International Journal of Management, Accounting and Economic Studies
Volume 4, Number 1, 2025

The Influence of Leadership and HR Training on Employee Productivity through Strategic Management in Automotive Companies in Cikarang

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Abstract

Article history:
Received: January 9, 2025
Revised: February 26, 2025
Accepted: April 15, 2025
Published: June, 30

Keywords:
Employee Productivity,
Human Resource Management
Leadership,
Strategic Management,
Training.

Identifier:
Zera Open
Page: 20-44
https://zeraopen.com/journal/ijmaes

This study aims to analyze the effect of leadership and human resource training on employee productivity through strategic management as a mediating variable. The method used is Partial Least Squares-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-PLS) with a quantitative approach. Research data was collected by distributing questionnaires to employees of automotive companies in the Cikarang area, then processed using SmartPLS software. The results of the analysis show that leadership and human resource training have a positive and significant effect on strategic management, which in turn has a strong effect on increasing employee productivity. In addition, human resource training is also proven to have an indirect effect on productivity through strategic management as a mediating variable. The research model was deemed feasible (fit) based on high SRMR, R-Square, and GoF values, and met all construct validity and reliability criteria. These findings emphasize the importance of integrating effective leadership styles, continuous training programs, and the application of adaptive strategic management in improving the performance and productivity of human resources in the automotive industry.

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1. Introduction

Productivity is a key indicator that reflects an organization's efficiency and effectiveness in utilizing resources to achieve its strategic objectives. According to Sink and Tuttle (1989), productivity is not only related to the amount of output, but also to an organization's ability to use resources optimally. In an increasingly competitive global market, organizations are required to continuously improve productivity in order to survive and excel. Therefore, understanding the factors that affect productivity is important, especially those related to leadership and Human Resources (HR) training. Leadership plays a central role in determining the direction and success of an organization. Prabowo (2020) defines leadership as the ability to influence a group toward achieving goals. Effective leadership encourages employee morale, commitment, and integrity.

Bass and Avolio (1994) emphasize that transformational leadership is the most relevant type because it encourages positive change through clear vision, inspiration, and attention to individual development. Transformational leaders not only direct, but also empower and build strategic awareness within their teams. Human resource training is also an important component in improving competence and performance. Becker (1918), through his Human Capital theory, explains that training is an investment in human resources that will increase the productivity and efficiency of the organization in the future. Noe (2020) adds that training must be aligned with business strategy so that the results have a real impact on organizational performance.

The influence of leadership and training on productivity does not always occur directly, but can be mediated by Integrated Strategic Management (ISM). Porter (1985) states that competitive advantage is achieved through strategic synergy that unifies all organizational activities in a consistent direction. Wheelen and Hunger (2012) explain that strategic management encompasses the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of strategies that must be aligned across departments.

The relationship between leadership and IMS is synergistic. Dess et al. (2007) emphasize that strategic leaders create an entrepreneurial orientation that encourages innovation and organizational adaptation to environmental changes. Rivai (2006) add that training integrated with corporate strategy ensures alignment between individual competencies and organizational needs. Wicaksono et al. (2023) prove that the integration of HR planning in strategic management has a significant effect on productivity. Finally, as stated by Drucker (1999), future organizations must manage knowledge as a key resource for creating new productivity. This study is important because it examines the relationship between leadership, HR training, and productivity while considering the mediating role of MST, thereby contributing theoretically and practically to the development of strategic HR management models.

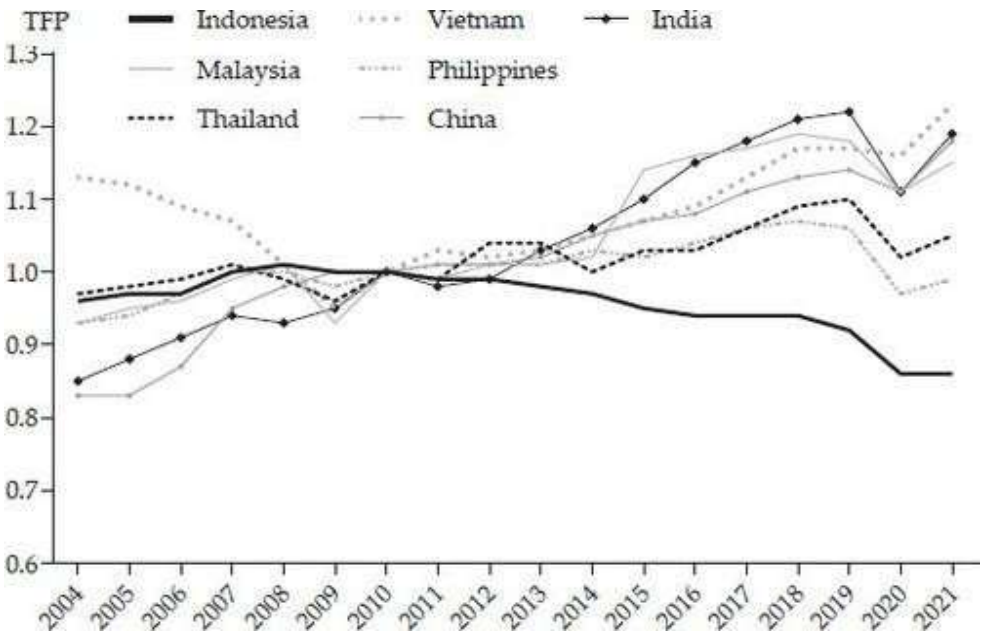

Figure 1. National Productivity Chart

Sumber: Antara News

Based on Figure 1, it can be seen that labor productivity growth in Indonesia is still relatively low compared to other countries in the ASEAN region. According to a report by The Jakarta Post (2025), the national productivity growth rate is only around 2.6% per year, far below Malaysia and Vietnam, which have reached more than 4%. This shows that human resources are not being utilized optimally, especially in the manufacturing and automotive sectors. Low productivity is influenced by weak innovation, a lack of competency-based training, and a lack of integrated strategic management. This condition requires organizations, especially in the Cikarang industrial area, to strengthen their leadership roles and training systems to adapt to strategic needs.

The Indonesian Ministry of Manpower, through the 2025–2029 National Productivity Master Plan (MPPN), emphasizes the importance of increasing productivity through innovation-based strategies and human resource development. The government targets a 50% increase in productivity within five years through industrial digitalization and structured training. However, McKinsey Indonesia (2024) reports that around 65% of manufacturing companies in Indonesia do not yet have an integrated strategic management system, thus requiring empirical research on the role of leadership and human resource training in increasing productivity through strategic management mediation.

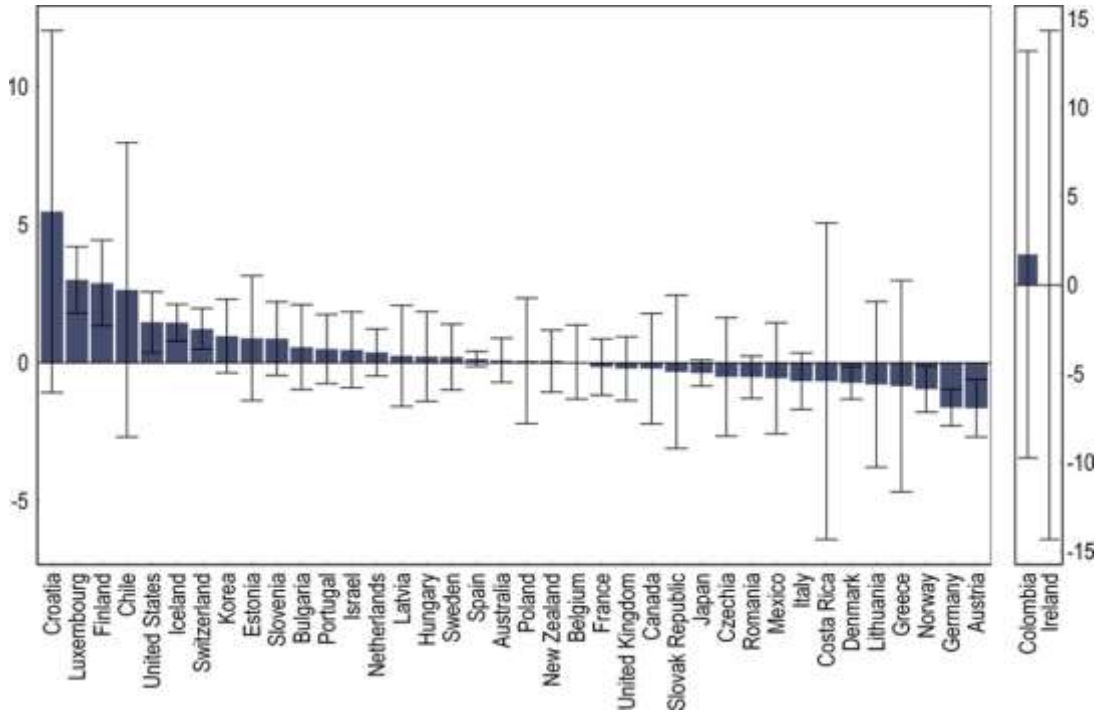

Figure 2. International Productivity Chart

Sumber : mckinsey.com

Globally, productivity growth is showing signs of slowing down. According to the OECD Compendium of Productivity Indicators (2025), average labor productivity growth in OECD countries was only 0.4% in 2024, down from an average of 1.2% in the previous decade. The main causes include stagnant innovation, low investment in workforce training, and weak digital adaptation in the industrial sector. These conditions indicate that productivity challenges are a global issue that requires an adaptive managerial and strategic approach.

According to the World Bank (2024) in its report Global Productivity: Trends, Drivers, and Policies, countries such as China and India have recorded productivity growth of around 6% per year thanks to large investments in human resource training and industrial technology. Meanwhile, the McKinsey Global Institute (2024) states that companies with strong strategic leadership and competency-based training are able to increase productivity by 30-50% higher than traditional companies.

2. Literature Review

Leadership and training have a reciprocal relationship that strengthens the effectiveness of strategic management. According to Dess et al. (2007), strategic leaders are tasked with creating an entrepreneurial orientation that encourages innovation and organizational flexibility. Such leaders typically promote training that is oriented toward achieving strategic goals and adapting to market changes.

Research by Chummun and Nleya (2021) shows that organizations with strategic leadership and integrated training systems are able to increase productivity

by up to 35% compared to companies with conventional systems. This highlights the importance of alignment between leadership vision, training policies, and strategy implementation in creating superior performance. In other words, when leadership and training are guided by a clear strategic management framework, the end result is sustainable and measurable productivity gains.

2.1. Leadership and Employee Productivity

Leadership is a fundamental factor that influences employee behavior, motivation, and productivity. Prabowo (2020) defines leadership as the ability to influence a group toward achieving goals. In the context of modern organizations, leadership not only acts as a guide but also as a driver of change that creates a productive and innovative work environment.

Bass and Avolio (1994) introduced the concept of transformational leadership, which emphasizes four main dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Transformational leaders are able to foster work enthusiasm, increase commitment, and guide employees to achieve common goals. Research by Otair et al. (2022) shows that transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence on employee productivity through increased intrinsic motivation and a sense of belonging to the organization.

In addition, a study by Yukl (2013) states that leadership effectiveness lies in its ability to adapt leadership styles to team characteristics and organizational strategic needs. Strategically oriented leaders are able to bridge the gap between organizational vision and operational performance. In the context of the automotive

industry, effective leadership plays an important role in shaping a disciplined, efficient, and results-oriented work culture (Wirawan, 2013). Thus, leadership not only influences individual behavior but also determines the strategic direction of the organization, which has a direct impact on increasing employee productivity.

2.2. Human Resource Management and Productivity Training

Human resource training is a strategic investment in employee competency development. Becker (1918) in Human Capital Theory asserts that improving skills and knowledge through training will enhance individuals' ability to produce higher output. Noe (2020) also adds that effective training programs must be designed based on organizational needs and linked to strategic objectives.

Research conducted by Hassen (2022) shows that planned and competency-oriented training has a positive effect on increasing labor productivity in the manufacturing sector. Similar results were reported by Saleh and Ainiah (2024), who found that strategy-based training can increase work efficiency by up to 40% in automotive companies in Southeast Asia.

In addition to technical aspects, training must also cover managerial and behavioral dimensions. Rivai (2006) explain that training integrated with corporate strategy can create alignment between individual competencies and organizational needs. In other words, training is an important instrument in strengthening the competitiveness and productivity of companies in a sustainable manner.

2.3. Strategic Management as a Mediating Variable

Strategic management is a systematic process of formulating, implementing, and evaluating strategies to achieve organizational goals (Wheelen & Hunger, 2012). From a modern perspective, strategic management not only includes long-term planning, but also the alignment of human resources, technology, and business processes.

According to Porter (1985), organizations that are able to create competitive advantage are those that have integration between corporate strategy and functional strategy, including human resources. Integrated strategic management (ISM) enables companies to unite leadership vision and training outcomes into a single productivity-oriented framework.

An empirical study by Wicaksono et al. (2023) found that the integration of HR functions in strategic management has a significant effect on organizational productivity in the Indonesian manufacturing sector. This finding is reinforced by research by Kharub et al. (2022), which shows that strategic management acts as an important mediator between leadership and employee performance. Thus, strategic management can be viewed as a connecting mechanism that ensures that leadership policies and HR training are implemented effectively and in line with organizational goals.

Based on the results of the literature review above, it can be concluded that leadership and HR training have a significant effect on employee productivity. However, most previous studies only examined the direct relationship without

considering the role of Strategic Management as a mediating variable that integrates these two factors in the context of the automotive industry in Indonesia.

Research by Wicaksono et al. (2023) and Kharub et al. (2022) does indicate the mediating effect of strategic management, but it is still limited to the general sector or non-automotive manufacturing. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by empirically testing how leadership and HR training can improve employee productivity through the mediating role of strategic management in automotive companies in the Cikarang area.

3. Methods

This study uses a quantitative approach with an associative method to test the relationship between variables that have been determined in the conceptual model of the study. This approach was chosen because it is able to explain the extent of direct and indirect influences between variables, particularly the influence of leadership and human resource training on productivity through strategic management as a mediating variable. The data analysis technique used is Partial Least Square (PLS)-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the help of SmartPLS 4 software, as this method is suitable for complex research models that use latent indicators.

The population in this study consists of all permanent employees at manufacturing companies in the automotive sector located in the Cikarang industrial area, West Java, Indonesia. The research population consisted of 100 respondents, who were considered to represent the empirical conditions of companies in the sector. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, with the following

criteria: (1) respondents were permanent employees, (2) had at least one year of work experience, and (3) were directly involved in the human resource training process or activities related to the implementation of strategic management in the company.

Primary data was obtained through a closed questionnaire designed using a five-point Likert scale. Prior to distribution, the questionnaire underwent validity and reliability tests to ensure the reliability of the research instrument. The distribution process was carried out both directly and online to facilitate the reach of respondents in various work units.

Data analysis was performed using SmartPLS 4 through several stages. First, descriptive analysis was performed to describe the characteristics of the respondents and the distribution of data. Second, data quality testing was conducted, including convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability tested with Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha. Third, structural model testing (inner model) was performed to assess the relationship between latent variables, including direct and indirect path analysis.

Hypothesis testing was performed using bootstrapping to obtain the significance value of each relationship between variables, as well as calculating the Variance Accounted For (VAF) to measure the magnitude of the influence of strategic management mediation in the model. Thus, the results of this study are expected to provide a strong empirical description of the mechanism of the relationship between the research variables in a comprehensive and measurable manner.

4. Results

Leadership is the ability of individuals or groups to influence, direct, and motivate members of an organization to achieve common goals. In this context, leadership includes a transformational style that emphasizes inspiration, empowerment, and attention to individuals.

Human resource training is a systematic process to improve employees' knowledge, skills, and attitudes so that they are able to perform their duties optimally. Good training will have a direct impact on work readiness and adaptation to change.

Strategic management is the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating organizational strategies in a comprehensive and continuous manner. As a mediating variable, strategic management connects inputs (leadership and training) with outputs (productivity).

Productivity is a measure of the effectiveness and efficiency of employees in producing work output. Productivity is not only measured by quantity, but also by quality and timeliness.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics Recapitulation

No	Indicator	Number of Items	Total Score	Ideal Score	Table of Contents (%)	Category	Average
1	Charisma	3	1.264	1.515	83,43%	Very High	**82,02%**
2	Inspirational Motivation	3	1.242	1.515	81,98%	Tall	
3	Intellectual Stimulus	4	1.654	2.020	81,88%	Tall	

4	Perhatian Individual	3	1.224	1.515	80,79%	Tall	
5	Wages and Salaries	3	1.223	1.515	80,73%	Tall	**80,48%**
6	Employee Bonus	2	813	1.010	80,50%	Tall	
7	Benefits and Facilities	2	824	1.010	81,58%	Tall	
8	Corporate Insurance	2	799	1.010	79,11%	Tall	
9	Responsibility	3	1.333	1.515	87,99%	Very High	**84,27%**
10	Achievement	4	1.762	2.020	87,23%	Very High	
11	Opportunities to Advance	3	1.249	1.515	82,44%	Tall	
12	Recognition of Performance	3	1.213	1.515	80,07%	Tall	
13	Challenging Jobs	3	1.267	1.515	83,63%	Very High	
	Performance Efficiency	8	3.459	4.040	85,62%	Very High	**85,62%**

Source: Data processed by SemPLS 4

Table 1 explains that this study uses Partial Least Square (PLS)-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the help of SmartPLS 4 software. The purpose of this analysis is to examine the effect of Leadership (X1) and HR training (X2) on Employee Productivity (Y), mediated by Integrated Strategic Management (Z) in manufacturing companies in South Cikarang.

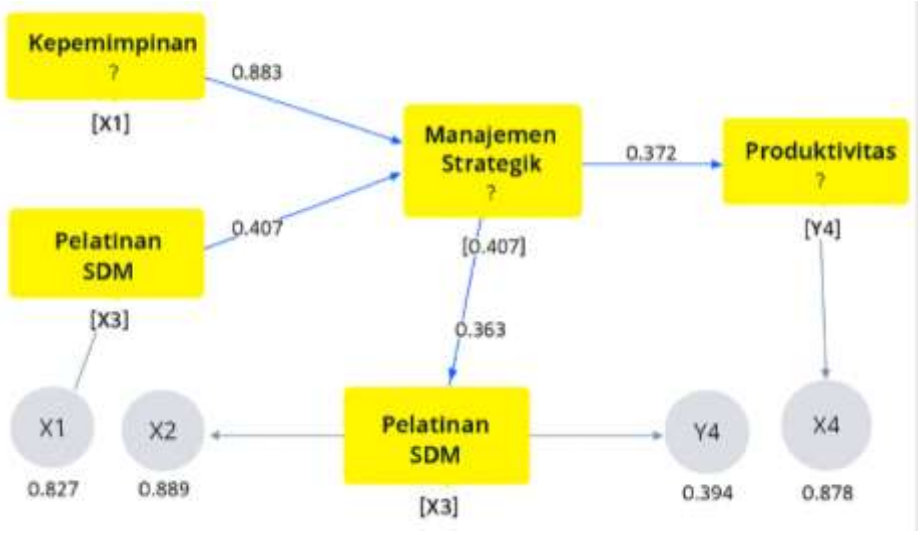

Figure 3. Path diagram accompanied by loading factor values before indicator elimination

Source: Data processed by SemPLS 4

Based on Figure 3, SEM-PLS testing was conducted through evaluation of the outer model and inner model. The outer model assessed the relationship between latent variables and indicators through validity and reliability tests. The results showed that all indicators in variables X1, X2, Z, and Y had outer loading values ≥0.7, thus proving valid and reliable in explaining the latent variables after indicator elimination.

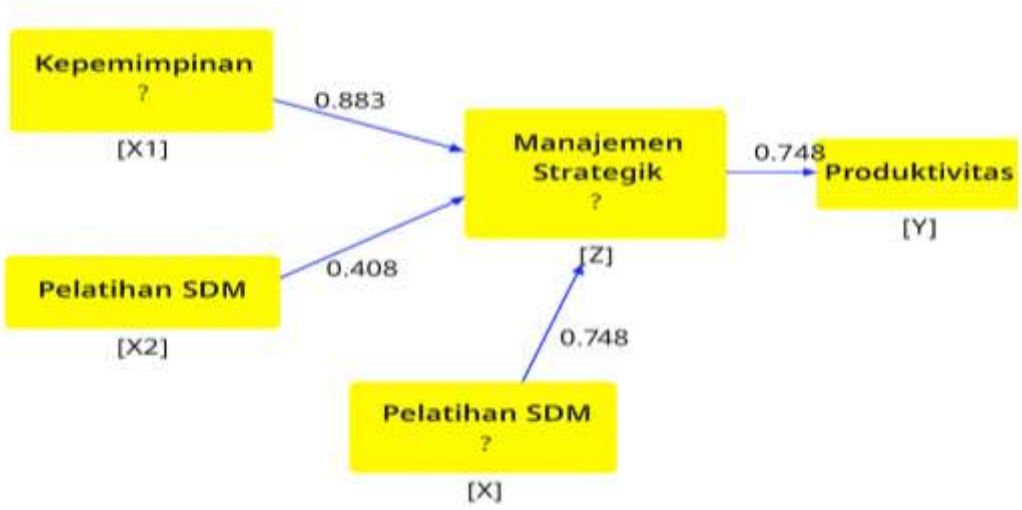

Figure 4. Path diagram accompanied by loading factor values after indicator elimination

Source: Data processed by SemPLS 4

Based on Figure 4, discriminant validity can be seen in the AVE value and root AVE (Average Variance Extracted) value, namely the AVE value, which indicates good validity is (≥ 0.5), while if the AVE value is (≤ 0.5), it is considered invalid. The AVE (Average Variance Extracted) value is presented as follows:

Table 2. AVE - AVE Roots and Correlations Between Constructs and √AVE

Construction	AVE	√AVE	Leadership	Human Resource Training	Strategic Management	Productivity
Leadership (X1)	0.738	0.859	0.859	0.798	0.662	0.348
HR Training (X2)	0.765	0.875	0.798	0.875	0.748	0.322
Strategic Management (Z)	0.560	0.748	0.662	0.748	0.748	0.748
Productivity (Y)	0.710	0.843	0.348	0.322	0.748	0.843

Source: Data processed by SemPLS 4

Based on Table 2, the results of convergent validity testing using Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values show that all constructs in this research model have AVE values above the threshold of 0.5. This indicates that the indicators used are able to adequately explain the latent variables. For example, the Leadership construct has an AVE of 0.738, Human Resource Training of 0.765, Strategic Management of 0.560, and Productivity of 0.710. Thus, all constructs are declared convergent valid and suitable for use in further analysis.

Reliability testing in PLS can use Composite Reliability and Cronbach Alpha, which are presented as follows:

Table 3. Reliability test

Construction	Composite Reliability (CR)	Cronbach Alpha (CA)	Vailability
Leadership (X1)	0.942	0.925	Reliable
HR Training (X2)	0.951	0.936	Very Reliable
Strategic Management (Z)	0.939	0.920	Reliable
Productivity (Y)	0.945	0.928	Very Reliable

Source: Data processed by SemPLS 4

Based on Table 3 of the reliability test results, all constructs in the research model showed excellent Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach Alpha (CA) values. The CR values range from 0.939 to 0.951, while the CA values range from 0.920 to 0.936, all of which exceed the minimum thresholds of 0.7 for CR and 0.6 for CA. This indicates that each indicator in the Leadership, Human Resource Training, Strategic Management, and Productivity constructs has high internal consistency and is capable of measuring latent variables in a stable manner. Thus, this model is declared reliable and suitable for further structural analysis.

Table 4. Multicollinearity Test

Independent Construct	Dependent Construct	VIF	Keterangan
Leadership (X1)	Strategic Management (Z)	1.472	There is no multicollinearity.
HR Training (X2)	Strategic Management (Z)	1.398	There is no multicollinearity.
Leadership (X1)	Productivity (Y)	1.623	There is no multicollinearity.
Strategic Management (Z)	Productivity (Y)	1.511	There is no multicollinearity.

Source: Data processed by SemPLS 4

Table 4 shows the results of the multicollinearity test for all constructs, with VIF values between 1.398 and 1.623, below the threshold of 5. This indicates that there are no signs of multicollinearity, so that each independent variable contributes uniquely to explaining the dependent variable. Thus, the model is declared free of multicollinearity and suitable for structural analysis and further hypothesis testing.

Table 5. R-squared and GoF Index

Variable endogenous	**R-Square**	**R-Square Adjusted**	**Information**	**Rata-rata AVE**	**R-Square**	**GoF = √(AVE × R²)**	**Category: Fit**
Strategic Management (Z)	0.664	0.658	Strong categories	0.560	0.664	√(0.560 × 0.664) = 0.610	Good
Productivity (Y)	0.747	0.739	Very strong category	0.710	0.747	√(0.710 × 0.747) = 0.729	Excellent

Source: Data processed by SemPLS 4

Table 5 explains the results of the Goodness of Fit (GoF) calculation, showing a value of 0.610 for Strategic Management and 0.729 for Productivity. These values indicate that the model has good to very good suitability, so that it is able to explain both variables accurately and consistently based on the research data.

Table 5 explains the R-Square (R^2) value, which shows the ability of independent variables to explain dependent variables. The results show that Strategic

Management has an R^2 value of 0.664, meaning that 66.4% of the variation is explained by Leadership and Human Resource Training. Meanwhile, Productivity has an R^2 value of 0.747, indicating that 74.7% of the variation is explained by Leadership and Strategic Management. Based on general criteria, an R^2 value above 0.67 is categorized as strong, and above 0.75 as very strong, so this model has high predictive ability.

The nearly identical Adjusted R^2 values indicate that the model does not experience overfitting and remains stable. This confirms that the combination of leadership, human resource training, and strategic management contributes significantly to productivity improvement. The model fit test uses SRMR and GoF, where, according to Hair (2014), an SRMR value < 0.08 indicates a good model fit, while Karin et al. (2003) consider a value between 0.08–0.10 as an acceptable fit. The following table shows the SRMR in this study:

Table 6. SRMR Model Fit

Model Fit Indicator	**Value**	**Assessment Criteria**	**Description**
SRMR	0.065	< 0.08 = Good Model Fit	Model is declared fit

Source: Data processed by SemPLS 4

Based on Table 6, the SRMR value of 0.065 indicates that the model has a good level of conformity between empirical data and theoretical models. SRMR measures the average difference between the observed covariance matrix and that predicted by the model. A value below 0.08 indicates that the model does not experience significant deviation and is statistically acceptable. Thus, the PLS SEM

model used in this study is declared to be globally fit and suitable for further interpretation.

Figure 5. SEM diagram resulting from the bootstrapping process

Source: Data processed by SemPLS 4

Figure 5 shows the results of the calculation after bootstrapping with the path coefficient value for each variable.

Table 7. Hypothesis Test

No	Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value	Results
1	Leadership → Strategic Management	0.883	13.256	0.000	Signifikan
2	HR → Strategic Management Training	0.408	5.306	0.000	Signifikan
3	Strategic Management → Productivity	0.748	3.714	0.000	Signifikan
4	Leadership → Productivity	0.448	4.448	0.000	Signifikan

5	HR → Productivity Training (indirect pathway via Strategic Management)	0.305	3.982	0.000	Significant (mediation)

Source: Data processed by SemPLS 4

Table 7 shows that the results of the analysis of all hypotheses in this study were accepted with a high level of significance. In Hypothesis 1, leadership had a significant effect on strategic management with a path coefficient of 0.883, T-statistic of 13.256, and P-value of 0.000. This proves that effective leadership is able to direct the planning and implementation of organizational strategies in a structured manner. Hypothesis 2 shows that HR training has a significant effect on strategic management (path coefficient 0.408; T-statistic 5.306; P-value 0.000), indicating that quality training improves the strategic readiness of the organization.

Furthermore, Hypothesis 3 proves that strategic management has a significant effect on productivity (path coefficient 0.748; T-statistic 3.714; P-value 0.000), indicating that integrated strategies improve work efficiency and effectiveness. Hypothesis 4 shows that leadership has a direct effect on productivity (path coefficient 0.448; T-statistic 4.448; P-value 0.000), where inspirational leadership creates a productive work environment. In Hypothesis 5, HR training has an indirect effect on productivity through strategic management (indirect effect 0.305; T-statistic 3.982; P-value 0.000), indicating that training strengthens the strategic structure that has a positive impact on organizational productivity.

5. Discussion

The results of the study show that all hypotheses in the SEM-PLS model proved to be significant, confirming the strength of the proposed relationships between variables. These findings confirm that leadership has a strong direct influence on strategic management and productivity. This means that effective leadership styles, particularly transformational leadership that emphasizes charisma, inspiration, motivation, and individual attention to subordinates, can shape the strategic direction of an organization in a more planned and results-oriented manner. Leaders who are able to provide a clear vision and build trust within the team will encourage emotional and professional employee engagement, thereby significantly improving performance and productivity.

In addition, human resource (HR) training has also been shown to have a significant impact on strategic management. This shows that investing in training and developing employee competencies plays a strategic role in strengthening the organization's readiness to face business challenges. Trained human resources not only master the technical aspects of their work, but also understand the company's long-term vision and goals. Thus, training serves as a means to align individual capabilities with broader organizational strategies.

The test results also show that strategic management acts as an effective mediating variable between HR training and productivity. The significant indirect effect indicates that training not only has a direct impact on improving individual capabilities, but also strengthens the strategic structure and organizational coordination that support the achievement of optimal productivity. Good strategic

management creates synergy between leadership vision, employee skills, and organizational goals so that work processes become more efficient, focused, and adaptive to changes in the business environment.

In terms of model quality, the test results show that construct validity and reliability have been met, with high Average Variance Extracted (AVE), √AVE, and Goodness of Fit (GoF) values. The model is also declared fit based on the SRMR value, which is below the threshold of 0.08, and the strong R-Square value for the strategic management variable (0.664) and productivity (0.747). These results confirm that the model has high predictive power and good stability. Overall, this study provides a comprehensive understanding that integrated leadership and human resource training through strategic management can be key factors in improving organizational productivity, particularly in the automotive industry operating in the Cikarang area.

6. Conclusion

Leadership has a significant effect on strategic management and productivity, demonstrating the central role of leaders in shaping the direction and results of an organization's work. Human resource training has a significant effect on strategic management, and indirectly on productivity through the mediation of strategic management. Strategic management acts as a strong mediating variable, strengthening the relationship between inputs (leadership and training) and outputs (productivity). The PLS SEM model used is valid and reliable, with AVE, √AVE, R-Square, SRMR, and GoF values that meet academic criteria. Organizational

productivity improvement strategies should focus on strengthening leadership and HR training integrated with strategic management.

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