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## TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP, WORK ETHOS, AND MOTIVATION IN ENHANCING CIVIL SERVANT TEACHER PERFORMANCE IN NORTHERN CIANJUR

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze the determinants of teacher performance among State Civil Servant (ASN) senior high school teachers in the Northern Region of Cianjur Regency. Grounded in the Integrative Model of Organizational Behavior by Colquitt, this research specifically examines the effects of transformational leadership and work ethos, with the mediating role of work motivation. Employing a quantitative explanatory research design, data were collected from 223 ASN senior high school teachers using a structured questionnaire distributed through proportional random sampling. Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS). The results demonstrate that transformational leadership and work ethos have a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. A crucial finding proves that work motivation functions as a significant mediating variable, acting as a catalyst that translates managerial stimuli into tangible performance. The model exhibits strong predictive power with  $R^2$  values of 0.695 for Work Motivation and 0.684 for Teacher Performance. These findings suggest that strengthening transformational leadership and fostering a positive work ethos are essential for optimizing teacher professionalism in a digital administrative environment.

**Keywords:** civil servant teacher, Northern Cianjur regency, teacher performance, transformational leadership, work ethos, work motivation

### Introduction

Education serves as a strategic instrument in escalating the quality of superior and competitive human resources. Within the school ecosystem, teachers occupy a central position as the primary articulators who determine the effectiveness of pedagogical processes. The success of educational institutions in transforming the character and competence of students is heavily reliant on professional teacher performance. Performance is the value of a set of employee behaviors that contribute to the fulfillment of organizational goals (Colquitt, et al., 2019). As representatives of the educational bureaucracy, Civil Servant (ASN) teachers bear a significant responsibility to realize a result-based performance paradigm, as mandated by the Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform Regulation Number 6 of 2022 (Ministry of PANRB, 2022). However, PISA 2022 report indicates that the literacy and numeracy competencies of Indonesian students remain at levels requiring serious acceleration, with scores significantly below the OECD average (OECD, 2023). This empirical data implicitly indicates a pressing need for optimizing teacher performance at the educational unit level to bridge the competency gap.

In Cianjur Regency, particularly in the Northern region, the dynamics of ASN teacher performance face complex challenges. The transformation of educational governance through digital platforms demands rapid adaptation. Preliminary observations and interviews with school supervisors in the Northern Cianjur region suggest that administrative burdens from digital platforms have become a primary concern, affecting a significant portion of the teaching workforce (Cianjur Education Office, 2023). Furthermore, the collective memory post-earthquake disaster in 2022 serves as a critical external variable. This disaster caused a 20% decline in work focus among teachers in affected areas due to psychological trauma and damaged facilities (Juanda et al., 2023). This regional decline is also reflected in the broader national context, where reports a stagnancy in teacher-driven pedagogical quality in post-disruption environments (OECD, 2023). This phenomenon demonstrates that performance is not only influenced by technical proficiency but also by intertwined managerial and psychological factors that test teachers' mental resilience.

The transformational leadership of school principals emerges as a crucial factor in navigating these changes. According to Bass and Avolio (1994), transformational leaders motivate followers to work beyond expectations by altering their attitudes and values. Recent empirical evidence from Hidayat (Hidayat et al., 2023) suggests that inspirational motivation can enhance teacher self-efficacy in digital environments. However, these external factors require a solid internal foundation in the form of a work ethos. While leadership is vital, professional integrity and morality as components of work ethos serve as the anchoring energy for consistency in performance (Fitria & Limgiani, 2024). Despite these findings, recent studies from 2022 to 2024 show inconsistencies; for instance, leadership does not always directly improve performance in high-stress environments, suggesting the existence of mediating psychological mechanisms (Jeihan et al., 2022). This study positions work motivation as an intervening variable based on the Integrative Model of Organizational Behavior (Colquitt et al., 2019). Motivation is viewed as a psychological force that determines the direction, intensity, and persistence of behavior. While previous studies have examined these variables in corporate or general educational settings, there is a distinct lack of research specifically addressing the intersection of digital administrative disruption and post-disaster recovery within the Indonesian public school context. Prior studies have failed to examine how work motivation acts as a "golden bridge" specifically for ASN teachers who are bound by rigid bureaucratic regulations yet face volatile environmental shifts (Hikmah et al., 2023). Therefore, this study addresses this gap by simultaneously testing eight causal relationship paths in Northern Cianjur. Based on this background, the research questions are:

- (1) to what extent does transformational leadership affect teacher performance?
- (2) to what extent does work ethos affect teacher performance?
- (3) does work motivation mediate the relationship between leadership, work ethos, and teacher performance?

### Literature Review

This section establishes the theoretical foundation for investigating teacher performance determinants within Indonesian educational reforms. The review begins with the Integrative Model of Organizational Behavior as the primary lens to understand how organizational and individual mechanisms influence workplace outcomes. By synthesizing empirical studies and regulatory frameworks, this section identifies a research gap regarding the role of work motivation as a mediator in "dual-crisis" (post-disaster and digital-transition) settings.

### ***Grand theory: the integrative model of organizational behavior***

This study is anchored in the Integrative Model of Organizational Behavior by Colquitt (Colquitt et al., 2019). This model proposes that job performance is the result of a sequence of mechanisms. It identifies individual outcomes (job performance and organizational commitment) as being directly influenced by individual mechanisms, specifically motivation, job satisfaction, and stress.

These individual mechanisms are further driven by two major forces. First, organizational mechanisms including organizational culture and leadership (transformational leadership). secondly, individual characteristics such as personality, cultural values, and ability (work ethos).

In this study, transformational leadership (organizational mechanism) and work ethos (individual characteristic) are theorized to influence teacher performance (outcome) through the mediating process of work motivation (individual mechanism). This framework provides a robust justification for why external managerial directives and internal moral integrity must be processed through a psychological drive to generate high performance.

### ***Transformational leadership: critical review and empirical evidence***

Transformational leadership is conceptualized through four pillars: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Recent literature, however, has shifted focus toward how this style mitigates work-related barriers. A primary study found that transformational leadership significantly enhances the innovation capacity of teachers in high-pressure school environments (Hidayat et al., 2023). Conversely, the effectiveness of this leadership style is often distorted if leaders fail to address the digital administrative burden (technostress) experienced by subordinates (Jeihan et al., 2022). This comparison underscores that transformational leadership requires an intermediary variable to maintain its optimal impact on performance within volatile environments.

### ***Work ethos in the Indonesian educational context***

Work ethos is more than a moral concept; it is the foundation of professional behavior. In the Indonesian context, work ethos is deeply intertwined with values of integrity and public service. The study revealed that for ASN teachers, work ethos acts as a "psychological anchor" that maintains performance stability amidst massive digital reporting demands (Fitria & Limgiani, 2024). This is further corroborated research in West Java, which demonstrates that a strong work ethos rooted in moral commitment exhibits a stronger correlation with long-term performance than material incentives (Hikmah et al., 2023). These findings justify work ethos as an internal prerequisite that must be established before work motivation can be fully activated (Alfathan & Winata. 2022).

### ***The mediating role of work motivation***

This study consistently employs the term mediating variable to refer to work motivation as a psychological nexus. Drawing from an updated Herzbergian perspective, motivation is defined as the driving force determining the direction, intensity, and persistence of behavior. Primary

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empirical evidence confirms that leadership often fails to influence performance directly if it does not first successfully elevate an individual's intrinsic motivation (Hidayat et al., 2023). In Northern Cianjur, motivation serves as the "golden bridge" that transforms managerial stimuli and ethical values into tangible pedagogical actions, particularly amidst the challenges of post-disaster recovery.

### ***Hypothesis development and theoretical synthesis***

The study begins by examining the direct effects on motivation and performance through five primary hypotheses. Transformational leadership provides a vision that reduces role ambiguity, while a strong work ethos ensures internal accountability. According to the Integrative Model, these factors first energize the individual's motivation before manifesting as performance. Therefore, it is hypothesized that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on work motivation (H1) and that work ethos similarly has a positive and significant effect on work motivation (H2). Furthermore, transformational leadership is expected to have a positive and significant effect on teacher performance (H3), alongside work ethos which is also hypothesized to significantly impact teacher performance (H4). Completing the direct effects, work motivation is predicted to have a positive and significant effect on teacher performance (H5).

Beyond direct relationships, the model explores the mediating role of work motivation as the individual mechanism that translates organizational stimuli. Particularly in high-stress post-disaster environments, motivation is required to bridge the gap between leadership vision and actual teaching output. Consequently, the study posits that work motivation significantly mediates the effect of transformational leadership on teacher performance (H6) as well as the effect of work ethos on teacher performance (H7). Finally, consistent with the integrative nature of the model, leadership, ethos, and motivation do not work in isolation but interact simultaneously. Thus, it is hypothesized that transformational leadership, work ethos, and work motivation simultaneously have a significant effect on teacher performance (H8).

### **Methodology**

#### ***Research design and approach of the study***

This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design. This design is appropriate as it aims to explain the causal relationships between transformational leadership, work ethos, and teacher performance, with work motivation acting as a mediating variable. The researchers utilize Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS) to test the complex 8-path relationship model, which allows for simultaneous analysis of multiple constructs and their indicators.

#### ***Research site and participants***

The research was conducted in the Northern Region of Cianjur Regency, involving ASN Senior High School teachers. The population consists of 504 teachers across several schools. To determine the representative sample size, the Slovin formula was applied with a 5% margin of error, which is considered robust for large educational populations (Sugiyono, 2019). This resulted

in a final sample of 223 respondents. A proportional random sampling technique was utilized to ensure each school was represented fairly, as detailed in Table 1.

**Table 1.** *Sampling distribution of ASN teachers in Northern Cianjur*

School Name	Population (N)	Sample (n)
SMAN 1 Cianjur	54	24
SMAN 2 Cianjur	48	21
SMAN 1 Cilaku	52	23
SMAN 1 Sukaresmi	58	26
SMAN 1 Cipanas	61	27
SMAN 1 Pacet	53	23
SMAN 1 Cugenang	44	20
SMAN 1 Warungkondang	50	22
SMAN 1 Mande	42	19
SMAN 1 Karangtengah	42	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>223</b>

### *Data collection and analysis*

Primary data were collected through a structured online questionnaire distributed to the sampled teachers. The research instrument comprises a total of 160 items, with each of the four variables being measured by 40 indicator items. This extensive measurement was designed to ensure a high level of granularity and construct coverage, allowing for a more precise capture of the teachers' behavioral and psychological states. The research instrument utilizes a 5-point Likert Scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). To ensure rigorous content validity, the items for each variable were developed through a systematic process of theoretical mapping and synthesis from established frameworks. First, the Transformational Leadership construct consists of 40 items operationalized based on the four-dimensional model of Bass and Avolio, covering idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Second, the Work Ethos variable, also comprising 40 items, was formulated by integrating dimensions of professional integrity, diligence, and discipline, specifically adapted to the Indonesian educational context with focus on the "BerAKHLAK" core values of the Indonesian civil service.

Furthermore, the Work Motivation scale was constructed by identifying key intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors through 40 items that measure indicators such as the drive for achievement, professional recognition, individual responsibility, and career growth. Finally, Teacher Performance was measured using 40 items derived from the Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform Regulation Number 6 of 2022. These items focus on result-oriented outcomes, encompassing pedagogical effectiveness, social competence, and compliance with both administrative and behavioral standards. The distribution and data collection process were supervised by the researchers to maintain data integrity. Furthermore, informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring their voluntary involvement and the total anonymization of their responses

### *Data analysis*

The data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS) with SmartPLS 4.0 software. This method was selected for its robustness in

analyzing complex causal relationships and its effectiveness with non-normal data distributions often found in social science research (Ghozali, 2021) (Henseler, 2015). The analysis was performed by the researchers, who possess advanced competencies in educational management and quantitative statistical modeling, ensuring the rigorous interpretation of the 8-path structural model.

The data analysis followed a comprehensive two-stage evaluation process, beginning with the evaluation of the measurement model or outer model. To ensure the 160 items across the four constructs were statistically sound, several rigorous tests were performed. First, convergent validity was assessed through loading factors with a threshold above 0.70 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) with a threshold above 0.50. Second, discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) to ensure that each construct remained empirically distinct. Furthermore, internal consistency reliability was confirmed through Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR), requiring a minimum value of 0.70 for all constructs.

Upon confirming the reliability and validity of the instruments, the second stage involved the evaluation of the structural model or inner model to test the eight-path causal relationships. This evaluation included measuring the model's predictive power for teacher performance and work motivation through the Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ ). Additionally, path coefficients ( $\beta$ ) were calculated to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between variables. Hypothesis testing was then conducted using the bootstrapping method with 5,000 sub-samples to determine significance levels, specifically looking for p-values below 0.05 and t-statistics above 1.96. Finally, a detailed mediation analysis was performed to examine the role of work motivation as a mediating variable using the specific indirect effects analysis.

### ***Ethical considerations***

The research was conducted with strict adherence to ethical standards for human subject research to ensure the protection of the participants' rights and well-being through several systematically implemented protocols. First, regarding informed consent, all 223 respondents were presented with a comprehensive information sheet prior to accessing the digital questionnaire. This document outlined the study's objectives, emphasized the strictly voluntary nature of their participation, and explicitly stated their right to withdraw from the survey at any stage without any professional or personal penalty. Second, to guarantee anonymity and data privacy, all data were fully anonymized at the point of collection to ensure total confidentiality. No personally identifiable information (PII) was recorded, and all raw responses were stored in a secure, encrypted database accessible only to the primary researchers for academic analysis.

Furthermore, the study's ethical framework included a rigorous instrument validation process. The 160 questionnaire items underwent intensive development involving theoretical mapping and structural verification to ensure they were not only scientifically valid but also respectful of the professional norms and cultural environment of ASN teachers. Finally, all procedures were executed in accordance with professional integrity and the ethical guidelines of Universitas Pakuan. This alignment ensures that the research fulfills the rigorous standards for academic integrity and social responsibility required for high-impact educational studies.

## Findings

This section presents the empirical results of the study, structured to systematically address the research questions. The analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 4.0 to evaluate both the measurement model and the structural model.

### *Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)*

Before testing the hypotheses, the 160 items were evaluated for validity and reliability as documented in the research instrument worksheets. The results of the average variance extracted (AVE) for all constructs exceeded the 0.50 threshold, and Composite Reliability (CR) values were above 0.70, confirming the internal consistency of the instrument.

### *Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)*

The structural model assesses the predictive power and the relationships between constructs. The  $R^2$  values indicate the proportion of variance explained by the antecedent variables. First, Work Motivation result the  $R^2$  value is 0.695, indicating that 69.5% of the variance in Work Motivation is explained by Transformational Leadership and Work Ethos. Secondly, Teacher Performance result the  $R^2$  value is 0.684, indicating that 68.4% of the variance in Teacher Performance is explained by the model's predictors. Then, addressing research questions and hypothesis testing following results explicitly address the research questions through the path coefficients ( $\beta$ ) and significance levels derived from the bootstrapping procedure.

**Table 2.** Summary of Hypothesis Testing and Path Coefficients (direct and indirect effects)

Hypothesis	(Path Analysis)	Coeff ( $\beta$ )	T- Statistic	P- Values	Results
H1	Transformational Leadership → Work Motivation	0,379	4,271	0,000	Significant
H2	Work Ethos → Work Motivation	0,501	5,590	0,000	Significant
H3	Transformational Leadership → Performance	0,175	2,016	0,044	Significant
H4	Work Ethos → Performance	0,265	2,479	0,013	Significant
H5	Work Motivation → Performance	0,475	3,840	0,000	Significant
H6	Transformational Leadership → Motivation → Performance	0,180	3,191	0,001	Significant Mediation
H7	Work Ethos → Work Motivation → Performance	0,238	3,334	0,001	Significant Mediation
H8	Simultaneous (X1, X2, X3) → Performance (Y)	<b>R<sup>2</sup>: 0,684</b>	-	0,000	Significant

Source: Processed SmartPLS Results, 2026.

The structural model analysis reveals that Transformational Leadership significantly affects Work Motivation ( $\beta = 0.379$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and Teacher Performance ( $\beta = 0.175$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Furthermore, Work Ethos shows a strong positive impact on Work Motivation ( $\beta = 0.501$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and Teacher Performance ( $\beta = 0.265$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The most substantial direct effect on performance is exerted

by Work Motivation ( $\beta = 0.475$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The model's predictive power for performance is robust, with an  $R^2$  of 0.684.

The results of the analysis provide comprehensive answers to the three primary research questions regarding the relationships between leadership, ethos, motivation, and performance. Regarding the first research question, the study reveals that Transformational Leadership has a positive and significant direct effect on Teacher Performance, with a path coefficient of ( $\beta = 0.175$  ( $p < 0.05$ )). This finding confirms that visionary leadership practiced within schools in Northern Cianjur directly enhances professional output. Similarly, in addressing the second research question, Work Ethos demonstrates a significant positive impact on Teacher Performance with a higher path coefficient ( $\beta = 0.265$  ( $p < 0.05$ )). This indicates that the internal professional integrity of teachers, as mapped in the theoretical framework, serves as a critical driver of their overall performance.

Furthermore, the study addresses the third research question by examining whether Work Motivation mediates the relationship between leadership, ethos, and performance. The mediation analysis confirms that Work Motivation serves as a significant mediating variable within the model. Specifically, the indirect effect of Transformational Leadership through Work Motivation on Performance is significant ( $\beta = 0.180$ ), as is the indirect effect of Work Ethos through Work Motivation ( $\beta = 0.238$ ). These results demonstrate that motivation acts as the essential psychological bridge, translating both external leadership vision and internal professional ethos into actual teaching performance.

## Discussion

### *The impact of transformational leadership on teacher performance*

The findings indicate that transformational leadership has a positive and significant direct effect on teacher performance ( $\beta = 0.175$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This result aligns with the Integrative Model of Organizational Behavior, which posits that leadership serves as a critical organizational mechanism influencing individual outcomes. In the context of Northern Cianjur, leaders who act as role models and provide intellectual stimulation as structured in the study's validated instrument effectively trigger higher pedagogical standards among teachers.

However, the relatively lower path coefficient ( $\beta = 0.175$ ) compared to other variables suggests a potential divergence from studies in purely corporate sectors. This inconsistency may be explained by the high level of digital administrative autonomy required by the Ministerial Regulation No. 6 of 2022, where performance is often driven more by systemic compliance than by direct charismatic leadership. This converges with recent Indonesian studies (Hidayat et al., 2023), suggesting that in a post-disaster recovery setting like Cianjur, teachers often rely on self-regulation when leadership focus is divided between academic and infrastructural recovery.

### *The dominant role of work ethos*

Work Ethos emerged as a stronger predictor of performance ( $\beta = 0.265$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) than direct leadership. This finding confirms the study's theoretical framework, which characterizes work ethos as an internal "psychological anchor" for teachers. The integration of "BerAKHLAK" core values into the daily workflow ensures that accountability and integrity remain high, even with minimal supervision.

Compared to previous research (Fitria & Limgiani, 2024), these results strengthen the argument that for Indonesian educators, internal moral commitment often overrides external managerial stimuli. The practical significance is clear: school districts should prioritize character-building and ethical reinforcement as much as technical training to sustain long-term performance.

### *The mediating mechanism of work motivation*

The mediation analysis confirms that Work Motivation is the most substantial driver of performance ( $\beta = 0.475$ ) and effectively bridges both leadership ( $\beta = 0.180$ ) and ethos ( $\beta = 0.238$ ). Theoretically, this supports the Herzbergian perspective synthesized in this research: while leadership and ethos provide the foundation, it is the internal drive for achievement and recognition that translates these factors into tangible results.

A notable finding is that the indirect effect of Work Ethos through Motivation is higher than that of Leadership. This suggests that in Northern Cianjur, teachers' motivation is more deeply rooted in their professional identity (ethos) than in the visionary appeals of their superiors. This provides a nuanced explanation for discrepancies in literature where leadership is often cited as the primary motivator; in stable bureaucratic environments, personal professional values may actually play a more pivotal role in sustaining motivation.

### *Theoretical and practical significance*

First for Theoretical Implications. This study extends the Integrative Model of Organizational Behavior by demonstrating its applicability in a "dual-crisis" context (digital disruption and post-disaster recovery). It proves that motivation acts as a "golden bridge" that is essential for converting ethical values into pedagogical action, based on the conceptual mapping developed in this study. Second, Practical Significance. For the Cianjur Education Office and school principals, these findings suggest that improving teacher performance should not rely solely on top-down leadership. Instead, fostering a culture of professional ethos and providing intrinsic motivational triggers (such as professional growth opportunities) are more effective strategies.

### *Limitations of the study*

Despite its rigorous methodological approach using SmartPLS 4.0, this study has limitations. First, the data is cross-sectional, capturing teacher perceptions at a single point in time, which may not account for long-term behavioral shifts. Second, the study is limited to the Northern Region of Cianjur, meaning the results may vary in other geographical or cultural contexts within Indonesia. Future research should consider a longitudinal approach or a multi-regional comparison to further validate these causal relationships.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations/Implications**

This study provides empirical evidence of the intricate relationship between transformational leadership, work ethos, and work motivation in determining teacher performance within the specific context of Northern Cianjur. The findings conclude that while transformational leadership and work ethos are essential organizational and individual foundations, their impact on performance is significantly optimized through the mediating role of work motivation. Notably,

in the current Indonesian educational landscape characterized by digital administrative shifts and post-disaster recovery a teacher's internal professional identity and ethical commitment (work ethos) emerge as more consistent predictors of performance than external leadership stimuli alone.

Based on these findings, several actionable recommendations are proposed for educational stakeholders. For School Districts (Disdikpora) is recruitment and professional development programs for teachers should move beyond technical pedagogical training to include a strong emphasis on "BerAKHLAK" core values to solidify a resilient work ethos. For School Principals is leadership strategies should shift from traditional supervision to fostering intrinsic motivational triggers, such as providing greater autonomy in digital classroom management and recognizing innovative teaching milestones. For Educational Policy Makers is performance evaluation systems, particularly those aligned with Ministerial Regulation No. 6 of 2022, should incorporate psychological well-being and motivational health as key metrics to ensure sustainable teacher productivity.

Despite its contributions, this study acknowledges certain limitations. The research relied on self-reported data through online questionnaires, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Furthermore, the cross-sectional design captures only a snapshot of teacher perceptions, and the geographical scope is limited to the Northern Region of Cianjur.

Future research should consider adopting a longitudinal approach to track how these variables evolve over time. Additionally, subsequent studies could expand the geographical coverage to include diverse regions in Indonesia or utilize a mixed-methods approach (integrating qualitative interviews) to gain a deeper, more nuanced understanding of the qualitative factors driving teacher motivation and ethos in the field.

### **Disclosure statement**

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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