



## **Employee Transfer Practices in Indonesia: An Integrative Review and Framework for the Employee Transfer Process**

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### **Abstract**

This study synthesizes empirical findings and statutory provisions to develop a coherent understanding of employee transfer practices in Indonesian organizations and to examine their relevance to organizational adaptability. An integrative literature review of eighteen empirical and conceptual studies published between 2020 and 2025 was conducted, supported by thematic synthesis to identify dominant patterns, inconsistencies, and conceptual gaps in the implementation of employee transfer. The findings indicate that employee transfer contributes to improved performance, capability development, and smoother adjustment when it is supported by competency-based placement, transparent procedures, and effective leadership communication. Despite these recurring patterns, the majority of existing studies examine employee transfer through fragmented variables such as performance, motivation, fairness, or leadership, and rarely conceptualize transfer as a strategic mechanism for enhancing organizational adaptability. This study addresses this gap by positioning employee transfer as a multidimensional governance process shaped by legal, organizational, and behavioural factors, and proposes an integrative Employee Transfer Framework that links input conditions, transfer process mechanisms, and strategic outcomes to support aligned decision-making, organizational flexibility, and sustainable workforce performance.

**Keywords:** *Employee Transfer; Employee Mutation; Job Rotation; Internal Mobility; Strategic HRM*

### **Introduction**

Employee transfer is widely applied in Indonesian organizations as a mechanism to maintain workflow continuity, redistribute staffing resources, and respond to operational changes. In organizational practice, transfer decisions are commonly driven by operational considerations such as filling vacant positions, reallocating human resources, or addressing performance gaps across work units. Although transfer is expected to support employee development and organizational effectiveness, evidence from Indonesian organizations suggests that its implementation often remains inconsistent and constrained by administrative and managerial limitations (Niswah & Atieq, 2023).

Several studies highlight procedural weaknesses in transfer implementation, particularly the absence of systematic competency assessment. Transfers that are not supported by structured evaluation

frequently result in mismatches between employee qualifications and job requirements, which may reduce performance and prolong adjustment periods (Daulay, 2021). Similar findings indicate that organizational units often prioritize administrative convenience over competency alignment, leading to suboptimal placement outcomes (Ibnu et al., 2022). These patterns suggest that the effectiveness of employee transfer is influenced less by the reassignment decision itself than by the organizational processes that accompany it.

In addition to competency issues, communication deficiencies are frequently reported in transfer practices. Employees often receive limited explanation regarding the purpose, criteria, and expectations of transfer decisions, which contributes to uncertainty, reduced motivation, and resistance during the transition period (Setiawan, 2022). When transfer decisions are communicated without sufficient clarity, employees may perceive reassignment as arbitrary rather than developmental, thereby weakening acceptance and organizational commitment.

Leadership support plays a decisive role in shaping employee adjustment following transfer. Empirical studies demonstrate that supervisors who provide guidance, reassurance, and ongoing support are more effective in reducing anxiety and facilitating adaptation to new roles (Sola & Mei, 2024). Conversely, weak supervisory involvement may intensify stress and resistance, particularly during the early stages of reassignment (Muaja et al., 2022). These findings emphasize that leadership involvement is a central component of effective transfer implementation rather than a supplementary managerial behavior.

Fairness and procedural clarity also significantly influence employee responses to transfer decisions. Employees are more likely to accept reassignment when procedures are perceived as transparent, objective, and consistently applied, whereas unclear or inconsistent processes tend to undermine trust and increase dissatisfaction (Warman et al., 2022). From a developmental perspective, transfer can enhance skills, broaden work experience, and support career progression when reassignment is structured and aligned with employee capabilities (Mea, 2022). Without such alignment, transfer may instead lead to performance decline or reduced engagement (Yuliana, 2020).

Despite the breadth of existing studies, the literature remains fragmented and largely focused on isolated determinants such as performance, motivation, leadership, or fairness. Very few studies integrate legal requirements, organizational processes, and employee adjustment into a unified understanding of employee transfer implementation. Moreover, employee transfer is rarely examined as a strategic mechanism for organizational adaptability, even though workforce mobility and internal capability redistribution have been shown to support adaptability in dynamic environments (Gong et al., 2021).

In response to these limitations, this study aims to synthesize empirical and conceptual evidence on employee transfer practices in Indonesia and to develop an integrative perspective that reflects legal, managerial, and behavioral dimensions. While the reviewed studies encompass both public and private organizational contexts, the framework proposed in this study is specifically intended to guide employee transfer governance in private-sector organizations. By positioning employee transfer as a multidimensional governance process, this study seeks to provide structured guidance for designing fair, effective, and adaptive transfer practices that support both employee development and organizational responsiveness.

## **Literature Review**

### **Concept of Employee Transfer**

Employee transfer refers to the reassignment of employees from one position or unit to another within the organization, which may occur both horizontally and vertically as part of efforts to improve work effectiveness, develop employee capability, and meet organizational needs (Hasibuan, 2023). In human resource management literature, transfer is understood not merely as an administrative action but

as an instrument for optimizing the alignment between employees and organizational roles. Transfer is not merely an administrative procedure, but a human resource development strategy designed to improve efficiency, enhance productivity, and optimize the utilization of employee competencies across organizational functions (Robert L. Mathis, 2010).

Transfer is viewed as part of employee deployment aimed at achieving job–person fit and ensuring that organizational capabilities are distributed where needed (Dessler, 2013). This perspective emphasizes that transfer decisions should be grounded in systematic evaluation of employee competencies rather than short-term administrative convenience. In addition, internal movement including lateral reassignment functions as a mechanism for maintaining operational stability and optimizing talent utilization within dynamic organizational environments (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023).

### Legal Foundations of Employee Transfer in Indonesia

Employee transfer in Indonesia operates within a regulated labor framework that defines the rights and obligations of both employers and employees. These legal provisions establish employee transfer as a formally regulated employment action rather than a discretionary managerial practice. The legal provisions governing transfer emphasize fairness, objectivity, job suitability, and protection of employee welfare, thereby establishing minimum standards that organizations must observe when reassigning employees.

The Indonesian Manpower Law mandates that employee placement be conducted in a fair and objective manner and aligned with workers' competencies, talents, and interests. Employment agreements are also required to specify job titles and work locations, implying that any change through transfer must be either mutually agreed upon or explicitly regulated through written clauses. This requirement highlights the importance of contractual clarity in preventing disputes related to unilateral reassignment. Wage protection provisions further require employers to adjust compensation in accordance with the regional minimum wage at the new work location, ensuring that transfers do not disadvantage employees economically.

The legal framework further clarifies the consequences of refusing a lawful transfer when proper procedures have been followed. Amendments introduced through the Job Creation Law reinforce organizational authority to implement transfers, while simultaneously obligating employers to comply with procedural requirements related to transparency, contractual clarity, and employee protection. Beyond statutory law, company regulations, collective labor agreements, and individual employment contracts function as operational instruments that translate legal norms into day-to-day transfer practices.

**Table 1. Legal Provisions Relevant to Employee Transfer in Indonesia**

Legal Source	Article	Content Summary	Relevance to Employee Transfer
<b>Indonesian Manpower Law (Law No. 13/2003)</b>	Article 32	Employee placement must be conducted openly, objectively, fairly, without discrimination, and must match the worker's skills, abilities, talents, and interests.	Establishes the legal requirement for competency-based transfers and prohibits arbitrary reassignment.
<b>Indonesian Manpower Law (Law No. 13/2003)</b>	Article 35	Employers must ensure employment protection from recruitment through assignment, including welfare, occupational safety, and health.	Requires that transfers guarantee adequate welfare, safety, housing support, and relocation protection.
<b>Indonesian Manpower Law (Law No. 13/2003)</b>	Article 54 (1)(c-d)	Employment agreements must specify the job title and work location; any changes must be mutually agreed upon or supported by a written transfer clause.	Confirms that transfers cannot be imposed unilaterally unless explicitly stated in the employment contract.
<b>Indonesian Manpower Law (Law No. 13/2003)</b>	Article 90 (1)	Employers are prohibited from paying wages below the regional minimum wage applicable at the work location.	Ensures that transfers must include wage adjustments reflecting the minimum wage in the new region.

<b>Manpower Law as amended by the Job Creation Law (Cipta Kerja - Law No. 6/2023)</b>	Article 154A (1)(g) point 5	Lawful termination may occur if an employee unlawfully refuses a legitimate transfer and is absent for more than 5 consecutive working days without written explanation.	Provides legal consequences for refusing a lawful transfer, reinforcing the need for proper procedures.
<b>Company Regulation (PP) or Collective Labour Agreement (CLA/PKB)</b>	(Internal provision)	Company-level rules regulating transfer procedures, employee rights, relocation allowances, compensation, and communication requirements.	Serves as the operational governance for transfer implementation and supports procedural justice.
<b>Individual Employment Contract</b>	(Contract clause)	Contract clauses may define the possibility of transfer, scope of assignment, and employee consent.	Determines the legal enforceability of transfers and prevents disputes arising from contractual ambiguity.

Source:

(Undang-Undang (UU) Nomor 13 Tahun 2003 Tentang Ketenagakerjaan, 2003)

(Undang-Undang (UU) Nomor 6 Tahun 2023 Tentang Penetapan Peraturan Pemerintah Pengganti Undang-Undang Nomor 2 Tahun 2022 Tentang Cipta Kerja Menjadi Undang-Undang, 2023)

These legal provisions establish the normative boundaries within which employee transfer must be implemented and serve as evaluative benchmarks for assessing procedural legitimacy. However, empirical studies indicate that organizations often face challenges in translating these legal requirements into consistent practice, particularly in areas such as competency matching, procedural adherence, and communication (Ulfah & Prastiwi, 2020). These gaps between legal standards and organizational implementation demonstrate that compliance alone is insufficient and must be supported by effective managerial processes (Niswah & Atieq, 2023).

### Determinants of Effective Transfer

The effectiveness of employee transfer is shaped by several interrelated determinants, with competency alignment emerging as one of the most influential factors. The competency model emphasizes that matching an individual's knowledge, skills, and behaviors with job requirements is essential for ensuring effective performance and minimizing adjustment difficulties (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). Empirical studies in Indonesia consistently show that poorly aligned placements contribute to reduced performance, role ambiguity, and prolonged adaptation periods, particularly in organizations where assessment processes are limited (Daulay, 2021). Conversely, transfers supported by structured competency evaluation tend to facilitate smoother transitions and enhance employee contributions to the receiving unit (Mea, 2022). These findings indicate that competency alignment functions as a foundational element of transfer governance rather than a supplementary HR consideration.

Procedural fairness and transparency also play a crucial role in shaping employee acceptance of transfer decisions. Organizational justice theory highlights that employees respond more positively when they perceive procedures as objective, consistent, and clearly explained (Colquitt, 2001). Empirical findings reinforce this perspective, showing that employees are more willing to accept reassignment when the rationale is well communicated, and transfer criteria are viewed as impartial (Setiawan, 2022). In contrast, unclear or inconsistent procedures increase the likelihood of resistance, dissatisfaction, and negative attitudes toward the organization (Warman et al., 2022).

Communication and leadership support further influence the success of transfer implementation, particularly during early adjustment. Leadership theory emphasizes the importance of supervisory guidance, reassurance, and information sharing in helping employees navigate change and reduce uncertainty (Yukl & Gardner, 2020). Indonesian studies demonstrate similar patterns, showing that supportive supervisors help mitigate anxiety, improve readiness, and accelerate performance stabilization in new roles (Sola & Mei, 2024). Conversely, limited communication or weak managerial involvement often intensifies stress and undermines employee motivation during the transition process (Setiawan, 2022).

## Synthesis of Literature Review

Overall, the literature indicates that employee transfer practices are influenced by legal compliance, competency alignment, procedural fairness, and leadership support. However, existing studies predominantly examine these determinants in isolation, resulting in fragmented explanations of transfer effectiveness. As a result, the literature lacks an integrated perspective on how employee transfer operates as a coherent governance process that links legal mandates, organizational mechanisms, and employee adjustment.

This fragmentation highlights the need for an integrative analytical approach that synthesizes empirical findings across multiple dimensions, providing the conceptual foundation for the framework developed in this study.

## Method

This study adopts an integrative literature review to synthesize theoretical, empirical, and regulatory perspectives on employee transfer. An integrative review is particularly suitable for examining complex organizational phenomena that cut across legal, managerial, and behavioral dimensions, as it allows the inclusion of diverse sources and supports theory development beyond mere aggregation of findings (Whittemore & Kathleen, 2005). It also facilitates the construction of new conceptual insights through structured synthesis and reinterpretation of existing literature (Richard J. Torraco, 2005).

The literature search was conducted through Scopus, Google Scholar, and institutional repositories using keywords related to employee transfer, internal mobility, mutation, job rotation, workforce mobility, and organizational justice. Both empirical and conceptual studies were included to capture not only operational practices but also theoretical explanations of employee transfer and internal mobility. Studies published between 2020 and 2025 were considered to ensure relevance to contemporary organizational and regulatory contexts. Articles were included if they examined employee transfer or internal mobility and provided insights into competency alignment, procedural fairness, communication, leadership, or organizational adaptability. Studies with limited relevance to transfer governance or lacking substantive analytical contribution were excluded.

A total of eighteen studies met the inclusion criteria and were selected for review. Each study was examined in terms of research context and thematic contribution to employee transfer practices. Rather than emphasizing statistical comparison, the review prioritized analytical depth and conceptual integration across studies. An inductive thematic analysis was applied to identify recurring patterns, contrasts, and gaps in the literature, enabling the synthesis of fragmented findings into coherent analytical themes.

A consolidated table summarizing all selected studies is presented as follows to enhance transparency and support analytical coherence.

**Table 2. Summary of Reviewed Studies on Employee Transfer**

No	Title, Authors & Year	Key Findings	Limitations	Relevance to This Study
1	<i>Analisa Dampak Sistem Rotasi Mutasi Promosi terhadap Kinerja Karyawan</i> (Rahmawati & Suherman, 2024)	Rotation, transfer, and promotion support performance and career development.	Limited to planning, impacts, and challenge management.	Practice-based evidence on employee transfer implementation.
2	Analysis of Mutation and Turnover Intention: Work Environment (Seth, 2023)	Transfer is linked to work environment and turnover intention.	Conceptual; no analysis of transfer processes.	Identifies antecedents and outcomes of transfer.
3	Impact of Internal Mobility on Employee Engagement (Balamurugan & Akila, 2024)	Internal mobility increases employee engagement.	Does not examine implementation contexts.	Links transfer to engagement outcomes.
4	Internal Mobility: A Review and Agenda for Future Research (Ray, 2024)	Transfers support skill development and organizational adjustment.	Broad and non-country specific.	Conceptual basis for transfer synthesis.
5	Job Satisfaction and Job Rotation Systems Implementation (Arta et al., 2023)	Job rotation improves satisfaction and performance.	Focuses on rotation outcomes only.	Informs outcome-related synthesis.
6	The Effect of Mutation and Leave on Motivation and Job Satisfaction (Setiawan, 2022)	Transfer increases motivation and job satisfaction.	Examines variables, not transfer practices.	Identifies motivational outcomes of transfer.
7	Organizational Adaptability Influenced by Practice Strategy (Gong et al., 2021)	Adaptability depends on strategy and absorptive capacity.	Does not examine HR or transfer practices.	Provides adaptability context.
8	<i>Pengaruh Gaya Kepemimpinan, Mutasi Jabatan dan Kompensasi</i> (Muaja et al., 2022)	Transfer is non-significant individually but significant jointly.	Focuses on performance outcomes only.	Outcome-based evidence on transfer.
9	<i>Pengaruh Kompetensi dan Mutasi terhadap Kinerja Karyawan</i> (Yuliana, 2020)	Transfer is positive but not significant individually.	Does not examine transfer processes.	Supports outcome-based synthesis.
10	<i>Peran Kebijakan Mutasi dan Penempatan Karyawan Outsourcing</i> (Mulyadi et al., 2022)	Competency-based transfer improves satisfaction and work quality.	Focuses on policy–outcome links only.	Supports transfer outcome synthesis.
11	Policy Analysis and Implementation of Employee Mutation (Ulfah & Prastiwi, 2020)	Merit-based mutation supports performance and career development.	Public-sector policy focus.	Provides policy-level insight.
12	<i>Rotasi dan Mutasi pada Kinerja Karyawan Universitas Flores</i> (Mea, 2022)	Rotation and transfer improve performance.	Examines outcomes only.	Empirical evidence on mobility outcomes.
13	The Influence of Leadership, Job Transfers, and Job Satisfaction (Kurniawan, 2023)	Transfer and leadership influence performance.	Conceptual; no practice analysis.	Conceptual linkage to outcomes.
14	The Role of Compensation, Job Rotation, and Engagement in SMEs (Ambarwati et al., 2023)	Job rotation enhances engagement and performance.	Focuses on rotation, not transfer.	Strengthens mobility–outcome evidence.
15	Organizational Justice and Job Rotation in Indonesia (Warman et al., 2022)	Procedural justice improves acceptance of rotation.	Focuses on perceptions, not design.	Highlights fairness in transfer practices.
16	<i>Efektivitas Pelaksanaan Mutasi Pegawai Negeri Sipil (PNS) di Badan Kepegawaian, Pendidikan, dan Pelatihan Kabupaten Kudus</i> (Niswah & Atiq, 2023)	Transfer implementation is constrained by competency gaps, administrative delays, and role mismatches.	Focuses on procedural execution without examining strategic or developmental aspects of transfer.	Shows the need for competency-based transfer processes.
17	Effectiveness of work mutation policy and work performance in improving performance in Batam City Government (Purwaningrum & Hansyah, 2025)	Clear mutation policies improve employee performance.	Descriptive analysis with limited exploration of organizational processes behind policy effectiveness.	Supports procedural consistency in transfer governance.
18	<i>Pelaksanaan Mutasi Pejabat Struktural di Kantor Badan Kepegawaian dan Diklat Daerah Kabupaten Polowali Mandar</i> (Ibnu et al., 2022)	Structural transfers maintain organisational continuity and help address competency gaps across positions.	Single-institution focus.	Indicates transfer's role in organizational adaptability.

Source: Processed by the author

## Results and Discussion

This section presents the synthesized findings of the integrative literature review, drawing on eighteen empirical and conceptual studies alongside relevant statutory provisions governing employee transfer in Indonesia. The analysis identifies recurring themes related to competency alignment, procedural fairness, leadership communication, performance outcomes, and organizational adaptability.

Together, these themes demonstrate that employee transfer functions not merely as an administrative reassignment but as a governance process shaped by legal requirements, organizational mechanisms, and employee responses.

### **Employee Transfer as a Regulated and Organizationally Embedded Practice**

The reviewed studies indicate that employee transfer in Indonesia operates within a regulated employment framework, particularly in contexts where reassignment involves changes in job role, location, or responsibility. Legal provisions related to job suitability, contractual clarity, wage protection, and relocation rights establish formal boundaries for transfer implementation. These statutory requirements define the legitimacy of transfer decisions and shape employee perceptions of fairness and enforceability.

However, empirical evidence shows that organizations often encounter difficulties in translating legal provisions into consistent operational practice. Studies focusing on mutation policies and administrative implementation reveal gaps between formal regulations and actual execution, particularly in competency matching and procedural adherence (Niswah & Atieq, 2023; Ulfah & Prastiwi, 2020). These discrepancies suggest that compliance with legal standards alone is insufficient; effective transfer requires organizational processes that operationalize legal norms into clear, consistent, and employee-centered practices.

### **Competency Alignment and Transfer Effectiveness**

Competency alignment emerges as one of the most consistently emphasized determinants of effective employee transfer across the reviewed studies. Empirical findings indicate that transfers are more likely to result in improved performance and smoother adjustment when employees' skills, experience, and capabilities align with the requirements of the receiving position (Mea, 2022; Yuliana, 2020). Competency-based placement reduces role ambiguity, shortens adaptation periods, and enhances employee contribution to organizational objectives.

Conversely, several studies report that limited or informal competency assessment leads to mismatches between employee backgrounds and assigned roles. Such mismatches are associated with confusion, prolonged adjustment, and suboptimal performance, particularly in organizations where transfer decisions are driven primarily by administrative convenience rather than systematic evaluation (Daulay, 2021; Niswah & Atieq, 2023). Evidence from organizational case studies further supports this pattern, showing that structured systems of rotation, transfer, and promotion are more effective when supported by planned competency development and role clarity (Rahmawati & Suherman, 2024).

These findings align with human resource management theory emphasizing job–person fit as a prerequisite for effective placement (Dessler, 2013). While internal mobility is theoretically recognized as a mechanism for optimizing talent utilization (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023), the reviewed studies indicate that competency alignment remains inconsistently applied in practice, highlighting an operational gap in transfer governance.

### **Procedural Fairness and Transparency**

Procedural fairness and transparency emerge as critical determinants of employee acceptance toward transfer decisions. Empirical findings demonstrate that employees are more willing to accept reassignment when transfer procedures are perceived as objective, transparent, and supported by clear explanations (Warman et al., 2022). Fair and consistent procedures strengthen trust in management and contribute to positive work attitudes during organizational transitions.

Conversely, studies focusing on motivation and job satisfaction indicate that poorly managed or unclear transfer processes are associated with decreased motivation, lower job satisfaction, and negative employee responses (Setiawan, 2022). These reactions suggest that employees evaluate transfer decisions not only based on their outcomes but also on the fairness of the process through which they are

implemented. Sudden or poorly communicated transfers are more likely to be perceived as arbitrary, even when they are formally justified.

Policy-oriented studies further indicate that merit-based mutation and placement policies contribute to improved performance and career development outcomes when implemented consistently and transparently (Ulfah & Prastiwi, 2020). Similarly, literature on outsourced employment contexts shows that competency-based transfer and placement policies positively influence job quality and satisfaction, although these studies primarily emphasize policy outcomes rather than operational processes (Mulyadi et al., 2022). Taken together, these findings suggest that procedural fairness is closely linked to policy clarity but remains unevenly operationalized at the organizational level.

Organizational justice theory provides a useful lens for interpreting these patterns, as it emphasizes that procedural fairness influences employee trust, commitment, and willingness to comply with organizational decisions (Colquitt, 2001). However, the reviewed literature indicates that fairness is often treated as a perceptual outcome rather than as an institutionalized organizational standard embedded in transfer systems, highlighting an important gap between normative expectations and practice.

### **Leadership Support and Communication**

Leadership support and communication play a crucial role in shaping employee experiences during transfer processes. Empirical evidence shows that supervisors who provide guidance, reassurance, and clear role expectations help reduce uncertainty and facilitate smoother adjustment to new assignments (Muaja et al., 2022; Sola & Mei, 2024). Leadership involvement is particularly important during the early transition phase, when employees face unfamiliar tasks, work environments, and performance expectations.

Effective communication further reinforces leadership support by ensuring that employees understand the rationale, objectives, and implications of the transfer. Studies indicate that clear explanation of transfer decisions contributes to higher acceptance and reduces anxiety and resistance (Setiawan, 2022). In contrast, limited communication or delayed information often results in confusion, stress, and negative perceptions toward management, even when transfers are implemented in accordance with organizational policy.

Conceptual analyses also highlight that transfer decisions interact with work environment conditions and employee expectations. Transfers perceived as misaligned with employee needs or poorly supported by leadership are associated with increased turnover intention and adverse motivational responses (Seth, 2023). Leadership behavior therefore shapes whether transfer is interpreted as a developmental opportunity or as an organizational imposition.

Despite the recognized importance of leadership, the reviewed literature rarely examines leadership support as part of a formalized transfer system. Instead, leadership involvement tends to depend on individual supervisory practices, resulting in inconsistent employee experiences across organizations (Kurniawan, 2023). This finding underscores the need to institutionalize communication protocols and leadership responsibilities within transfer governance.

### **Transfer Outcomes: Performance, Development, and Adaptability**

Employee transfer can generate positive outcomes at both the individual and organizational levels, when implemented effectively. Several studies show that well-managed transfers support performance improvement, skill enhancement, and broader career development by exposing employees to diverse tasks and responsibilities (Mea, 2022; Zai et al., 2024). Transfers have also been associated with higher levels of engagement and satisfaction, particularly when supported by empowerment practices and conducive work environments (Ambarwati et al., 2023; Muaja et al., 2022).

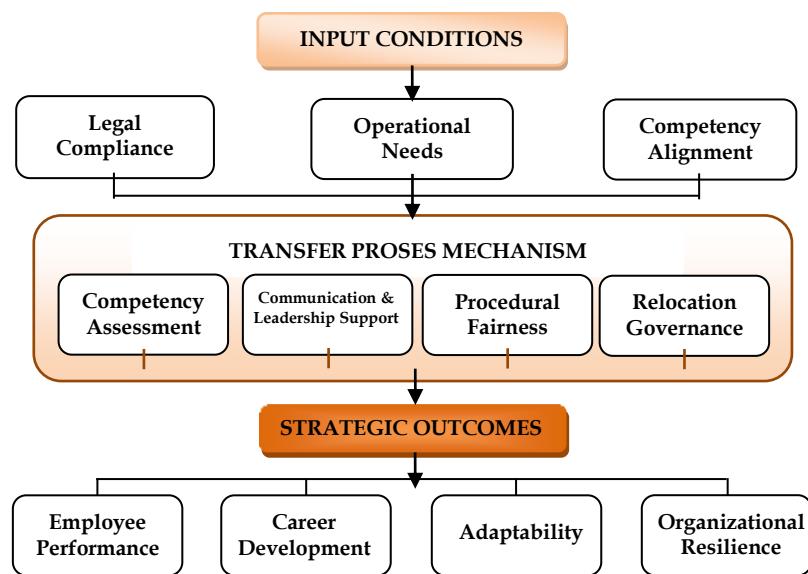
At the organizational level, transfer contributes to adaptability by enabling the reallocation of talent in response to changing operational demands. Broader internal mobility literature reinforces that employee transfer, as part of internal mobility systems, supports engagement, skill development, and

organizational adjustment, even though much of the existing evidence remains conceptual and cross-contextual (Balamurugan & Akila, 2024; Ray, 2024). This suggests that transfer plays a role in strengthening organizational responsiveness, albeit one that is not yet fully operationalized in empirical studies.

However, the reviewed studies also demonstrate that transfer outcomes are contingent on implementation quality. Transfers executed without adequate preparation, competency alignment, or communication may result in temporary performance decline, dissatisfaction, or resistance (Purwaningrum & Hansyah, 2025; Setiawan, 2022). These contrasting findings highlight that transfer is not inherently beneficial; its effectiveness depends on the integration of competency assessment, fairness, leadership support, and legal compliance.

### Synthesis of Findings and Implications for an Integrated Employee Transfer Framework

Taken together, the findings indicate that employee transfer operates as a multidimensional governance process shaped by competency alignment, procedural fairness, leadership support, and legal compliance. The effectiveness of transfer depends not on the reassignment decision itself but on the quality of the processes that accompany it. These interrelated dimensions provide the empirical and conceptual basis for the Employee Transfer Framework developed in this study.



**Figure 1. Employee Transfer Framework**

The Employee Transfer Framework conceptualizes employee transfer as a structured governance process rather than a standalone administrative decision. Built upon the synthesis of empirical findings and the Indonesian legal context, the framework explains how transfer effectiveness emerges from the interaction between input conditions, transfer process mechanisms, and strategic outcomes.

#### Input Conditions

The first component of the framework comprises the input conditions that determine whether a transfer decision is legitimate, justified, and feasible. Legal compliance constitutes the foundational condition, as employee transfer in Indonesia is a regulated employment action. Organizations must ensure alignment with statutory provisions concerning job suitability, contractual clarity, wage protection, and relocation entitlements. Failure to meet these requirements may undermine procedural legitimacy and expose organizations to legal disputes.

Beyond legal considerations, organizational needs provide the operational rationale for transfer decisions. These needs may include staffing shortages, workload redistribution, project-based assignments, restructuring, or organizational expansion. Transfers that lack a clear organizational justification are more likely to be perceived by employees as arbitrary rather than developmental.

The final input condition is competency alignment, which assesses the compatibility between employee capabilities and the requirements of the receiving position. Empirical evidence consistently indicates that misalignment at this stage is a primary source of performance decline and adjustment difficulties. Together, these input conditions ensure that transfer decisions are legally sound, operationally necessary, and aligned with employee capabilities.

### **Transfer Process Mechanisms**

The second component of the framework focuses on the mechanisms through which transfer decisions are implemented and translated into practice. Competency assessment functions as the core mechanism for validating job–person fit and minimizing role ambiguity. Structured assessment processes reduce reliance on subjective judgment and support transparent placement decisions.

Procedural fairness represents a central governance principle within the transfer process. Transparent criteria, consistent application, and clear documentation strengthen employee trust and acceptance of reassignment. Empirical findings show that when fairness is perceived as weak or inconsistent, resistance may occur regardless of the formal justification for transfer.

Communication and leadership support operate as relational mechanisms that shape employee adjustment during transfer. Clear communication regarding the rationale, expectations, and implications of reassignment reduces uncertainty and psychological strain. Leadership support, particularly during the early transition period, facilitates readiness and accelerates performance stabilization. Without institutionalized communication protocols and defined supervisory responsibilities, even legally compliant and competency-based transfers may fail to achieve their intended outcomes.

Relocation governance constitutes an additional process mechanism in cases involving geographic transfer. This includes arrangements related to housing, allowances, wage adjustment, and family considerations. Effective relocation governance reinforces procedural fairness and signals organizational commitment to employee welfare.

### **Strategic Outcomes**

When input conditions and transfer process mechanisms are coherently aligned, employee transfer generates strategic outcomes at both individual and organizational levels. At the employee level, transfer supports clearer role understanding, skill development, broader work experience, and career progression, contributing to higher engagement and long-term capability growth.

At the organizational level, transfer functions as a strategic tool for adaptability. By enabling dynamic redistribution of talent, organizations can respond more effectively to changing operational demands, reduce skill bottlenecks, and enhance cross-functional learning. Over time, well-governed transfer practices strengthen organizational resilience through increased flexibility and internal knowledge flow.

Conversely, when transfer is implemented without adequate governance, outcomes may include resistance, performance decline, dissatisfaction, and legal disputes. This reinforces that transfer effectiveness is contingent on governance quality rather than on mobility itself.

### **Integrative Contributions of the Framework**

The Employee Transfer Framework advances existing literature by explicitly integrating legal mandates, organizational processes, and behavioural dynamics within a single analytical structure. Unlike prior studies that examine transfer outcomes, fairness perceptions, or policy compliance in isolation, this framework demonstrates how these dimensions interact systematically to shape transfer effectiveness.

By positioning employee transfer as a multidimensional governance process, the framework offers both conceptual clarification and practical guidance. It provides private-sector organizations in Indonesia with a structured reference for designing transfer practices that are legally compliant, procedurally fair, competency-based, and strategically adaptive.

## Conclusion

Employee transfer in Indonesian organizations should be understood as a multidimensional governance practice rather than a purely administrative reassignment. This integrative review demonstrates that effective transfer implementation depends on the alignment of legal compliance, organizational needs, procedural clarity, and employee psychological readiness. When these dimensions are coherently managed, employee transfer can enhance performance, support capability development, and contribute to organizational adaptability.

The findings further indicate that transfer effectiveness is determined less by the reassignment decision itself than by the quality of the processes that accompany it. Legal provisions establish legitimacy and enforceability, competency alignment ensures role suitability, procedural fairness fosters trust and acceptance, and leadership support facilitates employee adjustment. The absence of any of these elements increases the likelihood of resistance, dissatisfaction, performance decline, and potential legal disputes.

This study contributes to the literature by proposing an integrative Employee Transfer Framework that connects input conditions, transfer process mechanisms, and strategic outcomes within a single analytical structure. By positioning employee transfer as a governance process shaped by legal, organizational, and behavioural dimensions, the framework provides practical guidance for private-sector organizations in Indonesia to design transfer practices that are structured, fair, and adaptive.

Future research may explore employees' psychological experiences during transfer, the use of digital and data-driven tools in mobility decision-making, and the integration of transfer practices within broader talent development and workforce adaptability strategies. Such research would further strengthen understanding of employee transfer as a strategic instrument for sustainable organizational performance.

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