

# Transformational Leadership Mediates the Effect of Integrity Zone Implementation on Organizational Commitment: Evidence from PLS-SEM Analysis

*Transformational  
Leadership in Integrity  
Zone Implementation*

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**1143**

**Submitted:**  
November 27, 2025

**Revised:**  
January 17, 2026

**Accepted:**  
January 30, 2026

**Published Online:**  
January 31, 2026

## **ABSTRACT**

*Public organizations are increasingly required to implement integrity-based reforms to improve governance quality and employee commitment. This study examines the effect of integrity zone implementation on organizational commitment and the mediating role of transformational leadership. The research was conducted at an institution actively implementing the integrity zone program to achieve a corruption-free area and a clean and serving bureaucracy. A quantitative approach was employed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with Partial Least Squares (PLS). The results indicate that the integrity zone does not have a significant direct effect on organizational commitment. However, integrity zone implementation significantly enhances transformational leadership, which in turn strengthens organizational commitment. These findings confirm that transformational leadership plays a mediating role in linking integrity zone implementation to organizational commitment. The study highlights the importance of leadership that upholds integrity values in translating organizational policies into employee commitment. This research contributes to the literature by emphasizing that the effectiveness of integrity-based reforms depends not only on formal policy implementation but also on leadership practices that internalize ethical values within organizations.*

**Keywords:** *Integrity Zone, Organizational Commitment, Public Organization, Transformational Leadership.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the context of maintaining integrity and fostering organizational commitment, transformational leadership plays a crucial role. This leadership style shapes employee behavior, encourages positive interaction, and motivates individuals to innovate and contribute toward organizational goals. Transformational leaders build mutually beneficial relationships with followers by acting as role models and sources of inspiration, enabling employees to transcend personal interests for collective objectives (Hussain & Khayat, 2021; Udin, 2023; Mudd-Fegett & Mudd, 2024). Transformational leadership cultivates a culture of integrity by reinforcing ethical norms and commitment to higher organizational values, leading employees to internalize integrity as part of their organizational identity (Hendra, 2021; Deddy, 2022; Zheng et al., 2022). Empirical studies further demonstrate that transformational leadership effectively strengthens organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee performance, and these findings are consistent with the results reported by Utarayana and Adnyani (2020) as well as Perkasa and Herawaty (2021).

In the context of integrity zone implementation, transformational leadership plays an increasingly vital role in enhancing its effectiveness. Studies by Kurniawan et al. (2022) and Pratiwi et al. (2023) show that transformational leaders strengthen integrity zone

**JIMKES**

Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen  
Kesatuan  
Vol. 14 No. 1, 2026  
pp. 1143-1154  
IBI Kesatuan  
ISSN 2337 – 7860  
E-ISSN 2721 – 169X  
DOI: 10.37641/jimkes.v14i1.4699

implementation by fostering organizational civic behavior among employees, thereby encouraging them to become agents of positive change. Moreover, research by Asbari et al. (2020) and Fazzari et al. (2023) confirms that transformational leadership significantly improves organizational readiness for change in the industry 4.0 era by creating an innovative and adaptive organizational climate, increasing employee motivation, and strengthening organizational resilience.

The Class I Immigration Office of TPI Samarinda is a technical implementation unit of the Directorate General of Immigration serving the East Kalimantan region, particularly Samarinda and its surrounding areas. As a key gateway for the mobility of Indonesian and foreign citizens, this office holds a strategic role in public service delivery and immigration law enforcement, including passport issuance, visas, residence permits, and the supervision of foreigners. Service quality and integrity at this institution directly affect the government's image and the regional investment climate. In recent years, the office has actively implemented the Integrity Zone program toward Corruption-Free Zone (*Wilayah Bebas dari Korupsi/WBK*) and Clean and Serving Bureaucracy Zone (*Wilayah Birokrasi Bersih dan Melayani/WBBM*). Efforts such as improving service facilities, enhancing procedural transparency, introducing online queue systems, and conducting anti-gratuuity socialization reflect a strong commitment to service excellence and corruption prevention. Nevertheless, the implementation of the integrity zone continues to face internal challenges related to systems, human resources, and leadership dynamics (Ranu et al., 2024).

Research on the influence of integrity zones on organizational commitment indicates that, while internal factors such as employee competencies, organizational culture, and work motivation play a significant role, the direct effect of integrity zones remains limited. Riyandari (2021) finds that employee competencies significantly support the effectiveness of the integrity zone program but do not directly strengthen organizational commitment, suggesting the presence of more dominant influencing variables. Similarly, Ambong et al. (2024) emphasize that internal factors, particularly organizational culture and individual behavior, have a stronger impact than external policies such as the integrity zone, including on readiness for change. nevertheless, studies examining the role of transformational leadership within this relationship remain scarce.

While the integrity zone has the potential to support organizational commitments, influence, and other internal activities, such as leadership, organizational culture, and job satisfaction, these need to be explored further to understand the complex interactions among all of these factors. A comprehensive approach is needed to get a complete picture of the dynamics that occur and the key determinants in strengthening organizational commitment in the context of the ever-changing situation. Previous studies have largely examined the direct effects of integrity zone implementation on organizational outcomes, while limited attention has been given to the mediating role of leadership in translating integrity-based policies into employee commitment. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine the influence of the integrity zone on organizational commitment and transformational leadership, as well as to look at the role of transformational leadership as a mediating variable for the integrity zone and organizational commitment.

## LITERATURE REVIEW & HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

### The Effect of Integrity Zone on Organizational Commitment

The concept of the integrity zone has gained significant attention in public administration and organizational management as an instrument to enhance transparency, accountability, and ethical behavior within governmental organizations (Sylvyani & Ramli, 2023; Syadiyah et al., 2024; Birdayanthi et al., 2025). The Integrity Zone represents a formal commitment by institutions to eliminate corruption, collusion, and nepotism, while fostering an ethical work environment that supports high-quality public services. Although the integrity zone provides an important foundation for creating a transparent and corruption-free bureaucracy, its direct impact on organizational commitment remains debatable (Kadir & Laela, 2023). Several studies by Widyawati et

al. (2023) argue that the integrity zone primarily functions as a structural and procedural framework, while employee commitment is often influenced more strongly by internal organizational factors rather than policy implementation alone.

For example, a quantitative study on the integrity zone program at Indonesian customs found that although the program positively influenced anti-corruption culture and service quality, changes in public trust and commitment depended on improvements in operational outcomes rather than on the policy itself (Wibiastika & Darma, 2024). Similarly, studies on integrity zone implementation emphasize that achieving organizational change requires more than formal designation; underlying organizational assumptions and culture must shift for integrity zones to yield sustained commitment (Wijayanti et al., 2025). These findings indicate that Integrity Zones alone may not significantly increase employee commitment without complementary internal mechanisms

H1: Integrity zone has a negative effect on organizational commitment.

### **The Effect of Integrity Zone on Transformational Leadership**

Beyond its direct implications, the integrity zone can influence leadership behavior within public organizations. The implementation of integrity-based policies requires leaders to internalize ethical values and demonstrate them through daily managerial practices (Perlman et al., 2023). In this context, the Integrity Zone may encourage leaders to adopt transformational leadership behaviors, such as setting ethical examples, motivating employees, and fostering a shared organizational vision. Transformational leadership has been widely recognized as a key driver in shaping organizational culture and guiding employees toward higher ethical standards and collective goals (Rojak et al., 2024; Ahsan et al., 2024). By reinforcing transparency and accountability, the integrity zone creates conditions that support the emergence of transformational leadership within public sector institutions (Hussain & Khayat, 2021; Maolani, 2023; Murniawati & Achmad, 2024).

Although research directly linking integrity zone implementation to transformational leadership is limited, there is theoretical support for the idea that integrity-oriented reforms can foster stronger ethical leadership behavior. Integrity zones require institutional commitment to transparency, accountability, and ethical standards, which may encourage leaders to embody and communicate these values more effectively. Organizational change research notes that institutional reforms often motivate leaders to adopt transformational practices, such as inspiring vision, ethical example, and support for innovation, to effectively implement integrity goals (Ranu, 2024; Gupta, 2025).

H2: Integrity zone has a positive effect on transformational leadership.

### **Transformational Leadership as a Mediating Variable**

Transformational leadership plays a crucial role in translating organizational policies into employee attitudes and behaviors. Previous studies show that transformational leaders inspire employees to transcend personal interests, foster innovation, and enhance job satisfaction, which ultimately strengthens organizational commitment and performance (Arimuladi et al., 2022; Cahyoadi & Amalia, 2025). Despite growing interest in the relationship between integrity zone implementation and organizational commitment, the underlying mechanism through which this relationship operates remains underexplored (Konadu et al., 2025). In particular, limited attention has been given to the mediating role of transformational leadership in linking integrity-based policies with employee commitment.

Recent research widely recognizes transformational leadership as a key driver of organizational commitment, especially in public and service-sector organizations. An analytical review highlights that transformational leadership significantly enhances affective and normative commitment across various contexts, including higher education

and banking, often through mediating factors such as work engagement and job satisfaction (Jameel, 2021; Sulistiasih et al., 2024). Studies involving Indonesian civil servants further confirm that transformational leadership positively influences employee attitudes and behaviors that support organizational goals (Arifin & Narmaditya, 2024). Collectively, these findings suggest that transformational leadership serves as a critical mechanism that bridges formal policy implementation, such as integrity zone programs, and employee commitment by embedding integrity values into daily organizational practices, thereby fostering sustained commitment and performance.

H3: Transformational leadership has a mediating positive effect between Integrity zone and organizational commitment.

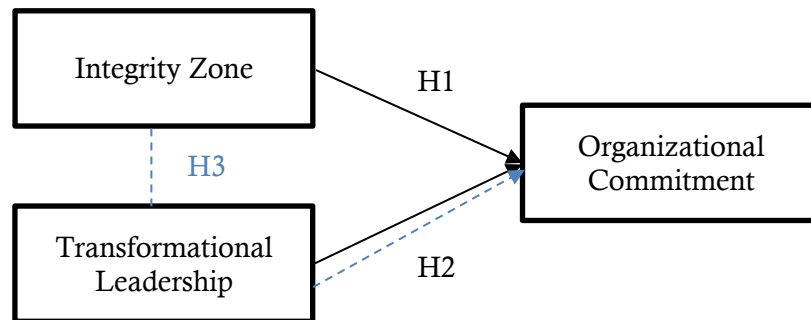


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

The study's conceptual framework is depicted in Figure 1, which also highlights the connection between organizational commitment, transformational leadership, and integrity zone. According to the paradigm, organizational commitment is immediately impacted by the integrity zone, and organizational commitment is directly impacted by transformational leadership. Furthermore, transformational leadership is proposed as a mediating factor that clarifies how the integrity zone's deployment results in increased employee organizational commitment.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs a quantitative methodology with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to investigate the mediating effect of work engagement on the relationship between work stress, technological transformation, and organizational performance. SEM is selected for its strength in testing complex models involving multiple latent constructs simultaneously, as well as in evaluating the overall validity and reliability of the proposed framework. The study was carried out at the Class I Immigration Office of TPI Samarinda, a public sector institution that has undergone substantial technological advancements and human resource transformations. These changes have introduced various challenges related to work stress and employee engagement, which are considered influential factors in shaping organizational performance.

The population of this study comprises 130 employees of the Class I Immigration Office of TPI Samarinda, including 68 civil servants (*Pegawai Negeri Sipil/PNS*), 37 candidate civil servants (*Calon Pegawai Negeri Sipil/CPNS*), and 25 outsourced employees. A purposive sampling technique was applied to select respondents who met the research criteria, resulting in a sample of 89 employees. The inclusion criteria required respondents to be active employees of the institution with a minimum of one year of work experience, ensuring that participants had sufficient understanding of organizational processes and policies.

This study employs three main variables, namely, integrity zone, organizational commitment, and transformational leadership. The integrity zone is defined as an organizational commitment to preventing corruption, collusion, and nepotism while promoting transparency, accountability, and high-quality public services. It is measured

through indicators of change management, governance, human resource management systems, strengthening accountability, strengthening supervision, and improving the quality of public services (Hidayat & Hartanto, 2019). Organizational commitment refers to the willingness and loyalty of organizational members to support and achieve the organization’s goals, vision, and values through optimal and coordinated performance. This variable is measured by affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment (Hayati et al., 2020). Transformational leadership is a leadership style that motivates and inspires organizational members to achieve their full potential, create positive change, and encourage innovation toward shared goals. It is measured through indicators of charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Fauzan et al., 2023).

SmartPLS 4.0 software was used to evaluate the data gathered for this investigation. Because it is appropriate for assessing theoretical models with intricate interactions across several variables, partial least squares–structural equation modeling, or PLS-SEM, was used. Examining the connections between the integrity zone as the independent variable, organizational commitment as the dependent variable, and transformational leadership as the mediating variable is appropriate since this approach enables the simultaneous examination of measurement and structural models. Furthermore, path analysis was used to evaluate transformational leadership’s mediating effect.

**RESULTS**

A statistical test for construct development in path analysis is proposed in this paper. PLS-SEM is used for statistical analysis based on predetermined criteria in external model measurements. To make sure that sufficient factor loads, Cronbach alphas, and composite reliability are present, the validity and reliability of the data should be assessed.

**Table 1.** Convergent Validity & Reliability Test

Variable	Item	Loading Factor	Cronbach’s Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Integrity Zone	X1	0.785	0.935	0.946	0.686
	X2	0.773			
	X3	0.759			
	X4	0.787			
	X5	0.761			
	X6	0.718			
	X7	0.734			
	X8	0.776			
	X9	0.810			
	X10	0.819			
Organizational Commitment	Y1	0.824	0.920	0.936	0.678
	Y2	0.813			
	Y3	0.839			
	Y4	0.771			
	Y5	0.844			
	Y6	0.852			
	Y7	0.824			
	Y8	0.856			
Transformational Leadership	Z1	0.887	0.925	0.937	0.597
	Z2	0.755			
	Z3	0.834			
	Z4	0.795			
	Z5	0.844			
	Z6	0.806			
	Z7	0.837			

Table 1 presents the measurement results for the constructs integrity zone, organizational commitment, and transformational leadership, including item loadings, Cronbach’s alpha, composite reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The

results indicate that all three constructs demonstrate good reliability and convergent validity according to commonly accepted thresholds in structural equation modeling.

For the integrity zone construct, all items (X1–X10) exhibit strong factor loadings, ranging from 0.718 to 0.819. These values exceed the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70, indicating that each item contributes meaningfully to the construct. The reliability indicators for the integrity zone are high: Cronbach’s alpha is 0.935, and composite reliability is 0.946, both well above the 0.70 standard, which suggests excellent internal consistency. Additionally, the AVE value of 0.686 exceeds the 0.50 benchmark, confirming that the construct explains more than half of the variance in its indicators and thus has good convergent validity.

Similarly, the organizational commitment construct shows robust measurement properties. Item loadings range from 0.771 to 0.856, all exceeding 0.70, which supports the appropriateness of these items as indicators of the underlying construct. Cronbach’s alpha for organizational commitment is 0.920, and composite reliability is 0.936, both indicating high internal consistency reliability. The AVE of 0.678 surpasses the recommended threshold of 0.50, further confirming convergent validity.

For transformational leadership, item loadings vary from 0.755 to 0.887. These loadings are all above the acceptable 0.70 cutoff, demonstrating that the items effectively measure the construct. The construct’s reliability is supported by Cronbach’s alpha of 0.925 and composite reliability of 0.937, indicating excellent internal consistency. Although the AVE for transformational leadership is 0.597, it still exceeds the 0.50 threshold, confirming that the construct has adequate convergent validity. In summary, all constructs in the table display satisfactory psychometric properties: strong factor loadings, high internal consistency reliability, and sufficient AVE values. This means the measurement model is reliable and valid for use in further structural analyses.

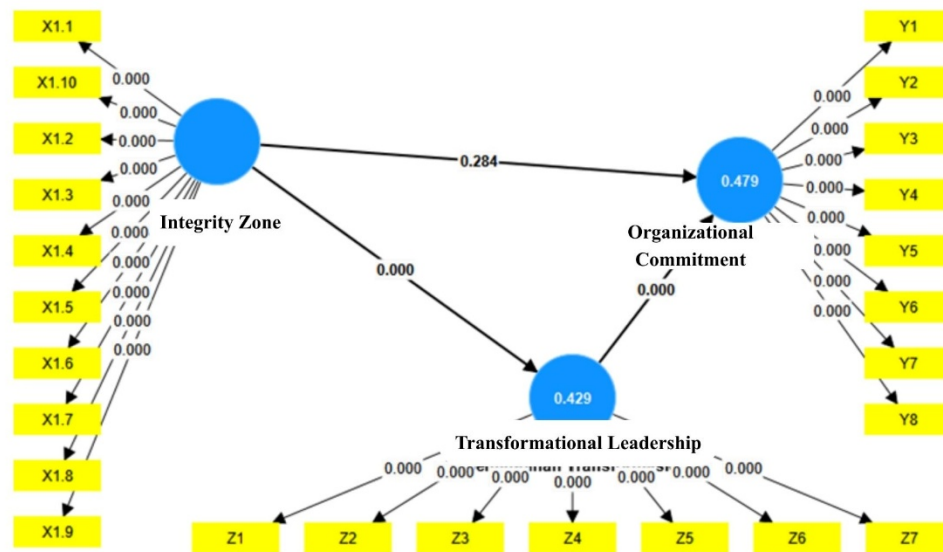


Figure 2. Bootstrapping Result

Figure 2 presents the coefficient of determination (R-square) for the endogenous variables in the structural model. The R-square value for Transformational Leadership is 0.429, indicating that the integrity zone explains 42.9% of the variance in transformational leadership, which reflects a moderate explanatory power. Meanwhile, the R-square value for organizational commitment is 0.479, showing that the integrity zone and transformational leadership jointly explain 47.9% of the variance in organizational commitment. These results indicate that the model has sufficient predictive relevance, while also suggesting that organizational commitment and transformational leadership are influenced by additional factors beyond those included in the model.

**Table 2.** Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	t statistic	P values	Decision
Integrity Zone -> Organizational Commitment	0.101	1.071	0.284	Rejected
Integrity Zone -> Transformational Leadership	0.064	10.305	0.000	Accepted
Integrity Zone -> Transformational Leadership->Organizational Commitment	0.083	4.858	0.000	Accepted

Table 2 shows that the hypothesis testing results indicate that the direct relationship between integrity zone and organizational commitment is not statistically significant, as evidenced by a low t statistic (1.071) and a p value greater than 0.05 (0.284), leading to the rejection of this hypothesis. This result suggests that the integrity zone alone does not exert a meaningful direct effect on organizational commitment within the context of the current data. In contrast, the integrity zone demonstrates a strong and statistically significant effect on transformational leadership, with a high t-statistic (10.305) and a p-value of 0.000, resulting in the acceptance of this hypothesis. This finding indicates that higher levels of integrity zone are associated with stronger perceptions or enactments of transformational leadership. Additionally, the indirect relationship between integrity zone and organizational commitment, mediated by transformational leadership, is also statistically significant, with a t-statistic of 4.858 and a p-value of 0.000, supporting the acceptance of the mediation hypothesis. This outcome implies that although the integrity zone does not directly enhance organizational commitment, transformational leadership serves as an important mediating mechanism through which the influence of the integrity zone on organizational commitment is realized.

**DISCUSSION**

Based on the research conducted, the integrity zone is proven to have no significant direct influence on organizational commitment. This is based on results showing that the significance value of the measured influence is 0.284, which is greater than the alpha of 0.05. These findings refer to research by Ambong et al. (2024), which emphasized that the influence of internal factors, such as employee competence and organizational culture, remains more dominant compared to external policies such as the integrity zone. Thus, although the integrity zone offers benefits in the context of organizational ethics, its influence on organizational commitment cannot be said to be significant without considering internal factors and the more dominant leadership role.

This finding differs from previous studies that found no direct effect of the integrity zone on organizational commitment. Instead, the integrity zone demonstrates a direct influence on transformational leadership, indicating that its implementation encourages the development of transformational leadership styles. By upholding high ethical standards, the integrity zone aligns closely with transformational leadership principles that emphasize integrity, trust, and strong leader–follower relationships (Riyandari, 2021). It also fosters a work environment that promotes openness, collaboration, and innovation, where program success depends on leadership support and active employee participation (Paramita & Prabawati, 2025). Leaders who internalize integrity zone values are better able to build emotional and motivational bonds with employees, enhance leadership quality, and strengthen leadership character during processes of change and innovation. These results support prior findings that leaders with high integrity play a key role in sustaining integrity zone values and empowering employees to contribute optimally toward shared organizational goals (Sitompul et al., 2020; Riyandari, 2021).

Although the integrity zone does not directly affect organizational commitment, it significantly influences commitment through the mediating role of transformational leadership. This leadership style serves as a critical link by translating Integrity Zone

principles into employee attitudes and behaviors. By promoting transparency and accountability, the integrity zone creates an ethical environment that strengthens transformational leadership and enables leaders to embed integrity values in daily practices. Consistent with this finding, Cahyoadi and Amalia (2025) show that effective transformational leadership fosters a results-oriented culture, thereby reinforcing the relationship between the Integrity Zone and organizational commitment.

At the Class I Immigration Office of TPI Samarinda, the implementation of the Integrity Zone can positively influence transformational leadership, which in turn enhances employee motivation and engagement. As a public service-oriented institution, leadership grounded in integrity fosters a work culture that supports transparency, accountability, and collaboration (Kusnadi et al., 2024). When leaders consistently apply Integrity Zone principles, employees are more likely to develop a stronger commitment to public service, contribute to improved organizational performance, and strengthen their affective commitment, engagement, and readiness for positive change.

Hasanah and Chairunisa (2023) show that transformational leadership strengthens affective commitment by providing support that increases employees' emotional attachment to the organization. Leaders who internalize integrity zone values can enhance affective commitment and employee engagement toward organizational goals. This is supported by Ambong et al. (2024), who find that an organizational culture reinforced by transformational leadership improves readiness for change, thereby strengthening both integrity zone implementation and organizational commitment. Although Asbari et al. (2020) argue that transformational leadership alone is insufficient to bridge the direct relationship between the integrity zone and organizational commitment, this study demonstrates that transformational leadership as a mediating variable can strengthen the influence of the integrity zone on organizational commitment, including in the context of the Class I Immigration Office of TPI Samarinda.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that the implementation of the integrity zone does not have a direct effect on organizational commitment. However, the findings reveal that transformational leadership plays a crucial mediating role in strengthening organizational commitment through the integrity zone. Leadership that internalizes integrity zone principles is able to foster an organizational environment characterized by transparency, accountability, and collaboration, which in turn enhances employee motivation, engagement, and commitment toward shared organizational goals. These results indicate that the effectiveness of integrity-based policies is highly dependent on leadership practices that translate ethical values into daily organizational behavior.

From a practical perspective, this study provides important implications for public sector organizations. The implementation of integrity zone programs should be accompanied by leadership development initiatives that emphasize transformational leadership values. Leaders are not only responsible for enforcing policies but also for embedding integrity, trust, and ethical conduct into organizational culture. Strengthening leadership capacity can therefore maximize the impact of integrity zone initiatives on employee commitment and overall organizational performance.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. The research sample is limited to a single public sector institution, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. In addition, this study focuses only on transformational leadership as a mediating variable, while other factors such as employee welfare, organizational support, compensation systems, or managerial policies were not examined. Future research is encouraged to involve broader samples across different institutions and sectors to enhance external validity. Further studies may also explore additional mediating or moderating variables that influence organizational commitment, providing a more comprehensive understanding of how integrity-based policies function within complex organizational settings.

## Acknowledgement

The authors would like to express their gratitude to those who contributed to the success of this article. Their support and encouragement were invaluable in completing this research.

**FUNDING STATEMENT:** This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not - for - profit sectors.

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** The author declares no conflict of interest.

**DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI STATEMENT:** During the preparation of this work, the authors used [ChatGPT by OpenAI] in order to assist with writing and editing tasks. After using this tool, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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