

Work Motivation and Organizational Culture Mediating Transformational Leadership on Employee Performance

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

received: 05/01/2026

revised: 10/02/2026

accepted: 01/04/2026

Keywords:

Transformational Leadership; Work Motivation; Organizational Culture; Employee Performance

DOI:

10.32509/mirshus.v6i1.152

ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of transformational leadership on employee performance, with work motivation and organizational culture as mediating variables. The research was conducted to understand the mechanisms through which leadership affects employee performance within organizational settings. A quantitative approach with a cross-sectional research design was employed. Data were collected through a questionnaire distributed to 304 employees, and the analysis was conducted using path analysis and the Sobel test to examine both direct and indirect relationships among variables. The results indicate that transformational leadership significantly influences work motivation and employee performance. Work motivation also has a significant positive effect on employee performance and plays a mediating role in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. However, transformational leadership does not significantly influence organizational culture, and organizational culture does not mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. These findings contribute to leadership and organizational behavior literature by demonstrating that the effectiveness of transformational leadership in improving employee performance operates primarily through individual motivational mechanisms rather than through broader organizational culture. Practically, the results suggest that organizations should strengthen leadership practices that enhance employee motivation in order to improve performance outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

Human resources are widely recognized as one of the most strategic assets in determining organizational effectiveness and long-term sustainability. In contemporary

organizations, employee performance plays a crucial role in ensuring that institutional objectives are achieved effectively and efficiently. Employee performance reflects the extent to which individuals are able to accomplish work responsibilities in terms of quality, quantity, and timeliness while aligning their contributions with organizational goals. Employees who possess adequate knowledge, skills, and professional competencies tend to demonstrate productive work behavior and contribute positively to organizational outcomes. Consequently, organizations must continuously develop managerial practices and supportive work environments that enable employees to perform optimally.

However, maintaining high levels of employee performance has become increasingly challenging due to rapid organizational change, technological development, and growing demands for innovation. Modern organizations require employees not only to perform routine tasks but also to demonstrate adaptability, creativity, and collaborative capabilities. In this context, leadership becomes a critical managerial factor that shapes employee attitudes, motivation, and work behavior. Leadership influences how employees interpret organizational goals, respond to challenges, and coordinate their efforts to achieve collective outcomes (Banks et al., 2016). Effective leadership is therefore essential for fostering an organizational environment that supports high levels of employee engagement and performance.

Among various leadership approaches, transformational leadership has received significant scholarly attention because of its ability to inspire employees and promote organizational change. Transformational leadership refers to a leadership style in which leaders motivate followers to transcend their personal interests and focus on achieving collective organizational goals. Transformational leaders articulate a clear vision, provide intellectual stimulation, and demonstrate individualized consideration toward employees. Through these behaviors, leaders can foster trust, commitment, and intrinsic motivation among employees. Previous studies suggest that transformational leadership positively influences employee engagement, innovative behavior, and organizational performance across various sectors (Choi et al., 2016; Hoch et al., 2018). More recent studies also emphasize that transformational leadership plays a critical role in encouraging knowledge sharing, creativity, and collaborative learning within organizations (Puni et al., 2021; Sethibe & Steyn, 2021).

Despite the widely acknowledged benefits of transformational leadership, empirical findings regarding its influence on employee performance remain somewhat inconsistent. Some studies report a significant direct effect of transformational leadership on employee performance, while others indicate that its influence operates indirectly through mediating organizational factors. For instance, Al-Husseini and Elbeltagi (2018) found that transformational leadership does not directly affect knowledge-sharing behavior but contributes indirectly through the development of a supportive knowledge-sharing culture. Similarly, other studies suggest that the effectiveness of transformational leadership may depend on contextual factors such as trust in leadership, organizational climate, and employee readiness for change (Dinata Kusumah et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2023). These findings indicate that leadership practices often influence employee outcomes through broader organizational mechanisms rather than through direct behavioral control.

In addition to leadership, work motivation is widely recognized as another important determinant of employee performance. Work motivation refers to the internal and external

forces that initiate, direct, and sustain work-related behavior toward achieving organizational objectives. Employees who possess high levels of motivation tend to exhibit greater persistence, stronger commitment, and higher levels of initiative in performing their tasks. As a result, motivated employees are more likely to achieve higher performance outcomes. Previous research has demonstrated that work motivation positively influences job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and employee productivity (Dewi Putri Anjar Wulan et al., 2018). Recent studies also highlight that motivation enhances employees' willingness to engage in innovative activities and knowledge-sharing behaviors that contribute to organizational learning and performance improvement (Fischer et al., 2022).

Nevertheless, the relationship between motivation and employee performance is not always straightforward. Some studies have found that motivation does not significantly influence performance when organizational conditions do not support employee participation, collaboration, or professional development. These inconsistencies suggest that motivation alone may not be sufficient to improve employee performance unless it is supported by conducive organizational environments. Intrinsic motivational factors such as recognition, meaningful work, autonomy, and opportunities for personal growth are increasingly recognized as important drivers of employee engagement and performance in modern organizations (Deci et al., 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2020).

Organizational culture represents one of the most influential contextual factors that shape employee behavior in the workplace. Organizational culture refers to the shared values, norms, beliefs, and practices that guide how employees interact and perform their roles within an organization. A strong organizational culture can foster collaboration, trust, and shared commitment among employees, thereby enhancing organizational effectiveness. In particular, cultures that encourage open communication and knowledge sharing enable employees to exchange ideas, learn from each other, and continuously improve their competencies. Such collaborative environments are especially important in knowledge-based organizations where collective learning plays a central role in organizational success (Schein & Schein, 2017; Fischer et al., 2022).

Organizations are therefore encouraged to create structures and mechanisms that facilitate knowledge exchange among employees, including collaborative meetings, discussion forums, and organizational learning initiatives (Abdul-Jalal & Toulson, 2013). When knowledge sharing is supported by fair reward systems and participatory organizational structures, it can strengthen trust among employees and foster a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement. In turn, such cultural environments enhance employee engagement and contribute to higher levels of performance.

Although previous studies have extensively examined the relationships among transformational leadership, work motivation, organizational culture, and employee performance, several research gaps remain. First, empirical findings regarding the direct effects of transformational leadership and work motivation on employee performance remain inconsistent across different organizational contexts. Second, many studies analyze these variables separately, resulting in a fragmented understanding of how leadership and motivational factors interact within broader organizational environments. Third, limited research has explored the mediating role of organizational culture in explaining how transformational leadership and work motivation jointly influence employee performance within an integrated analytical framework.

Addressing these gaps is important for developing a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms that shape employee performance within organizations. Organizational culture may function as a critical mechanism that translates leadership practices and motivational factors into improved employee outcomes. By shaping shared values, communication patterns, and collaborative practices, organizational culture can strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and motivation in influencing employee behavior and performance.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the effects of transformational leadership and work motivation on employee performance, both directly and indirectly through organizational culture. By integrating these variables into a single conceptual framework, this study seeks to provide a more comprehensive explanation of how leadership and motivational factors interact with organizational culture to influence employee performance. The findings of this research are expected to contribute to the development of organizational behavior and human resource management literature while also offering practical insights for organizations seeking to enhance employee performance through effective leadership and supportive organizational cultures.

THEORETICAL BASIS

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is seen as a representative form of leadership, meeting the demands of the decentralization era. Transformational leadership offers many benefits for organizational development. A creative leader will have more freedom to explore their vision without being constrained by rigid rules for creativity. According to Faris et al., (2017), transformational leadership is able to transform and motivate followers by: (a) making them more aware of the importance of the results of a job, (b) encouraging them to prioritize the organization or team over their own interests, and (c) activating the need for betterment. Transformational leadership strives for each individual and team to work beyond status. A transformational leader is someone who has the power to bring about change within team members and within the organization as a whole. Transformational leadership is a leader's effort to transform their followers to a higher level of need (Bass et al., 2003). Leaders can transform their followers, to develop organizational culture to achieve goals. Through transformational leadership, followers can achieve performance that exceeds the leader's expectations. Leaders and followers both have visions, goals, motivations, desires, needs, aspirations, and hopes for the future that are integrated with the leader's desires. Transformational leadership can motivate and inspire followers and is similar to visionary and charismatic leadership (Braun, Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013). This is because transformational leadership aims to increase followers' intrinsic motivation in achieving the leader's goals and aspirations. Transformational leadership has four main domains: idealized influence; inspirational motivation; intellectual stimulation; and individualized consideration (Doody & Doody, 2012).

Transformational leadership is in line with Bernard, M. Bass and B.J. Avolio (1990), which has the following indicators: a) Individual consideration. Namely, leaders can develop followers by creating a supportive organizational environment and culture. Leaders' attention to individual followers is more about the level of followers to listen to their desires and needs. Leaders provide empathy and support to followers; open open communication

channels and provide challenges to them. Followers have intrinsic motivation to carry out their tasks; b) Intellectual stimulation; meaning a leader stimulates followers to be creative and innovative. Leaders encourage their followers to use their imagination and to challenge the way things are done that are accepted by the social system; c) Inspirational motivation; namely, leaders create a clear picture of a future state (vision) that is optimistic and can be achieved and encourage followers to raise expectations and commit themselves to that vision; d) Idealized influence; namely, leaders act as role models. They show determination, steadfastness in achieving goals, take full responsibility for their actions and show high confidence in the vision. Leaders are ready to sacrifice themselves, give rewards for achievements and honor to followers.

Work Motivation

According to Heny Sidanti (2015), work motivation is defined as something that creates a drive or enthusiasm for work, or a driving force for work enthusiasm. Work motivation also provides the energy that drives all existing potential, creates high and noble desires, and increases togetherness in achieving organizational goals. In other words, work motivation, according to this definition, is a condition that influences the awakening, directing, and maintaining behavior related to the work environment. Work motivation is seen as a driving force that will encourage employees to improve their abilities to carry out their assigned duties and responsibilities. In carrying out their obligations, it is aimed at achieving predetermined organizational goals in accordance with the outlines contained in its vision and mission (Sondang P. Siagian, 2008). Work motivation is something that can generate work encouragement or enthusiasm. They also further touched on how the level of motivation will affect future work results. Therefore, it is natural that each individual has different work results depending on their motivation (As'ad., A. 2021). Work motivation is a condition that can influence an individual in improving, directing, and maintaining behavior related to the world of work.

According to Siswanto Sastrohadiwiryono (2008) that a condition that can influence an individual in improving, directing and maintaining behavior related to work. The intended behavior can involve many things starting from goal setting, work motives, developing skills, and many others, by implementing one or several of them, it is expected to be able to increase a person's motivation in working to achieve previously determined organizational goals. Employees to be motivated need support from cooperation between members and leaders in realizing the organization's vision and mission. Work motivation is measured by indicators: a) Goals to be achieved; namely every human being certainly has a goal to be achieved whether in terms of personal life, social, or broader areas closely related to the targets the company wants to achieve in the future; b) Aware of the responsibilities carried; meaning that every regulation has a responsibility that needs to be implemented to make a work process run well; c) Implementation of Obligations; namely the relationship between rights and obligations cannot be separated. Realizing responsibility for obligations that need to be completed according to deadlines; d) Forming Skills; namely there are many skills needed, one of which is time management. Skills themselves are a person's ability to carry out a well-structured behavioral pattern in order to achieve their goals. The formation of skills does not only involve one part of the body, but requires the cooperation of several of them. One of the most important parts is mastery of cognitive mental functions. When skills

have been formed, a person can coordinate body parts both physically and mentally optimally; e) Forming Expertise; The desire to have certain skills is an indicator of work motivation that can effectively increase enthusiasm. When an employee targets a goal, they will try to achieve it with various efforts and hard work without knowing the word give up; f) Willingness; namely working with willingness allows for more enthusiasm in working. Factors that can shape willingness can be from the comfort of working, feeling indebted, or wanting to achieve certain targets; g) Will; namely the drive to do something that is influenced by motivation from within humans and external factors; h) Driving Force; Each individual generally has a driving force within them that tends to vary. Driving force is closely related to the driving force in increasing a person's willingness to carry out certain actions. Driving force will make an individual able to motivate himself to achieve goals both in personal life, social life, or work-related.

Organization Culture

According to Nurdin Ismail (2012), organizational culture is a set of assumptions, norms, and values as a belief system that grows and develops within an organization as a guideline for organizational members, so that the organization is able to carry out external and internal adaptations to maintain its existence. Organizational culture becomes the basis for employee orientation to pay attention to the interests of all employees. Furthermore, organizational culture is interpreted as values or behavioral norms that are understood and accepted together by organizational members as rules of behavior contained in the organization (Chaerudin, 2019). Organizational culture when associated with the behavior of an employee in an organization, then according to Sulaksono Hari (2015) that organizational culture is actually a system adopted by all members of the organization that distinguishes one organization from another. Because culture is a system adopted by an organization, organizational culture is divided into several parts, namely: 1) Organizational culture that can create a clear difference between one organization and another; 2) Organizational culture that brings into an identity for the members of the organization; 3) Organizational culture facilitates the emergence of a broader commitment than one's individual self-interest; 4) Organizational culture helps unite the organization by providing appropriate standards for employees to do; 5) Organizational culture as a control that guides and shapes employee attitudes and behavior. Thus the functions of organizational culture are: a) Culture has a role to define boundaries, this creates a difference between one organization and another; b) Conveys a sense of identity for members of the organization; c) Culture will facilitate commitment to something greater than individual self-interest; d) culture encourages the stability of the social system, which is culture as a social tool that helps bind the organization together by providing standards for what employees should say and do; e) Taking feelings and control mechanisms that guide and shape employee behavior and behavior. Organizational culture is measured in line with Sulaksono, Hari (2015) that organizational culture has the following dimensions and indicators: 1) Innovative in calculating risks, such as: (a) Creating new ideas for the company's success; (b) Dare to take risks in developing new ideas; 2) Results-oriented, such as: (a) Setting targets to be achieved by the company; (b) Assessing the results of work that has been carried out; 3) Oriented to all employee interests, such as: (a) Meeting the needs to carry out and do work; (b) Supporting employee achievement; 4) Detail-oriented in tasks, such as: (a) Careful in carrying out tasks; (b)

Accuracy of work results.

Employee Performance

According to Mangkunegara (2010), employee performance is the quality and quantity of work results achieved by an employee in carrying out his duties in accordance with the responsibilities given to him. Performance is a management process in an organization as a whole where the results of the work must be shown concretely and can be measured (compared to predetermined standards). In carrying out employee performance assessments, there are several aspects that become the starting point for measurement, although until now there has been no similarity between one organization and another in determining the elements that must be assessed in the performance assessment process carried out by management or the authorized party in providing the assessment. This is because apart from there being differences in expectations from each organization, there is also no standard regarding the elements that must be held in the assessment. According to Hasibuan (2008), the aspects assessed in employee performance assessment include the following: a) Loyalty; b) Work Results; c. Honesty; d) Discipline; e) Creativity; f) Cooperation; g) Leadership; h) Personality; i) Initiative; j) Skills; k) Responsibility. The focus of performance measurement is usually on the outcome and not the input or process. Where the intended outcome is usually the work produced by individuals or the organization as a whole must be able to meet the expectations and needs of the community as a benchmark for the success of public sector organizations. According to Fauzan and Rahmadewi (2013), there are several factors that influence employee performance, namely: 1) Determining organizational goals, objectives, and strategies; 2) Formulating performance indicators and measures; 3) Measuring the level of achievement of organizational goals and objectives; 4) Performance evaluation/feedback, assessment of organizational progress, 5) Improving the quality of decision making and accountability.

In line with Mangkunegara (2010; 21) that employee performance is interpreted as work results that have speed, accuracy, quality and quantity achieved in carrying out their duties in accordance with the responsibilities given to them. Overall, the work results must be able to be shown concretely and measurably according to predetermined standards. Employee performance has the following indicators: 1) Quality of work; namely the quality of work produced according to the conditions that have been determined and exceed expectations; 2) Quantity of work; namely the amount of work that has been done in a specified time period based on the achievement of key performance indicators (IKU); 3) Consistency of employee members; namely the ability to improve skills and self-knowledge; 4) Cooperation; namely the ability and willingness to cooperate with others (fellow employee members); 5) Obeying regulations; The attitude of members who are capable of obeying regulations and loyalty in carrying out work.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach classified as an explanatory research type that aims to analyze the causal relationship between independent and dependent variables, namely; transformational leadership, work motivation, organizational culture and employee performance. The selected population was 1,272 respondents from the South Jakarta Metro Police. A sample of 304 employees was taken using purposive sampling, a sampling technique

that uses the Slovin formula with a margin of error of 5%. Data analysis used path analysis with the help of the Sobel- test application. Primary data was obtained by filling out questionnaires distributed directly to respondents. To meet the quality of data, validity, reliability and homogeneity tests were carried out for each variable (Ghozali,.I. 2017:52). In addition to quality data, another prerequisite is that the data must be normally distributed (Sugiono, 2009:184).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The distribution of questionnaires resulted in 304 valid responses. Based on gender characteristics, the respondents were dominated by male employees, totaling 225 respondents (74.01%), while female respondents accounted for 79 individuals (25.99%). This indicates that male employees represent the majority of the workforce within the organization.

In terms of educational background, the majority of respondents had an education level ranging from senior high school to diploma (D3), totaling 220 employees or 72.36%. Meanwhile, respondents with undergraduate to postgraduate education (S1–S3) accounted for 84 individuals or 27.64%. This distribution indicates that the workforce is largely composed of employees with vocational or technical educational backgrounds.

The quality of the research data was tested using validity and reliability tests. The validity test was conducted by correlating each item score with the total score of all items and comparing it with the product-moment r-table value at $df = 304 - 3$. The instrument items were considered valid when the correlation coefficient exceeded the r-table value of 0.1129.

Meanwhile, the reliability test was conducted using Cronbach's alpha coefficient to determine the internal consistency of each variable. A questionnaire is considered reliable if it produces consistent results when measurements are repeated under similar conditions.

Table 1. Results of the Validity and Reliability Test of Instruments for All Research Variables

Variable	Validity	Reliability		Desicion	
	R Statistic is Greather Than R Product Moment Table	Cronbach Alpha	N of Item	Valid	Reliable
Transformational Leadership	Medium	0.971	9	Valid	Reliable
Work Motivation	Medium	0.929	8	Valid	Reliable
Organization Culture	Medium	0.922	8	Valid	Reliable
Employee Performance	Medium	0.908	6	Valid	Reliable

Source: Processed primary data, 2025.

Table 1 shows that all research instruments demonstrated high validity and reliability levels. Each variable obtained a Cronbach's alpha value greater than 0.7, indicating strong internal consistency among the measurement items.

Transformational leadership obtained a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.971 with nine valid indicators. Work motivation obtained a reliability coefficient of 0.929 with eight indicators, while organizational culture achieved a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.922 with eight indicators. Employee performance showed a reliability coefficient of 0.908 with six indicators. These results indicate that all variables met the required standards of reliability and validity and were therefore suitable for further statistical analysis.. The results are shown in Table 2 below:

To test the normality of the data, the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was employed. The results of the normality test are presented in Table 2 and 3:

Table 2. Results of the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		Unstandardi
N		304
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	1.25256026
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.046
	Positive	.023
	Negative	-.046
Test Statistic		.046
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 ^{c,d}
Test distribution is Normal		

Table 3. Results of the Direct Effect Model Equation Analysis

Model	Direct Effect Sig	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	Transformation Leadership→ Work Motivation	27.137	2.099	0.155	12.926	0.000
2	Transformational Leadership→ Organization Culture	31.980	2.019	0.034	0.600	0.549
3	Transformational Leadership→ Employee Performance	30.138	0.890	-0.351	-6.505	0.000
4	Work Motivation→ Employee Performance	36.269	0.857	-0.356	-7.608	0.000
-	Organization Culture→ Employee Performance	36.269	0.587	-0.427	-9.133	0.000

The test results show that the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value is 0.200, which is greater than the significance threshold of 0.05. This indicates that the data are normally distributed and meet the assumptions required for parametric statistical analysis.

Furthermore, path analysis was conducted to examine both the direct and indirect effects among the variables in the research model. The results of the indirect effect analysis using the Sobel test are illustrated in Figure 1.

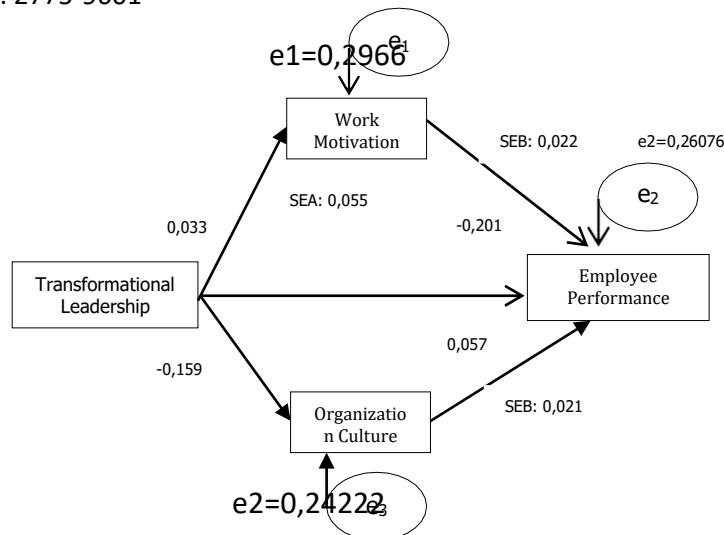


Figure 1. Results of the Indirect Effect Analysis (Path Analysis) in the Model Equation

The Sobel test results show that the indirect effect of transformational leadership on employee performance through work motivation is significant, with a Sobel test value of -2.57385 . This value is greater than the direct effect coefficient (-1.19679), indicating that work motivation plays a mediating role in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance.

In contrast, the Sobel test value for the indirect effect of transformational leadership on employee performance through organizational culture is -0.59871 , which is smaller than the direct effect value. This result indicates that organizational culture does not mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance in this study.

Therefore, the analysis of the direct and indirect influences in the research model equations can be concluded as follows:

1. Transformational Leadership and Work Motivation

The findings indicate that transformational leadership significantly influences employee work motivation. This result supports the theoretical perspective that transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees by communicating a clear vision, providing intellectual stimulation, and offering individualized consideration.

According to leadership theory, transformational leaders play a crucial role in shaping employees' psychological attachment to their work. Through inspirational motivation and personal encouragement, leaders are able to stimulate employees' intrinsic motivation and encourage them to perform beyond minimum expectations. When employees perceive that their leaders demonstrate commitment, confidence, and clear direction, they are more likely to develop stronger motivation to contribute to organizational goals. This finding is consistent with previous studies by Roy et al. (2014) and Faris et al. (2017), which suggest that transformational leadership enhances employees' motivation by fostering a supportive work environment and encouraging personal development.

2. Transformational Leadership and Organizational Culture

The results show that transformational leadership does not significantly influence organizational culture. This finding suggests that leadership behavior alone may not be sufficient to shape or transform organizational culture, particularly within bureaucratic or highly structured institutions.

From a theoretical perspective, organizational culture is a complex and deeply embedded

system of shared values, beliefs, and norms that evolves over time. According to organizational culture theory, culture is shaped not only by leadership but also by historical traditions, institutional policies, and collective organizational experiences. Therefore, cultural transformation often requires long-term structural changes rather than relying solely on individual leadership behavior.

This finding indicates that within the studied organization, cultural patterns may already be institutionalized and relatively resistant to leadership influence. As a result, even though transformational leaders may attempt to encourage innovation and collaboration, these efforts may not immediately translate into broader cultural change.

This result differs from the findings of Ahmad Zaid Ridwan (2024), who reported that transformational leadership significantly influences organizational culture. The discrepancy may be explained by contextual differences between organizations, particularly regarding organizational structure, bureaucratic characteristics, and the level of institutional flexibility.

3. Transformational Leadership and Employee Performance

The results also demonstrate that transformational leadership has a significant effect on employee performance. This finding supports leadership theory, which suggests that effective leadership behaviors can directly influence employees' productivity and work outcomes.

Transformational leaders tend to build trust, admiration, and respect among employees. Such psychological relationships encourage employees to commit more strongly to their work responsibilities and organizational goals. When employees perceive their leaders as supportive and visionary, they are more likely to increase their level of effort and engagement, which ultimately contributes to improved performance.

This finding is consistent with Al-Barqy (2015), who found that effective leadership plays an essential role in helping organizations maintain performance, particularly in dynamic and uncertain environments.

4. Work Motivation and Employee Performance

The findings confirm that work motivation significantly influences employee performance. This relationship can be explained through motivational theories, particularly expectancy theory, which suggests that employees are more likely to exert greater effort when they believe their efforts will lead to desirable outcomes.

Motivated employees tend to demonstrate higher levels of persistence, commitment, and initiative in performing their tasks. As a result, they are more capable of achieving higher performance levels. When employees feel motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically, they are more likely to align their individual goals with organizational objectives.

This finding is consistent with previous research by Dewi Putri Anjar Wulan et al. (2018), which found that work motivation significantly contributes to improved employee performance.

5. Organizational Culture and Employee Performance

The study also shows that organizational culture significantly influences employee performance. Organizational culture provides behavioral guidelines that shape employees' attitudes, interactions, and work practices within the organization.

A positive organizational culture fosters collaboration, trust, and a shared commitment to organizational goals. Such conditions create a conducive work environment that

encourages employees to perform their duties more effectively.

This finding aligns with the research of Reni Febrina and Adi Prawira (2019), who demonstrated that organizational culture plays a significant role in shaping employee performance.

6. The Mediating Role of Work Motivation

The results show that work motivation mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. This finding supports the theoretical argument that leadership influences performance indirectly through psychological mechanisms such as motivation.

Transformational leaders do not only influence performance directly; they also shape employees' internal motivation. Through inspirational communication, intellectual stimulation, and individual support, leaders enhance employees' motivation to achieve higher levels of performance.

Therefore, motivation acts as an important psychological bridge linking leadership behavior and performance outcomes. When employees feel inspired and valued by their leaders, they develop stronger motivation that ultimately translates into improved work performance.

7. The Absence of Organizational Culture as a Mediating Variable

Interestingly, the findings show that organizational culture does not mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. This result suggests that the influence of leadership on performance occurs more directly or through individual-level mechanisms such as motivation rather than through broader organizational culture.

One possible explanation is that cultural structures within the organization may already be well established and less responsive to short-term leadership influence. In such contexts, leadership behaviors may directly affect employees' motivation and performance without significantly altering the overall cultural framework.

From a leadership theory perspective, this finding highlights that transformational leadership may operate more strongly at the individual level rather than the organizational level in certain institutional contexts. This indicates that leadership effectiveness in improving performance may depend more on motivational mechanisms than on cultural transformation.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that transformational leadership has a significant role in improving employee performance, both directly and indirectly through work motivation. Leaders who are able to articulate clear expectations, demonstrate strong commitment to organizational goals, and inspire enthusiasm and optimism among their subordinates can effectively enhance employees' work motivation. This motivation encourages employees to work more diligently, creatively, and responsibly, which ultimately leads to higher performance levels. Therefore, work motivation is confirmed as a crucial mediating variable in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance.

In contrast, transformational leadership was found to have no significant effect on organizational culture, and organizational culture does not mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. This indicates that organizational

culture is influenced by broader institutional values, long-established norms, and contextual factors that extend beyond leadership behavior alone. Nevertheless, organizational culture independently affects employee performance by creating a sense of comfort, security, and a conducive working environment. A positive organizational culture enables employees to feel more engaged and committed, thereby supporting optimal performance even though it does not function as a mediating variable in this study.

Overall, employee performance is largely determined by the effectiveness of leadership practices that prioritize motivation and direct support for subordinates rather than relying solely on cultural mechanisms. Leaders who are able to adapt their leadership style to the characteristics and needs of their employees are more likely to foster higher motivation and achieve better performance outcomes.

Based on these findings, this study recommends that organizations strengthen transformational leadership practices with a particular emphasis on enhancing employee work motivation through individual support, recognition, and clear performance expectations. Leaders should develop motivational approaches that are aligned with employees' individual characteristics to maximize performance. In addition, organizations should continue to cultivate a positive and supportive organizational culture, as it remains an important independent factor influencing employee performance. Future research is encouraged to examine other mediating or moderating variables, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, or employee engagement, and to apply different research contexts or longitudinal designs in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between leadership, motivation, organizational culture, and employee performance.

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