# THE HERSEY-BLANCHARD SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP MODEL IN ENHANCING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AT THE CLASS IIA WOMEN'S CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION IN BANDUNG



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#### **ABSTRACT**

Correctional Institutions (Lapas) encounter several challenges related to organizational complexity, such as high population density, limited human resources, and significant work pressure, all of which impact employee performance. In this context, the application of the Hersey-Blanchard situational leadership model is an important strategy to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of services at the Class IIA Bandung Women's Prison. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach that aims to analyze adaptive role leadership in managing diverse employees and adjusting leadership styles according to their level of readiness and competence. The results of the study indicate that situational leadership style is able to strengthen work motivation, improve communication, and improve employee performance through an appropriate adjustment approach according to the situation at hand. This model is expected to provide a positive contribution in creating a more productive, adaptive work environment that is able to face organizational challenges effectively.

Keywords: Leadership; Employee Performance; Correctional Institutions



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#### INTRODUCTION

Correctional institutions (prisons) operate within a complex administrative and social framework. Their core mandate is the rehabilitation and reintegration of inmates into society as productive individuals (Joanti & Sumardhani, 2024; Sabila, 2022). As public bureaucracies, prisons are expected to maintain high standards of professionalism in delivering guidance and security services. A major challenge in this context is overcrowding, which severely strains resources and staff capacity. For instance, the Class IIA Women's Correctional Institution in Bandung houses 428 inmates but is served by only 87 staff members, leading to substantial pressures on rehabilitation programs (Sabila, 2022). This discrepancy reflects a broader issue of insufficient organizational capacity in managing correctional services effectively.

Given these challenges, the role of prison staff becomes critical. Their performance is not only shaped by individual competence but also by internal factors such as organizational culture and leadership style, as well as external pressures like policy constraints and social dynamics (Susanto et al., 2024; Basyir et al., 2023). Effective leadership is needed to navigate the high workload, limited resources, and emotionally charged environment (Heryyanoor & Febriana, 2023). Situational leadership, which adapts to the readiness and competence of subordinates (Rohman et al., 2023; Hersey & Blanchard, as cited in Hairiah & Asy'ari, 2024), emerges as a relevant approach. This model includes four styles—directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating—and emphasizes the leader's capacity to assess situations and apply appropriate methods (Fitriani & Suradinata, 2023; Atiqoh et al., 2023).

Despite existing research on leadership in public organizations, there remains a gap in studies applying situational leadership models in prison settings, particularly in women's correctional institutions with multicultural and high-pressure environments. Research by Susanto et al. (2024) and Qurtubi (2024) underscores the potential of situational leadership in improving organizational sustainability and employee performance. However, its contextual effectiveness in correctional settings, such as the Class IIA Women's Prison in Bandung, is underexplored. This study aims to investigate how the Hersey-Blanchard situational leadership model enhances staff performance in such environments. It also seeks to determine how leadership adaptation can address issues like job dissatisfaction, task imbalance, and ineffective communication that issues previously identified as key stressors in prison staff performance (Dalimunthe & Putriekapuja, 2024; Heryyanoor & Febriana, 2023; Az-Zahroh et al., 2023).

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

Research by Hakim, et al. (2021) analyzed the application of situational leadership styles in PT. BPR Purwosari Anugerah by employing the Hersey and Blanchard situational leadership theory as the framework. This study aimed to assess the leadership styles used by the heads of operational, general, administrative, and marketing divisions in relation to the maturity level of their subordinates. The results revealed discrepancies between theoretical expectations and practical implementation, where for example, the marketing and administrative divisions applied consultation styles despite the subordinates' high maturity, which according to theory should be handled using a delegating leadership style. This mismatch led to employees feeling overwhelmed and lacking autonomy, indicating that leaders often failed to align their leadership styles with the actual competence and commitment levels of employees. This study highlights the complexity of implementing situational leadership effectively in organizational contexts, where

cultural and communication factors often influence leadership behavior beyond the ideal theoretical model.

Research by Qurtubi (2024) focused on exploring the role of situational leadership in enhancing team performance and satisfaction using a literature review method. The research utilized Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership theory to examine how leaders' adaptability in adjusting their leadership style to various situations influences team dynamics. The findings showed that situational leadership has a positive correlation with team performance and team member satisfaction, particularly when leaders accurately read situations and respond with the appropriate leadership approach. Key factors such as effective communication, conflict management, and appropriate task distribution were identified as essential in optimizing performance under situational leadership. However, challenges like resistance to change and difficulties in correctly diagnosing situations were also found as barriers to effective implementation. This study reinforces the importance of leader flexibility and responsiveness in modern organizational management to foster productivity and satisfaction.

Research by Az-Zahroh (2023) examined the influence of situational leadership on employee job satisfaction through a literature review approach, using Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership model as the theoretical basis. The study aimed to understand how leaders' adaptability in leadership styles affects employee satisfaction levels. The results demonstrated that situational leadership could significantly improve job satisfaction by ensuring that leadership approaches are adjusted according to the needs, competence, and commitment of the employees. It was found that situational leadership enables clearer task management, supports effective control over work processes, and creates an environment where employees feel their roles are understood and supported. The research concluded that situational leadership, when applied effectively, contributes to a healthier organizational climate and increased employee satisfaction.

#### **METHOD**

This study adopted a qualitative descriptive research approach, which emphasizes understanding social phenomena from the perspective of the subjects, focusing on the processes, experiences, and meanings constructed in their natural context (Fiantika, 2022). The theory applied in this study was developed inductively, allowing the researcher to derive concepts and patterns from the field data rather than applying preestablished theoretical frameworks. The scope of this research centered on the implementation of the Hersey-Blanchard situational leadership model in enhancing staff performance at the Class IIA Bandung Women's Correctional Institution (Lapas Perempuan Kelas IIA Bandung). This institution was purposefully selected due to its unique organizational characteristics and challenges, such as high workloads, limited human resources, and the distinctive dynamics of managing female inmates, which present a relevant context for exploring the effectiveness of situational leadership practices.

The population of the study consisted of employees working under the Guidance Section for Inmates and Students (Binadik) within the Lapas Perempuan Kelas IIA Bandung. The selected sample included the Head of the Binadik Section and seven staff members directly involved in inmate rehabilitation activities, making a total of eight participants. The sample size was determined using purposive sampling, based on specific criteria such as the participants' strategic role in implementing situational

leadership and their active engagement in the rehabilitation process (Tojiri et al., 2023). This technique ensured that only those who possessed in-depth knowledge and practical experience related to the research topic were included in the study, aligning with the principles of qualitative inquiry that prioritize data richness over statistical generalizability.

Data collection was conducted using multiple methods, including in-depth semi-structured interviews, direct observation, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted with the eight selected participants, guided by an interview framework based on Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership theory, specifically focusing on indicators of task behavior and relationship behavior. Observations were made to capture the actual leadership practices in daily work activities, while internal institutional documents were analyzed to provide additional insights and support triangulation of data. Data analysis employed the Miles and Huberman interactive model (Darmawan & Roselini, 2022), involving the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data were organized using spreadsheet software and presented thematically to identify leadership style patterns. The findings were then compared to the situational leadership curve of Hersey-Blanchard, using a customized 1-9 scale categorization to systematically assess the alignment between leadership behaviors and staff readiness levels, ensuring a detailed and objective analysis of the collected data.

Table 1
Guidelines for Determining Task Behavior and Relationship Behavior in Situational Leadership by the Head of Binadik Section at LPP Bandung

Scale	Task Behaviour Criteria	Relationship Behaviour Criteria
2	Very Extremely Low The Head of Binadik provides almost no direction or supervision to employees. All work matters are entirely handed over to the employees.  Very Extremely Low Communication with	Very Extremely Low Communication with employees is minimal. There is no motivation or coaching provided. Conflicts are left entirely for employees to resolve on their own.  Very Extremely Low Communication with
	employees is minimal. There is no motivation or coaching provided. Conflicts are left entirely for employees to resolve on their own.	employees is minimal. There is no motivation or coaching provided. Conflicts are left entirely for employees to resolve on their own.
3	Low The Head of Binadik begins to delegate certain tasks to specific employees with minimal direction. Supervision is done occasionally.	Low Communication is limited to certain employees. Motivation and guidance are minimal. Conflict handling remains reactive.
4	Low Communication is limited to certain employees. Motivation and guidance are minimal. Conflict handling remains reactive.	Fairly Low Two-way communication is conducted selectively. Motivation is given to specific employees. Conflict solutions are provided when necessary.
5	Fairly Low Two-way communication is conducted selectively. Motivation is given to specific employees. Conflict solutions are provided when necessary.	Moderate Two-way communication is conducted with some employees. Motivation is given situationally. Conflict handling is not yet consistent.
6	Fairly High The Head of Binadik provides direction through senior staff and conducts direct or indirect supervision periodically.	Fairly High Two-way communication starts to be conducted regularly with many employees. Motivation is given more frequently. Conflict handling becomes more structured.
7	High Instructions are given directly to key employees. Supervision is conducted routinely, though not constantly.	High Two-way communication is regular. Employees feel heard and empowered. Conflicts are resolved quickly with the assistance of the Head of Binadik.



- 8 Very High Instructions are routinely provided by the Head of Binadik, either directly or through staff. Intensive supervision is conducted daily.
- 9 Extremely High The Head of Binadik always provides direct instructions and conducts daily supervision without delegating authority.

Very High Comprehensive two-way communication. Employees are consistently motivated and coached. Conflicts are handled promptly and solution-focused.

Extremely High Open and intensive communication with all employees. Motivation and conflict solutions are always available and continuous.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### **Data Analysis**

In-depth interviews were conducted with the officers as a follow-up to the initial data collection. These interviews were carefully designed based on the preliminary findings derived from the quantitative method. This approach aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the issues identified earlier. By combining both methods, the study ensured a more comprehensive analysis of the research problem.

Table 2
Recapitulation of Interview Results on the Situational Leadership Practices of the Head of Binadik at LPP Bandung

No	Leadership Style (S1-S4)	Adjusted Ouestion	Staff Statements
1	Telling/Directing (S1)	How are tasks assigned and decisions made by the Head of Binadik to enhance work productivity under pressure?	<ul> <li>"In emergency situations, the Head provides direct instructions so we can act swiftly and productively." (Informant 1 – productivity)</li> <li>"She makes firm decisions when time is tight, and this reduces confusion in high-pressure situations." (Informant 2 – responsiveness)</li> </ul>
			- "The clarity of her decisions makes it easier to complete tasks efficiently." (Informant 3 – professionalism)



2 Selling/Coaching (S2)

How are clear yet adaptable work procedures implemented by the Head of Binadik to support your responsiveness to challenges?

- "The procedures are clear yet responsive to realtime conditions, which helps us stay efficient when facing sudden changes." (Informant 3 – responsiveness)
- "Even in tight situations, I can adapt because the rules are not overly rigid." (Informant 1 productivity)
- "Clarity in procedures supports consistency, while flexibility enables quick problem-solving under pressure." (Informant 2 – professionalism)

How does the Head of Binadik facilitate training to improve professional competencies and readiness in facing new challenges?

- "We are always encouraged to join relevant training programs to upgrade our skills." (Informant 3 – professionalism)
- "I was able to join technical workshops that enhanced my responsiveness and decision-making." (Informant 2 – responsiveness)
- "The Head ensures we are equipped with knowledge that supports both individual and team productivity." (Informant 1 – productivity)



3	Participating	
	(S3)	

How does the Head of Binadik foster a secure and supportive work environment to enhance teamwork and morale?

- "The workplace feels like a second home. This closeness helps us collaborate more openly." (Informant 2 teamwork)
- "Because we feel psychologically safe, it's easier to give and receive feedback constructively." (Informant 1 – professionalism)
- "Support during stressful periods makes us feel that our efforts are recognized, encouraging discipline." (Informant 3 – discipline)

How does the Head of Binadik accommodate your personal and professional needs to improve professionalism and discipline?

- "The Head of Binadik shows understanding by allowing schedule flexibility, which helps us stay disciplined despite personal demands." (Informant 2 – discipline)
- "When I encountered personal difficulties, the Head still encouraged me to contribute meaningfully to the team." (Informant 1 – teamwork)
- "She considers our mental readiness before assigning tasks, which helps me stay professional in high-pressure moments." (Informant 3 professionalism)

How does the Head of Binadik ensure fairness in treatment and task distribution to promote discipline and collaboration?

- "The same standards apply to everyone, and this encourages me to stay disciplined." (Informant 3 discipline)
- "Fairness helps us work more cohesively as a team, knowing no one receives preferential treatment." (Informant 2 – teamwork)
- "I appreciate being treated equally regardless of seniority—it motivates me to contribute professionally." (Informant 1 – professionalism)

In what ways does the Head of Binadik promote staff collaboration and joint problem-solving to strengthen teamwork?

- "We often work in small groups to resolve issues, and the Head facilitates open discussions without imposing top-down control." (Informant 1 – teamwork)
- "Her inclusive approach allows ideas to flow freely and makes collaboration more effective." (Informant 3 – teamwork)

# 4 Delegating (S4)

In what ways does the Head of Binadik entrust you with responsibilities to enhance your work productivity and confidence?

- "We feel that the Head of Binadik treats us as equals, blending with us and fostering solidarity. The approach is very humanistic, which makes us feel trusted and more confident to perform our duties independently." (Informant 2 productivity)
- "I'm often assigned to manage tasks independently, which boosts my self-reliance and confidence." (Informant 1 – professionalism)
- "Through the given autonomy, I've learned to better prioritize tasks and take accountability." (Informant 3 – discipline)

Leadership style refers to the approach a leader takes to influence, guide, and motivate their team members to achieve organizational goals. It encompasses the way leaders communicate, make decisions, delegate tasks, and foster relationships within the team. A leader's style can significantly impact the work environment, employee morale, and overall organizational success. One of the most widely recognized frameworks for understanding leadership styles is the Situational Leadership Model, developed by Hersey and Blanchard. This model emphasizes the importance of adapting leadership behavior based on the readiness level of the followers, which includes their ability and willingness to perform tasks (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982 *cit* Hakim et al. 2021).

The telling/directing style (S1) has been implemented by the Head of Binadik when addressing staff with low competence and low motivation (R1). In practice, this is reflected in the way new employees at LPP Bandung are given structured guidance, particularly regarding the use of SDP applications, inmate rehabilitation mechanisms, and conflict handling procedures. It was conveyed by staff that instructions are delivered in a clear, step-by-step manner, accompanied by strict supervision. The importance of such directive leadership in early work phases has been emphasized, particularly to ensure procedural compliance and reduce errors (Irpan et al., 2022). The relevance of this approach is reinforced in correctional settings that demand strict adherence to operational standards, where clarity of instruction builds discipline and procedural loyalty (Az-Zahroh et al., 2023). Moreover, it has been argued that structured supervision aids in shaping systematic work orientation and responsible task execution (Hairiah & Asy'ari, 2024).

The selling/coaching style (S2) has been applied in situations where staff demonstrate high motivation but lack sufficient task mastery (R2). Staff responses revealed that the Head of Binadik provides clear directions while maintaining open communication and emotional support to guide employees handling sensitive responsibilities, such as reintegration and rehabilitation programs. It has been noted that such duality of structure and support helps sustain morale while bridging competence gaps (Hakim et al., 2021). Within the context of LPP Bandung, this approach is particularly effective in reducing anxiety during new task transitions. The strategic balance between instruction and engagement has been described as essential for reducing resistance to learning and strengthening interpersonal dynamics in multicultural bureaucratic environments (Dalimunthe & Putriekapuja, 2024). Additionally, emotional support from leadership has been identified as a catalyst for enhancing professionalism during the developmental phase of staff careers (Indah et al., 2024).

The participating style (S3) has been consistently demonstrated in interactions with staff who are competent but exhibit fluctuating levels of commitment (R3). It has been reported that the Head of Binadik regularly involves staff in decision-making forums, especially when planning inmate development programs. Staff indicated that through routine meetings, they are encouraged to express challenges and offer suggestions, thereby promoting a collaborative and democratic work climate. The relevance of participatory leadership in dynamic institutions has been emphasized, especially for reinforcing collective responsibility and improving communication (Rodić & Marić, 2021). Furthermore, it has been argued that intensive team dialogue fosters group cohesion and minimizes the likelihood of horizontal tensions (Qurtubi, 2024). In such contexts, participatory approaches have also been found to encourage emotional

investment and sustained productivity within public institutions (Fitriani & Suradinata, 2023).

The delegating style (S4) has been employed for staff with both high competence and strong motivation (R4), particularly those who have gained seniority and experience. According to staff statements, the Head of Binadik entrusts these individuals with full autonomy in managing correctional programs or administrative processes. It has been emphasized that delegation enhances efficiency while fostering a sense of ownership and initiative (Hakim et al., 2021). This practice aligns with the view that professional autonomy reinforces employee accountability and institutional loyalty (Heryyanoor & Febriana, 2023). Moreover, the act of trusting competent staff with independent tasks has been shown to build resilience and drive high performance under pressure (Fitriani & Suradinata, 2023). At LPP Bandung, such delegation reflects a mature leadership approach aimed at optimizing human resources by cultivating strategic independence and performance accountability.

Respond better to supportive and delegative styles that grant autonomy and trust. These leadership styles, when applied contextually, contribute significantly to improving productivity, professionalism, discipline, teamwork, and resilience under pressure. Therefore, effective leadership at LPP Bandung must be dynamic and adaptive, matching the leadership style to the specific developmental level of each staff member in order to optimize overall organizational performance.

Work productivity has been identified as a key factor in evaluating employee performance, particularly in light of the disproportional ratio between inmates and staff at LPP Bandung. In this context, productivity is not only assessed based on quantitative output but also on efficiency, timeliness, and quality of work. It has been emphasized that productivity is greatly influenced by leadership that integrates vision with operational practices focused on both outcomes and processes (Az-Zahroh et al., 2023). Additionally, it has been stated that structural pressures, when not accompanied by emotional support and fair task delegation, can negatively impact productivity (Heryyanoor & Febriana, 2023). Task delegation based on employee readiness has been proposed as an adaptive strategy to sustain productivity (Susanto et al., 2024). Thus, in the case of LPP Bandung, productivity enhancement depends not only on technical skills but also on adaptive leadership and systems that accommodate structural challenges.

Professionalism has been reflected in the responsibility, integrity, and commitment shown by employees, especially those at a high readiness level. It has been noted that professionalism develops from collective values shaped by leadership that models moral responsibility and consistency (Rohman et al., 2023). Employees classified as R4 (able and confident) have demonstrated autonomous and ethical work behavior, while those at R2–R3 readiness levels often require additional motivation and role clarity. A decline in professionalism has been associated with a lack of participatory space and psychological support in the work environment (Heryyanoor & Febriana, 2023). Furthermore, it has been asserted that consistent and responsive leadership plays a pivotal role in maintaining professionalism by fostering intrinsic motivation and providing contextual support (Qurtubi, 2024).

Employee discipline has been recognized as a critical element in maintaining order and operational efficiency within LPP Bandung. High-readiness staff have consistently adhered to work schedules, standard procedures, and reporting deadlines. However, issues such as tardiness, work rule violations, and over-reliance on supervisors have been observed among employees with R2 and R3 readiness levels. It has been stated that discipline is shaped not only by external control but also by internalized values

fostered through fair and humanistic leadership (Hairiah & Asy'ari, 2024). Moreover, it has been emphasized that structural pressures, if unaccompanied by psychological support, can significantly reduce workplace discipline (Fitriani & Suradinata, 2023). Therefore, the enforcement of discipline requires consistent monitoring and a leadership approach that adapts to the varied readiness of individual staff members.

Teamwork ability has proven essential in ensuring the smooth coordination of interdepartmental tasks such as rehabilitation programs, religious activities, and facility security. It has been reported that effective teamwork arises from role clarity, open communication, and leadership that is sensitive to individual backgrounds and needs (Qurtubi, 2024). High-readiness employees have shown initiative and actively contributed to team goals, whereas those at R3 often need more structured guidance during crises. Disruptions in teamwork have been linked to overlapping responsibilities and miscommunication. A collaborative and flexible structure has been suggested as a mechanism to strengthen teamwork, especially in high-stakes environments such as correctional facilities (Az-Zahroh et al., 2023). Accordingly, it has been concluded that sustaining effective teamwork requires not only formal assignments but also recognition of individual contributions and leadership that fosters collaboration (Heryyanoor & Febriana, 2023).

Response to pressure and challenges has served as an important indicator of the psychological and professional resilience of staff members. Employees at LPP Bandung operate under high-pressure conditions including inmate overcapacity and limited human resources. It has been found that R4-level employees manage stress effectively, showing composure and rapid response in conflict or emergency situations. In contrast, those at R3 readiness levels have exhibited emotional fatigue, reduced focus, and difficulties coping with ongoing pressure. It has been indicated that prolonged work-related stress undermines performance unless addressed through supportive leadership (Fitriani & Suradinata, 2023). It has also been pointed out that leaders who recognize their subordinates' emotional needs are more successful in building resilience (Hairiah & Asy'ari, 2024). Thus, the ability to respond to challenges has been deemed contingent upon leadership that is empathetic, flexible, and capable of serving as a psychological anchor for staff (Qurtubi, 2024).

The role of the situational leadership model implemented by Kasi Binadik at LPP Bandung plays a crucial part in enhancing employee performance amidst the structural and operational pressures of the correctional facility. This model, characterized by its adaptability, aligns the leadership style with the readiness levels of employees, covering both competence and commitment. According to Hersey and Blanchard, effective leadership is determined by the leader's ability to adjust their leadership style based on the situation and the needs of subordinates (Hakim et al., 2021). In LPP Bandung, Kasi Binadik employs a flexible leadership approach, which includes directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating styles depending on the readiness of the employee. As Rodić and Marić (2021) noted, successful leadership is one that accurately identifies the readiness level of its employees and adapts accordingly. By focusing on individual development without losing sight of organizational goals, this situational approach facilitates both employee satisfaction and organizational performance (Qurtubi, 2024).

This approach has had a tangible impact on employee performance, particularly in terms of productivity, discipline, and teamwork. Observations at LPP Bandung reveal that employees are more punctual, meet deadlines, and collaborate effectively in team activities. This aligns with the findings of Fitriani and Suradinata (2023), who noted that contextual leadership styles are effective in managing work stress, ultimately improving



performance outputs. Moreover, the leadership style has fostered a healthier work environment and increased employee satisfaction, as employees feel their psychological and professional needs are met by their supervisors' adaptive approaches (Az-Zahroh et al., 2023). These improvements in individual and team performance demonstrate that the situational leadership model has been key in optimizing operational outcomes at LPP Bandung, thereby reinforcing the importance of adaptive leadership in complex organizational settings. This aligns with the previous discussion on the relevance of situational leadership in responding to diverse employee readiness levels and organizational challenges.

#### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

Based on the analysis presented, it can be concluded that the Women's Correctional Facility Class IIA Bandung has implemented the Situational Leadership Model by the Head of the Binadik Section (Kasi Binadik) in efforts to improve employee performance by adjusting leadership approaches to the readiness and conditions of each employee. The most dominant leadership styles applied are the participative and delegative styles, where the Head of the Binadik Section provides space for dialogue and full trust to senior employees who are ready to work independently. The instructive and consultative styles are applied to new employees or those still in the adaptation stage, with the aim of providing technical guidance and gradually building task understanding.

Performance improvement efforts are carried out through five indicators: work productivity, professionalism, discipline, teamwork, and response to work pressure. However, this process has not been without challenges. Some obstacles include the need for continued supervision and motivation for certain employees, as well as the imbalance in the number of employees compared to the number of inmates. These development efforts aim to create a productive and professional work culture, which includes completing tasks on time, adhering to schedules and procedures, effective cross-sectional collaboration, and mental resilience in facing work pressure.

Overall, the application of situational leadership at the Women's Correctional Facility Bandung has been quite effective, although there remains a need for strengthening consistency in discipline building and comprehensive employee competency development.

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