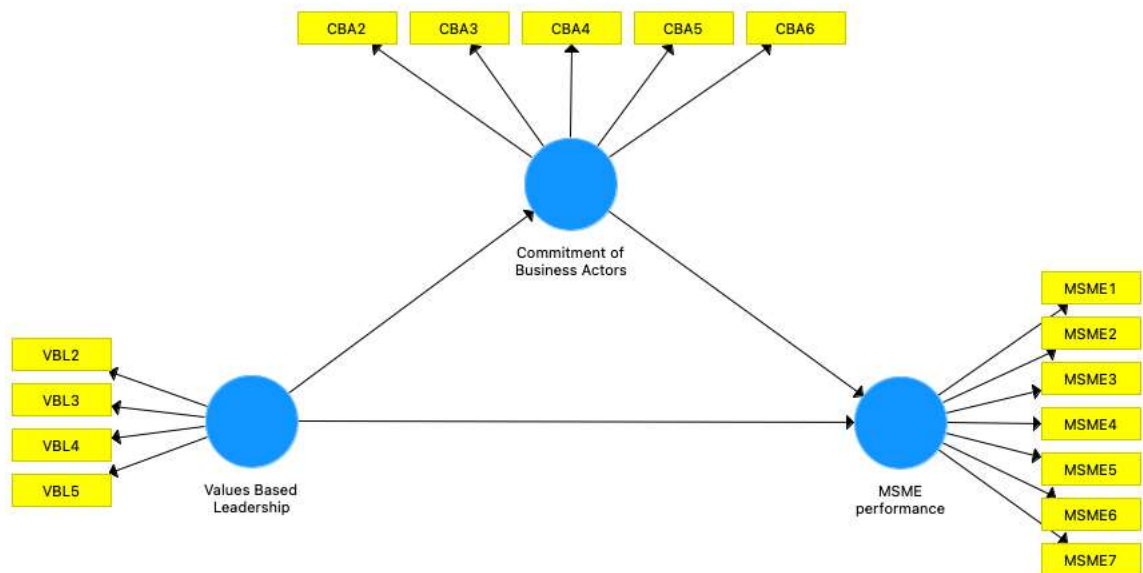


Figure 1. Research Model

## Method

This study was conducted on MSMEs in Purwakarta Regency by providing questionnaires to MSME actors using Google Form. The total population of MSMEs in Purwakarta Regency was 6,324, using the Slovin formula and an inaccuracy level of 5%, resulting in a sample size of 221 respondents. The Likert scale of 1-5 was used in this questionnaire, with 5 questions for value-based leadership, 6 questions for business actor commitment, and 7 questions for MSME performance. This study used Partial Least Square (PLS) model analysis. The research data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the characteristics of respondents such as age, gender, and education level. Validity testing was carried out using loading factors and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) with values > 0.5. Reliability was measured by composite reliability with values > 0.6 (Ghozali, 2015). The PLS-SEM method was used to test the research hypothesis. Inner model, R-Square value, and path coefficient were used to test the relationship between latent variables. Testing was continued with a statistical bootstrap test. The results of the data analysis will answer all research questions.

## Results

The first step taken is to measure the outer model to find out how valid and reliable the indicators

are. The loading factor value must be greater than 0.7, and if the correlation value is less than 0.7 then the indicator is removed. Test results show that all indicators are greater than 0.7. This means that the construct has good convergent validity.

Table 1. Variables, Indicators, Loading Factor, AVEs and Composite Reliability

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Loading Factors Running</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>
VBL	VBL2	0,846	0,884	0,776	0,943
	VBL3	0,911			
	VBL4	0,902			
	VBL5	0,790			
CBA	CBA2	0,805	0,852	0,784	0,932
	CBA3	0,793			
	CBA4	0,840			
	CBA5	0,829			
	CBA6	0,768			
MSME	MSME1	0,768	0,832	0,734	0,915
	MSME2	0,848			
	MSME3	0,828			
	MSME4	0,829			
	MSME5	0,755			
	MSME6	0,807			
	MSME7	0,788			

Source: Processed data, 2024

The next step is to look at the R-square to test the predicted relationship between hidden variables or structural models. Figure 2 shows the structural model, and Table 2 shows the R-square value. The R-square value of Commitment of Business Actors is 0.696 or 69.6%. Then MSME performance is 0.694 or 69.4%.

Table 2. Value of R Square

	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>
<b>Commitment of Business Actors</b>	0,696	0,695
<b>MSME performance</b>	0,694	0,691

Source: Processed data, 2024

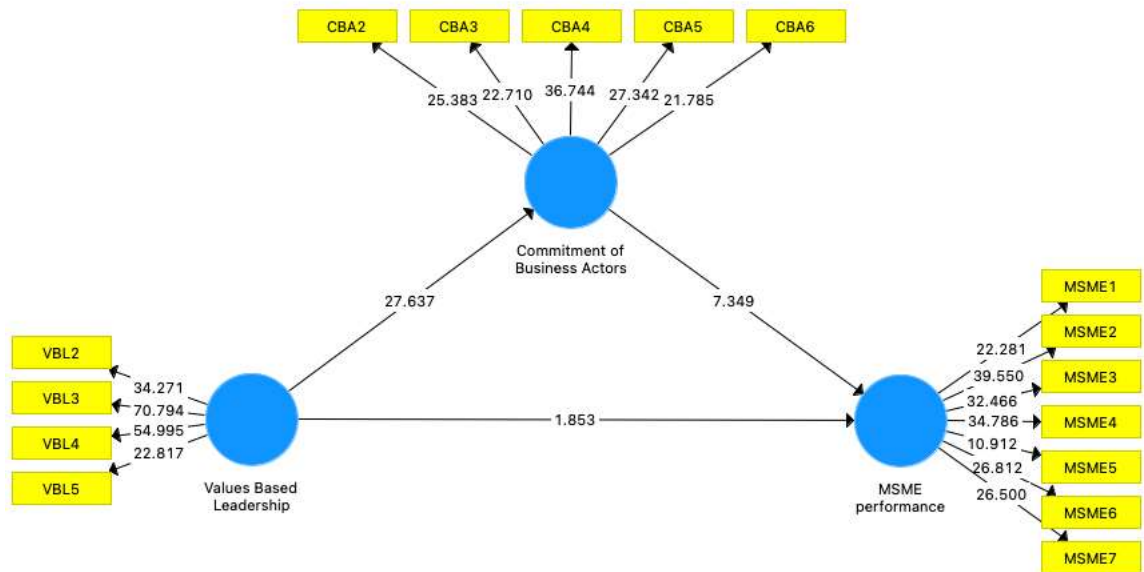


Figure 2. Structural Equation Model

Table 3: Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis	Relationships	Original Sample	T.Statistics	P-Value	Result
1	Values Based Leadership -> MSME performance	0,185	1,853	0,064	Reject
2	Values Based Leadership -> Commitment of Business Actors	0,835	27,637	0,000	Accepted
3	Commitment of Business Actors -> MSME performance	0,672	7,349	0,000	Accepted

Source: Processed data, 2024

## Discussion

### Value-Based Leadership's Impact on MSME Performance

The first hypothesis, which posits that value-based leadership influences MSME performance, was not supported by the findings. This is due to a P-Value of 0.064, which exceeds the alpha level of 0.05, leading to the rejection of the hypothesis. The results indicate that value-based leadership does not significantly affect MSME performance in Purwakarta Regency. Although

value-based leadership emphasizes the importance of integrity, ethics, and social responsibility in decision-making and team interactions, it does not directly enhance MSME performance. One possible reason for this is that ethical and moral values may not always translate into concrete and effective actions in daily operations. Business owners might struggle to consistently apply these values amidst the pressures and complexities of business operations.

Moreover, value-based leadership might require more time to show its positive impact on business performance. The process of embedding ethical and moral values necessitates profound organizational cultural changes, which cannot be achieved quickly. MSME owners in Purwakarta may need more immediate interventions related to managerial capacity, financial management, and access to markets and technology to quickly and effectively improve their performance. Without adequate support in these practical aspects, value-based leadership alone may not be sufficient to drive significant changes in business performance.

This research also suggests that external factors such as market conditions, government regulations, and access to resources might have a greater influence on MSME performance compared to internal factors like leadership style. Therefore, while value-based leadership remains crucial for fostering a healthy and ethical organizational culture, the primary focus for improving MSME performance in Purwakarta might need to shift towards providing more concrete and relevant external support tailored to their operational needs. These findings offer valuable insights for stakeholders to design more comprehensive and holistic programs and policies to support MSME growth.

### **Value-Based Leadership's Impact on Entrepreneurial Commitment**

The second hypothesis, which posits that value-based leadership influences entrepreneurial commitment, is supported by the findings. The P-Value of 0.000 is less than the alpha level of 0.05, meaning the hypothesis is accepted. The research reveals that value-based leadership has a positive and significant impact on entrepreneurial commitment in Purwakarta Regency. Leaders who implement ethical, moral, and social responsibility values in their leadership successfully create a more supportive and inspirational work environment. This enhances entrepreneurs' sense of attachment and loyalty to their company. When entrepreneurs feel that their leaders uphold positive values, they are more likely to be committed and willing to work hard to achieve shared goals.

This commitment is reflected in various operational aspects, including increased dedication to daily tasks, a desire to continuously learn and grow, and a willingness to actively participate in activities that support company advancement. Entrepreneurs who feel valued and respected by their leaders are also more likely to have a positive and proactive attitude towards business challenges. Thus, value-based leadership not only fosters a stronger relationship between leaders and entrepreneurs but also creates an organizational climate conducive to the growth and development of both individuals and the company as a whole.

The findings suggest that strong leadership values can serve as a powerful intrinsic motivator for entrepreneurs. When leaders exemplify integrity and ethics in every aspect of their leadership, entrepreneurs feel inspired to emulate such behavior, which in turn strengthens their commitment to the company. This strong commitment is crucial for the sustainability and long-term success of MSMEs in Purwakarta. With value-oriented leaders, entrepreneurs are more likely to remain loyal and motivated despite facing various business difficulties and

uncertainties. These findings underscore the importance of integrating ethical and moral values into leadership styles to foster higher levels of commitment among entrepreneurs.

### **Entrepreneurial Commitment's Impact on MSME Performance**

The third hypothesis, testing the influence of entrepreneurial commitment on MSME performance, is confirmed as true. The P-Value of 0.000 is less than the alpha level of 0.05, thus the hypothesis is accepted. This research demonstrates that entrepreneurial commitment has a positive and significant impact on MSME performance in Purwakarta Regency. High levels of entrepreneurial commitment are evidenced by dedication, loyalty, and hard work towards achieving company goals. Committed entrepreneurs are more proactive in identifying opportunities, solving problems, and implementing strategies to enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness. They are also more likely to invest in skill and knowledge development, which leads to improvements in product and service quality.

Entrepreneurial commitment plays a crucial role in creating a positive and productive work culture within the company. With high commitment, entrepreneurs can build harmonious working relationships with employees, business partners, and customers. This enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty, and fosters a supportive and collaborative work environment. A good work culture contributes to improved MSME performance, including increased sales, profitability, and market competitiveness. Thus, entrepreneurial commitment is a key pillar in driving sustainable business performance.

The study also indicates that entrepreneurial commitment is linked to the ability to innovate and adapt to market changes. Highly committed entrepreneurs are more likely to seek new ways to improve their products, processes, and services. They are also quicker to respond to market changes. This ability to innovate and adapt allows MSMEs in Purwakarta to maintain their relevance and address emerging challenges. These findings emphasize the importance of entrepreneurial commitment not only for current performance but also for the long-term sustainability and growth of MSMEs.

### **Conclusion**

The objective of this study was to analyze the impact of value-based leadership on entrepreneurial commitment and MSME performance in Purwakarta Regency. The research aimed to determine the extent to which integrating ethical and moral values into leadership styles could enhance entrepreneurs' dedication, loyalty, and motivation. The findings indicate that while value-based leadership does not have a direct impact on MSME performance, it significantly influences entrepreneurial commitment, which in turn affects MSME performance.

However, this study has limitations, including its exclusive focus on MSMEs in Purwakarta Regency, which may not reflect the conditions of MSMEs across Indonesia. Variations in MSME characteristics across different regions or industry sectors might lead to different outcomes concerning entrepreneurial commitment and MSME performance. Additionally, the study utilized a cross-sectional approach, which only assesses the relationship between variables at a single point in time. Longitudinal research could provide further insights into changes in entrepreneurial commitment and MSME performance over time. Limitations in sample size and data collection methods could also affect the generalizability of the research findings.

Future research is recommended to explore additional factors influencing entrepreneurial



commitment, such as local government support, more focused education and training, and other external factors. Further studies could also broaden the sample scope, considering variations in MSME size and industry sectors to obtain a more comprehensive view. Moreover, future research might delve deeper into how organizational culture developed through value-based leadership affects entrepreneurial commitment and overall MSME performance.

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