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The Role of Motivation in the Influence of Transformational Leadership and Organizational Culture on Employee Performance: A Study at the Regional Secretariat of Solok City

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of transformational leadership and organizational culture on employee performance, with work motivation as a mediating variable, at the Regional Secretariat of Solok City. The research addresses challenges stemming from bureaucratic leadership styles and weak organizational culture, which are related to low employee motivation and performance. A quantitative method was employed, with data collected through surveys of 90 civil servants and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) assisted by SmartPLS. The results show that both transformational leadership and organizational culture have a positive and significant effect on employee motivation and performance. Motivation was found to mediate these relationships. This study emphasizes the importance of internal incentive systems, an adaptive work culture, and inspirational leadership in improving civil servant performance. These findings are expected to serve as a guideline for the Solok City Government in strengthening human resources and enhancing bureaucratic effectiveness.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Organizational Culture, Performance, Motivation, State Civil Apparatus

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis pengaruh kepemimpinan transformasional dan budaya organisasi terhadap kinerja pegawai dengan motivasi kerja sebagai variabel mediasi pada Sekretariat Daerah Kota Solok, dengan motivasi kerja sebagai variabel mediasi. Penelitian ini membahas tantangan yang berasal dari gaya kepemimpinan birokratis dan budaya organisasi yang lemah, yang berkaitan dengan rendahnya motivasi dan kinerja pegawai. Metode kuantitatif digunakan dengan pengumpulan data melalui survei terhadap 90 pegawai negeri sipil dan dianalisis menggunakan Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) dengan bantuan SmartPLS. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional dan budaya organisasi keduanya berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap motivasi dan kinerja pegawai. Motivasi terbukti memediasi hubungan tersebut. Penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya sistem insentif internal, budaya kerja yang adaptif, serta kepemimpinan yang inspiratif dalam meningkatkan kinerja pegawai negeri. Temuan ini diharapkan dapat menjadi panduan bagi Pemerintah Kota Solok dalam memperkuat sumber daya manusia dan meningkatkan efektivitas birokrasi.

Kata kunci: Kepemimpinan Transformasional, Budaya Organisasi, Kinerja, Motivasi, Aparatur Sipil Negara

INTRODUCTION

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Transformational leadership is a contemporary approach that emphasizes the importance of inspiration, individual development, and the creation of a conducive work environment for innovation. A transformational leader not only acts as a supervisor but also serves as a role model capable of fostering team spirit. The study by Panjaitan and Frinaldi (2022) demonstrates that this leadership model enhances employee loyalty and creativity in public organizations. This is supported by findings from Ramadhani and Indawati (2022), who state that this leadership style significantly boosts performance. The four core components of transformational leadership include idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

A strong organizational culture fosters a supportive work atmosphere, reinforces shared values, and accelerates the achievement of organizational vision. Fitriani et al. (2022) explain that a positive organizational culture can cultivate a sense of belonging and increase employee commitment. Conversely, a non-adaptive culture tends to hinder productivity, escalate internal conflicts, and decrease employee loyalty. Wijayanto et al. (2021) note that a weak organizational culture is often associated with high absenteeism and employee turnover rates. Therefore, organizational culture is a crucial variable influencing work behavior and organizational performance.

Work motivation is also a critical factor in determining employee effectiveness and productivity. Motivation refers to the internal and external drives that influence the direction, intensity, and persistence of individual work behavior (Susanto & Rahmawati, 2023). Factors such as compensation, career development opportunities, and role clarity can strengthen both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Handayani & Kurniawan, 2023). In the public sector, motivation is often shaped by bureaucratic structures and leadership styles. Thus, understanding how motivation is influenced by internal organizational factors such as work culture and leadership is essential.

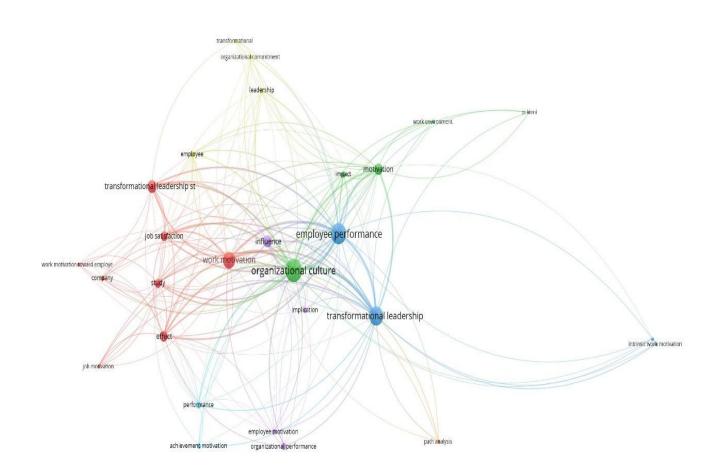
Data from BPS Kota Solok (2023) show that the job satisfaction level of civil servants (ASN) stands at only 65%, significantly below the national average of 72%. Furthermore, the annual performance report of the Solok City Secretariat reveals that only 63% of performance targets were achieved on time. These findings indicate challenges in the internalization of work culture and weak individual motivation. The prevalence of tardiness and lack of initiative highlight the need for improvement in human resource governance. This reinforces the importance of examining the factors that influence employee motivation and performance in local government settings.

Supporting data from BPS of West Sumatra Province (2023) indicate that the professionalism index of civil servants in Solok City is only 61.4, lower than the provincial average of 68.2. This index reflects a combination of technical skills, work ethics, and commitment to public service. The low score suggests the presence of unresolved systemic barriers in employee capacity development. These issues are not only related to competencies but also rooted in suboptimal leadership and organizational culture. Therefore, a comprehensive approach is needed to explain these phenomena scientifically.

Previous studies provide empirical evidence of the significant role of leadership and organizational culture in enhancing bureaucratic performance. Rivai (2020) emphasizes that transformational leadership fosters self-confidence and responsibility among employees. Ramadhani and Indawati (2022) show that an organizational culture promoting collaboration and participation positively impacts civil servant productivity. At the global level, Bass and Riggio (2006) and Hofstede (2001) link leadership effectiveness and organizational values to cross-sectoral performance. However, local contexts such as regional governments require further exploration.

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The issue of low civil servant performance in Solok City cannot be simplified as the result of a single factor. The complex interplay between leadership, organizational culture, and motivation requires deeper and more systematic analysis. The prevailing bureaucratic leadership style often fails to motivate employees in addressing public service challenges. Hence, there is a need for research that not only examines direct relationships among variables but also explores mediating mechanisms that influence these relationships. This study aims to address that gap through empirical investigation.

To strengthen the theoretical foundation, a bibliometric analysis was conducted using VOSviewer software, covering scientific publications from the past five years. The analysis revealed that the variables of transformational leadership, organizational culture, and work motivation frequently appear together in human resource management literature. However, the integration of these three variables within a single research framework remains limited, particularly in the context of local public sectors. Therefore, an integrative approach is crucial to understanding the dynamics of civil servant performance more comprehensively. This also underscores the urgency of context-based and theory-driven research.

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In this regard, the present study not only seeks to identify the direct effects of transformational leadership and organizational culture on employee performance but also positions motivation as a mediating variable that bridges these relationships. This approach provides a more holistic view of work behavior dynamics among civil servants at the local government level. While various studies have partially examined these topics, the integration of all three variables within a single analytical model remains rare, especially at the municipal level. This research offers a novel perspective that is empirically relevant and contextually grounded, contributing to the development of adaptive and performance-oriented civil service management strategies. As such, the findings are expected to serve as a reference for policymakers in improving human resource governance at the regional level.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Performance is the outcome attained by people or organizations when they fulfill their duties and obligations within a certain time frame. Performance is measured by a number of factors, including: Task performance, contextual performance, counterproductive work behavior, and adaptive performance are the first four categories (Abbasi et al., 2022).

Furthermore, transformational leadership is a leadership style defined by the leader's capacity to use effective communication and a clear vision to inspire and motivate his followers to accomplish shared objectives. Indicators of transformative leadership include the following: 1) Vision; 2) Development of Staff; 3) Empowerment; 4) Supportive Leadership; 5) Creative Thinking; 6) Setting an Example; and 7) Charismatic. (Mahardika et al., 2024)

Furthermore, the motivation that propels people to perform certain behaviors in order to accomplish objectives is what is meant by corporate culture. In this context, Yukl highlights that transformational leaders will take a variety of actions to empower their followers and help them become self-sufficient. These actions include giving each person authority, fostering their followers' abilities and self-assurance, establishing self-management, minimizing things that don't require control, and creating a strong culture that supports their followers' empowerment. 1) Education and Problem-Solving; 2) Safety of the Mind; 3) Opposition to Change; 4) Improvement Time; and 5) Organizational Commitment.(Liu et al., 2022)

Motivation is the drive that encourages individuals to take certain actions to achieve goals. (Kotera et al, 2022). In addition, (Wulandari, 2022) added that work motivation encourages individuals to give their best in their work, not only because of monetary rewards, but also because of personal satisfaction, self-development, and good relationships with coworkers. Integrated regulation, identified regulation, introjected regulation, external regulation, amotivation, and intrinsic motivation are the first six types

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach. A qualitative descriptive approach was on Partial Least Square (PLS), processed with SmartPLS 3.0, which is suitable for analyzing complex relationships among latent variables with a relatively small sample size. The population consists of civil servants (ASN) at [institution name], with 90 respondents selected through purposive sampling based on criteria such as a minimum of one year of service and involvement in the organizational structure. The research instrument was developed using indicators adapted from previous studies: Performance (Abbasi et al., 2022), Transformational Leadership (Mahardika et al., 2024), Organizational Culture (Liu et al., 2022), and Motivation (Kotera et al., 2022). Validity and reliability tests were conducted using outer

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loading \geq 0.60, AVE > 0.50, and Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability > 0.70. The results indicate that all constructs meet the required criteria for validity and reliability, confirming that the instrument is appropriate for use in this study. The following section presents a detailed explanation of the validity test results, starting with the assessment of convergent validity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Validity Test Results

Convergent Validity Test Results

Convergent validity may be evaluated using Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and outer loadings. To be considered to have a high degree of validity, the study's outer loadings limit is 0.60. The results of the outer loadings test in table 4.13, it is known that all indicators meet the loading factor value \geq 0.60. In addition, the AVE value must be > 0.50 to be considered adequate because if it is <0.50 then more variance is caused by error variance than indicator variance.

Table 1. AVE Testing

| | Average Variance Extracted I(AVE) |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Organizational culture | 0.583 |
| Transformational Leadership | 0.605 |
| Performance | 0.628 |
| Motivation | 0.613 |

It is evident from Table 4.14's AVE test results that every indicator yields an AVE value greater than 0.50. Thus, it can be said that all indicators are considered to meet convergent validity and have a high level of validity.

Discriminant Validity Test Results

Considering the cross loading test findings in the preceding table, all indicators show higher loading values on their respective latent variables compared to other variables. This indicates that the research instrument has met the criteria for discriminant validity.

- 1. In the Transformational Leadership variable, all indicators have dominant loading values on the variable, with indicator X1.3.1 recording the highest value of 0.830. This reflects that respondents feel a strong influence from transformational leadership, especially in terms of inspiration and motivation provided by leaders.
- 2. Organizational Culture Variable, indicator X2.1.2 stands out with the highest loading value of 0.846, indicating that the organizational culture values applied in the work environment are recognized and felt strongly by employees.
- 3. Performance Variable, indicator Y4.1 has the highest loading value of 0.830, which reflects that the success of completing tasks according to targets and efforts to maintain work quality are the main focus of employees in measuring their performance.
- 4. Motivation Variable, indicator Z5.1 has the highest loading value of 0.831, which indicates that the drive to continue to develop, work competently, and belief in the usefulness of work play a

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major role in motivating employees. Overall, these results confirm that each indicator has a significant contribution to the measured variables, and supports the feasibility of the instrument in measuring the constructs studied.

Reliability Test Results

The reliability test results in the above table indicate that all dimensions are trustworthy because the Cronbach's Alpha value is ≥ 0.70 and the Composite Reliability value (rho_c) is > 0.70.

Table 2. Construct Reliability Testing

| | Cronbach Alpha | Composite Reliability (rho_a) | Composite Reliability (rho_c) |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Organizational culture | 0.920 | 0.928 | 0.933 |
| Transformational Leadership | 0.950 | 0.951 | 0.955 |
| Performance | 0.915 | 0.918 | 0.931 |
| Motivation | 0.942 | 0.943 | 0.950 |

Every construct in this research demonstrated a very high degree of dependability, according to the reliability test results in the above table. This may be seen in the Cronbach's Alpha score, which was 0.950 for Transformational Leadership, 0.920 for Organizational Culture, 0.915 for Performance, and 0.942 for Motivation. Each construct has great internal consistency, as seen by the fact that all of these values significantly above the minimal cutoff of 0.70. Additionally, each construct received a score of 0.955 for Transformational Leadership, 0.933 for Organizational Culture, 0.931 for Performance, and 0.950 for Motivation, indicating highly excellent results from the Composite Reliability (rho_c) value. Overall, these findings show that the research tool satisfies construct reliability requirements, making it appropriate for further examination, such as examining the correlation between the variables in the structural model.

Inner Model Test Results (Structural Model Result)

Goodness of Fit Model Result

Table 3. Goodness of Fit Model Testing

| | | J |
|------|-----------------|------------------------|
| | Saturated Model | Estimated Model |
| SRMR | 0.076 | 0.076 |

The estimated model column in the following table shows that the SRMR value achieved is 0.076 (<0.10). It can be concluded that the model is considered suitable.

F-Square and R-Square Test

Table 4. F-Square Test

| | F-Square | Results |
|--|----------|---------------|
| Organizational Culture -> Performance | 0.031 | Low Effect |
| Organizational Culture -> Motivation | 0.648 | Strong Effect |
| Transformational Leadership -> Performance | 0.128 | Low Effect |
| Transformational Leadership -> Motivation | 0.250 | Medium Effect |
| Motivation -> Performance | 0.208 | Low Effect |

Overall, the R-Square value of both endogenous variables is above 0.60, indicating that the model has strong predictive power and is worthy of use in further research. This increases the structural model's

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dependability in elucidating the correlation between factors in regard to employee performance in the workplace.

Path Coefficient and P-Value Test

The route coefficients for each variable in the model have different values. This suggests that a variable's effect on the other variables is stronger the higher its route coefficient value to another variable.

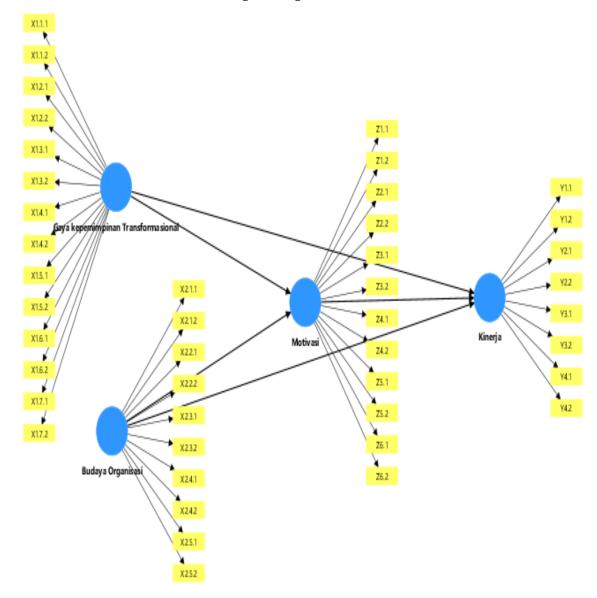


Figure 2. Path Coefficient and P-Value Test

Every variable in the model has a route coefficient with a range of values, as shown in the preceding image. This suggests that a variable's effect on the other variables is stronger the higher its route coefficient value to another variable. From the table, it can be seen that:

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| Tambahkan Kepala Tabel | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| Jalur Hubungan | Original sample (0) | Sample mean (M) | Standard deviation (STDEV) | T statistics (O/STDEV) | P values |
| Budaya Organisasi -> Kinerja | 0,421 | 0,409 | 0,129 | 3,262 | 0,001 |
| Budaya Organisasi -> Motivasi | 0,566 | 0,554 | 0,116 | 4,87 | 0,000 |
| Kepemimpinan Transformasional -> Kinerja | 0,45 | 0,455 | 0,126 | 3,576 | 0,000 |
| Kepemimpinan Transformasional -> Motivasi | 0,352 | 0,361 | 0,127 | 2,763 | 0,006 |
| Motivasi -> Kinerja | 0,462 | 0,432 | 0,156 | 2,956 | 0,003 |
| Budaya Organisasi -> Motivasi -> Kinerja | 0,262 | 0,246 | 0,107 | 2,442 | 0,015 |
| Transformasional -> Motivasi -> Kinerja | 0,163 | 0,15 | 0,07 | 2,324 | 0,020 |

The value of testing the research hypothesis is as follows:

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing Results

| No. | Hypothesis | Results |
|-----|--|-----------|
| 1. | Transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence on work performance | Supported |
| 2. | Organizational culture has a positive and significant influence on work performance | Supported |
| 3. | Transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence on employee motivation | Supported |
| 4. | The work environment has a positive and significant influence on employee motivation | Supported |
| 5. | Motivation has a positive and significant influence on employee performance | Supported |
| 6. | Transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence on employee performance through motivation mediation. | Supported |
| 7. | Organizational culture has a positive and significant influence on employee performance through motivation mediation. | Supported |

Discussion

Based on the results of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis using SmartPLS, it was found that organizational culture and transformational leadership have direct and significant effects on employee motivation and performance at the Regional Secretariat of Solok City. Organizational culture significantly influences employee performance with a path coefficient of 0.421, T-statistic = 3.262, and p-value = 0.001. This indicates that a work culture emphasizing professionalism, ethics, and collaboration creates a supportive climate that enhances employee performance. These findings are consistent with those of Fitriani et al. (2022) and Wijayanto et al. (2021), which showed that a positive organizational culture increases employee loyalty and productivity.

Furthermore, organizational culture has an even stronger effect on employee motivation, with a path coefficient of 0.566, T-statistic = 4.870, and p-value = 0.000, reflecting a very high level of significance. This means that a supportive work culture can effectively boost employees' internal motivation to perform

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optimally. In the local context of Solok City, this is particularly important considering the presence of individualistic work cultures and limited space for innovation, as revealed through employee interviews.

Meanwhile, transformational leadership also significantly influences employee performance, with a path coefficient of 0.450, T-statistic = 3.576, and p-value = 0.000. Leaders who can inspire, serve as role models, and empower subordinates have been shown to directly improve performance. This effect is further strengthened by the impact of leadership on motivation (coefficient = 0.352; T = 2.763; p = 0.006). These results support the studies by Rivai (2020) and Ramadhani & Indawati (2022), while also indicating that in bureaucratic environments like Solok City, the success of transformational leadership depends heavily on its ability to overcome structural bureaucratic barriers.

Motivation itself is proven to be a significant mediating variable. The influence of motivation on employee performance has a coefficient of 0.462, T-statistic = 2.956, and p-value = 0.003. In addition to this direct effect, organizational culture affects performance through motivation (mediation coefficient = 0.262; T = 2.442; p = 0.015), as does transformational leadership (mediation coefficient = 0.163; T = 2.324; p = 0.020). This demonstrates that improving motivation—whether through strengthening culture or leadership—is an effective pathway to enhance performance.

These findings align with national and international studies such as Kotera et al. (2022), which highlight the central role of work motivation in employee performance, although in the Indonesian context, structural factors and local culture still play a significant role. Therefore, strategies to improve motivation at the Regional Secretariat of Solok City should consider context-based approaches, including strengthening non-financial incentives, providing space for innovation, and implementing sustainable career development programs.

Overall, this study confirms the importance of an integrative approach that combines organizational culture, transformational leadership, and motivation strategies to improve civil servant performance. Policy recommendations include transformational leadership training, a review of work culture, and strengthening performance-based reward systems. By implementing these approaches simultaneously, it is expected that a more conducive, collaborative, and productive work environment will be created.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, employee performance at the Regional Secretariat of Solok City is positively and significantly influenced by transformational leadership and organizational culture, both directly and indirectly through motivation as a mediating variable. Motivation plays a strong mediating role in the relationship between organizational culture and performance, while its mediating role in the relationship between transformational leadership and performance is more moderate. These findings are consistent with several previous national and international studies, but also highlight that in the local context of Solok City, a less adaptive organizational culture and a bureaucratic leadership style remain key challenges. Therefore, it is recommended that the Solok City Government conduct transformational leadership training, reform organizational culture by instilling values of collaboration and innovation, and strengthen employee motivation systems through performance-based incentives, career development programs, and mentoring initiatives. This integrative approach is expected to create a more conducive work environment, enhance productivity, and support a more effective and responsive bureaucracy.

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