

ANALYSIS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE AND WORK ETHIC ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE WITH WORK MOTIVATION AS AN INTERVENING VARIABLE AT THE REGIONAL FINANCE AND ASSET AGENCY OF NORTH SUMATRA PROVINCE

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of transformational leadership style and work ethic on employee performance with work motivation as an intervening variable at the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province. The research method used is a quantitative approach with data collection techniques through distributing questionnaires to employees. The number of samples was determined by purposive sampling technique with a sample size of 80 respondents. Data analysis was carried out using a path analysis model to see the direct and indirect effects between variables. The results of the study indicate that transformational leadership style and work ethic have a positive and significant effect on employee work motivation. Furthermore, work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. In addition, transformational leadership style has a positive and significant direct effect on employee performance, but work ethic has a positive but not significant effect on employee performance but its indirect effect through motivation is positive and significant. These findings indicate that work motivation is able to mediate the effect of transformational leadership style and work ethic on employee performance. This study is expected to contribute to management in formulating strategies to improve employee performance through strengthening transformational leadership, instilling work ethic, and increasing work motivation.

Keywords: *Transformational Leadership Style, Work Ethic, Work Motivation, Employee Performance.*

INTRODUCTION

In government organizations, the achievement of goals is highly dependent on employee performance. Optimal employee performance is not only determined by individual abilities, but also by how leaders direct, motivate, and motivate work with their subordinates. Therefore, leadership and work motivation factors are important aspects that must be managed effectively in improving employee performance. Transformational leadership style is one of the modern leadership approaches that focuses on inspiring and motivating employees to go beyond personal interests for the sake of the organization. According to Bass & Riggio (2021), transformational leadership style is a leadership style that focuses on creating positive change in followers by inspiring, motivating, and raising awareness of moral values and higher goals. Transformational leaders build strong relationships with subordinates and encourage them to go beyond personal interests for the sake of organizational goals.

In addition to leadership, organizational work motivation also plays an important role in creating a conducive work atmosphere. Effective work motivation allows the flow of information to run smoothly, encourages collaboration, and avoids misunderstandings between employees. According to Robbins and Judge (2022), work motivation is an important element in management that functions to convey information, motivate, and coordinate activities within the organization. However, the influence of leadership style and work motivation on employee performance is not always direct. Work motivation is often a variable that bridges this influence. High work motivation encourages employees to work more productively and responsibly towards their tasks. According to Hasibuan (2019), motivation is a drive that causes someone to act to achieve goals, and this greatly affects employee performance. In a government environment such as the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province, the role of leadership and work motivation is very important in creating an efficient work system, especially

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since this institution is responsible for managing complex and strategic regional finances. Therefore, it is important to analyze the extent to which transformational leadership style and work motivation affect employee performance by considering work motivation as an intervening variable. This research is expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions in the development of human resource management in the government sector, especially in increasing organizational effectiveness through strategic leadership and work motivation approaches.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Employee Performance

a) Understanding Employee Performance

According to Mangkunegara (2017) "employee performance (work achievement) is the work results in terms of quality and quantity achieved by an employee in carrying out his duties in accordance with the responsibilities given to him".

b) Employee Performance Indicators

According to Mangkunegara (2017), employee performance indicators include:

1) Quality of Work

Work quality measures how well an employee does what he or she is supposed to do, including accuracy, neatness, and precision in working according to established standards.

2) Quantity of Work

Work quantity measures how much work is produced by an employee in a certain time, which can be seen from the working speed of each employee.

3) Execution of Tasks

Task execution measures how accurate an employee is in performing his/her tasks and is error-free.

4) Responsibility

Responsibility refers to the awareness of the obligation to carry out work well and in accordance with the responsibilities given.

2) Work motivation

a) Understanding Work Motivation

Work motivation is an internal or external drive that causes a person to work in a certain way, with the aim of achieving desired results and achieving personal satisfaction and contribution to organizational goals. Work motivation is very important in improving individual performance because it can affect the level of employee engagement, productivity, and commitment to the organization.

According to Robbins and Judge (2017), work motivation is a process that initiates, directs, and maintains behavior in achieving goals. This motivation plays a role in determining how much effort an individual puts into achieving those goals.

b) Work Motivation Indicators

Work Motivation Indicators According to Robbins and Judge (2017)

1) Intensity of Business

This refers to how hard an employee tries to achieve the goals that have been set. Motivated employees will work harder and give maximum effort in carrying out their duties.

2) Business Direction

The direction of the effort relates to the focus of the effort made by the employee. Motivated employees will ensure that their efforts are directed towards achieving the organization's goals, not just on individual work.

3) Perseverance

Perseverance is an indicator that describes how an employee continues to try to complete a task despite facing obstacles or challenges. Motivated employees do not give up easily when they encounter difficulties in their work.

4) Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction reflects whether employees are satisfied with the work they do, both in terms of salary, rewards, work relationships, and self-development opportunities. This satisfaction is a major indicator of work motivation.

5) Involvement in Work

Motivated employees tend to be more engaged in their work, show high interest, take initiative, and are committed to achieving organizational goals.

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- 6) Desire to Achieve Goals
Employees who have high work motivation will strive to achieve the goals that have been set in the organization. They are more oriented towards achieving results and improving performance to obtain the best results.
- 3) Work ethic
 - a) Understanding Work Ethic
Priharwantiningsih (2019), work ethic is defined as a positive mental attitude that is the basis for a person in carrying out their duties and responsibilities in the workplace, which is reflected through discipline, responsibility, hard work, honesty, cooperation, creativity, and commitment.
 - b) Work Ethic Indicator
Work ethic indicators according to Priharwantiningsih (2019) which are often used as references in human resources and organizational research:
 - 1) Discipline – An individual's ability to consistently adhere to work rules and hours.
 - 2) Responsibility – Willingness to accept and complete tasks well and be accountable for them.
 - 3) Hard Work – Maximum effort and consistency in completing work despite challenges.
 - 4) Honesty – Carrying out work with integrity and without cheating.
 - 5) Teamwork – Ability to work in a team and establish good working relationships with colleagues.
 - 6) Creativity and Innovation – Willingness to create new ideas and improve ways of working.
 - 7) Commitment – Dedication to work and loyalty to the organization.
4. Transformational Leadership Style
 - a) Understanding Transformational Leadership Style
Transformational leadership style is a leadership approach that focuses on creating positive change in organizations and developing human resources through inspiring, motivating, and empowering employees. Transformational leaders seek to raise subordinates' awareness of the importance of their work, and motivate them to work beyond their own self-interest for the benefit of the organization.
According to Northouse (2021), transformational leadership is a process that changes and transforms individuals by creating trusting, inspiring, and motivating relationships to achieve common goals.
 - b) Transformational Leadership Style Indicators
According to Northouse (2021), transformational leadership style indicators consist of four main components which include:
 - 1) Idealized Influence (Ideal Influence)
Leaders act as role models for their followers, demonstrating ethical and respected behavior, and earning the trust and respect of their subordinates. Leaders demonstrate the ideal influence of creating a sense of pride and trust within the team.
 - 2) Inspirational Motivation
Leaders are able to inspire and motivate their followers through a clear vision, a compelling purpose, and a passion for shared success. They inspire followers by speaking in a way that is inspiring and full of optimism.
 - 3) Intellectual Stimulation
Leaders encourage followers to think creatively and not be tied to old ways. They challenge conventional ideas and encourage innovation to solve problems in more effective ways. Such leaders value new ideas and provide opportunities for team members to grow.
 - 4) Individualized Consideration (Individual Consideration)
Leaders show concern for the individual needs and personal development of their followers. They provide personal support, direction, and feedback, and serve as mentors or coaches for team members. Leaders who have individual consideration are able to build close relationships and care about the well-being of each individual on the team..

Conceptual Framework

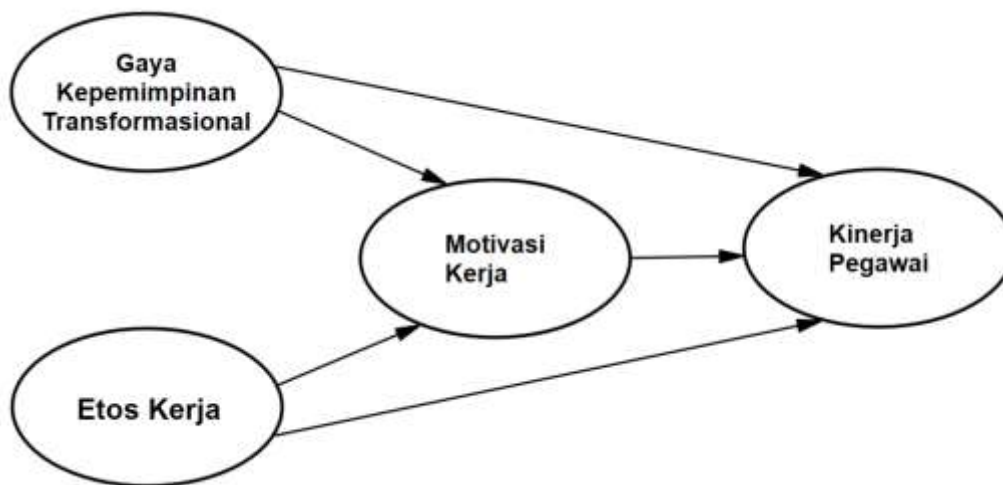


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Research Hypothesis

- H1: Transformational leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province.
- H2: Work ethic has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province.
- H3: Transformational leadership style has a positive and significant effect on work motivation at the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province.
- H4: Work ethic has a positive and significant effect on work motivation at the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province.
- H5: Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province.
- H6: Transformational leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work motivation at the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province.
- H7: Work ethic has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work motivation at the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province.

RESEARCH METHODS

Types of research

The type of research used by the researcher is quantitative research. This type of quantitative research is conducted to create a study that aims to adjust a study and to analyze Transformational Leadership Style and Communication on Employee Performance with Work Motivation as an Intervening Variable at the Financial and Regional Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province.

Research Location and Research Time

The location of the research was conducted at the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province, located at Jl. Jl. Imam Bonjol No. 61, Suka Damai, Medan 20142. The research period was carried out for 3 months, starting from April to June 2025.

Population and Sample

The population and sample in this study were all permanent employees at the Financial and Regional Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province. The number of employees at the Financial and Regional Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province is 135 employees, with details: 80 ASN employees and 55 people as honorary workers. In this study, samples were taken only from ASN employees as many as 80 people.

Research Data Sources

The data sources used in this study are primary data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Outer Model Analysis

Outer Model Analysis musePLS Algorithm, produce:

1) Validity Test

Table 1. ValuesOuter Loadings

	Work ethic	Transformational Leadership Style	Employee Performance	Work motivation
X1.1		0.860		
X1.2		0.887		
X1.3		0.902		
X1.4		0.845		
X2.1	0.758			
X2.2	0.902			
X2.3	0.720			
X2.4	0.892			
X2.5	0.843			
X2.6	0.860			
X2.7	0.918			
Y.1			0.864	
Y.2			0.935	
Y.3			0.937	
Y.4			0.862	
Z.1				0.811
Z.2				0.896
Z.3				0.855
Z.4				0.836
Z.5				0.909
Z.6				0.866

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

Based on the values in Table 1 above, it shows the results of testing the outer model through the loading factor value /outer loadings, all indicators in each variable have a loading value ≥ 0.70 . This shows that each indicator is able to represent the construct being measured validly and strongly. Therefore, it can be concluded that all items in the questionnaire have met the convergent validity criteria and can be used in further analysis. For more details, the above values can also be seen in the following figure.

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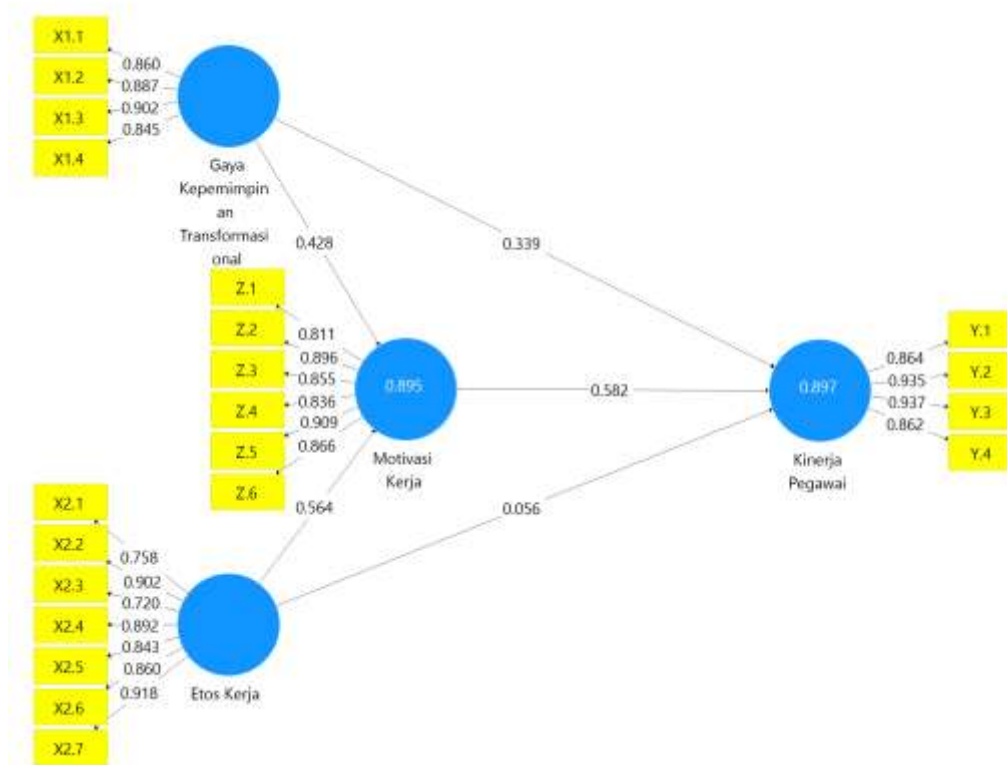


Figure 1. Outer Loudings

In this study there is an equation and the equation consists of two substructures for substructure 1:

$$Z = \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + e_1$$

$$Z = 0.428 X_1 + 0.564 X_2 + e_1$$

For substructure 2:

$$Y = \beta_2 X_1 + \beta_3 X_2 + \beta_3 Z + e_2$$

$$Y = 0.339 X_1 + 0.056 X_2 + 0.582 Z + e_2$$

2) Reliability Test

Table 2. Construct Reliability and Validity Test

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Work ethic	0.932	0.941	0.945	0.713
Transformational Leadership Style	0.897	0.901	0.928	0.764
Employee Performance	0.921	0.924	0.945	0.810
Work motivation	0.931	0.933	0.946	0.744

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

From Table 2 above, the results of the reliability test show that the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values for all constructs have values above 0.70. This shows that all indicators have high internal consistency and can be relied on to measure their respective constructs. Thus, the research instrument is declared reliable and suitable for use in testing the structural model.

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Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

Inner model or structural model testing is conducted to see the relationship between constructs, significance values and R-square of the research model. The structural model is evaluated using R-square for the dependent construct.

1) Coefficient of Determination (R²)

In assessing the model with PLS, it starts by looking at the R-square for each dependent latent variable. The table below is the result of Rsquare estimation using SmartPLS.

Table 3. R Square Results

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Employee Performance	0.897	0.893
Work motivation	0.895	0.892

Source: Smart PLS, 2025

In table 3 there is an R square value on both dependent variables for the work motivation variable there is an R square value of 0.895 meaning that the influence of transformational leadership style and work ethic is 0.895 or 89.5% the rest is on other variables outside the model. The R square value of employee performance is 0.897 meaning that the influence of leadership style, work ethic and work motivation is 0.897 or 89.7% the rest is on other variables outside the model.

2) Hypothesis Testing

a) Direct Influence Between Variables

The direct influence between variables can be seen in the path coefficients value. The results of data processing show the direct influence value can be seen in the following table.

Table 4. Path Coefficients (Direct Effect)

	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Conclusion
Transformational Leadership Style -> Employee Performance	0.339	2,042	0.042	Accepted
Transformational Leadership Style -> Work Motivation	0.428	3,255	0.001	Accepted
Work Ethic -> Employee Performance	0.056	0.709	0.479	Rejected
Work Ethic -> Work Motivation	0.564	4,456	0,000	Accepted
Work Motivation -> Employee Performance	0.582	3,625	0,000	Accepted

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

In the results of Table 4 there are direct influence values which will be explained as follows:

1. Transformational leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance with a t-statistic value of 2.042 above 1.96 and a significance of 0.042 below 0.05, meaning that transformational leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance because the significance value is below 0.05. The results of this study are in accordance with the results of previous studies, namely that transformational leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Binjai Inspectorate Office (Tarigan & Ferine, 2024) and transformational leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Binjai National Unity and Politics Agency (Hasibuan & Ferine, 2023).
2. Transformational leadership style has a positive and significant influence on work motivation with a t-statistic value of 3.255 above 1.96 and a significance of 0.001 below 0.05 means that transformational leadership style has a positive and significant effect on work motivation because the significance value is below 0.05. This study is in accordance with research which states that transformational leadership style has a positive and significant effect on work motivation at the Financial Revenue and Regional Asset Management Agency of Binjai City (Firda & Ferine, 2023)
3. Work ethic has a positive but not significant effect on employee performance with a t-statistic value of 0.709 below 1.96 and a significance of 0.479 above 0.05 means that work ethic has a positive but not

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significant effect on employee performance because the significance value is above 0.05. The results of this study are in contrast to previous studies, namely that work ethic has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Binjai City Cooperative Service (Faisal & Mesra, 2023).

4. Work ethic has a positive and significant influence on work motivation with a t-statistic value of 4.456 above 1.96 and a significance of 0.000 below 0.05 means that work ethic has a positive and significant effect on work motivation because the significance value is below 0.05. The results of this study are also in accordance with research conducted by Budiarjo & Mesra (2023) which states that work ethic has a positive and significant effect on motivation.
5. Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance with a t-statistic value of 3.625 above 1.96 and a significance of 0.000 below 0.05, meaning that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance because the significance value is below 0.05. The results of this study are in accordance with the results of previous studies, namely employees with a t-statistic value of 4.094 above 1.96 and significance of 0.000 below 0.05 means that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance because the significance value is below 0.05. Jintar's research (2023) also states that motivation has a positive and significant effect on performance at CV. Anugerah Abadi.

b) Indirect Influence Between Variables

The indirect influence between variables can be seen in the specific indirect effects value. The results of data processing show the indirect effect value can be seen in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Specific Indirect Effects (Indirect Effects)

	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Kesimpulan
Work Ethic -> Work Motivation -> Employee Performance	0,328	3,365	0,001	Accepted
Transformational Leadership -> Work Motivation -> Employee Performance	0,249	2,028	0,043	Accepted

Source: Smart PLS, 2025

In table 5 there is an indirect influence between variables which will be explained as follows:

1. Work ethic has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work motivation with a t-statistical value of 3.365 and a significance value of 0.001, meaning that work motivation plays a role as an intervening variable between work ethic and employee performance. Here, work motivation plays a role as an intervening variable that directly influences work ethic on employee performance is rejected, but with the presence of intervening variables, work ethic on employee performance through work motivation is accepted. Lamere & Welsa's research (2021) states that work ethic has a positive and significant effect on the performance of employees of the Tanimbar Islands Regency Regional Development Planning Agency through motivation.
2. Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work motivation with a t-statistical value of 2.028 and a significance value of 0.043, meaning that work motivation plays an intervening variable between transformational leadership and employee performance. Marhawati research (2022) states that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work motivation at Jala Ammari Hospital, Makassar City.

CONCLUSION

1. Transformational leadership style has a positive and significant influence on employee performance at the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province.
2. Work ethic has a positive but insignificant effect on employee performance at the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province.

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3. Transformational leadership style has a positive and significant influence on work motivation at the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province.
4. Work ethic has a positive and significant influence on work motivation at the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province.
5. Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province.
6. Transformational leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work motivation at the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province.
7. Work ethic has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work motivation at the Regional Finance and Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province.

SUGGESTION

1. In the transformational leadership style variable, it turns out that the indicator with the lowest value is the statement "My leader pays special attention to my needs and personal development". It turns out that this statement shows that a leader needs to pay more attention to his subordinates because someone, especially his subordinates, will feel appreciated if his leader pays more attention to his needs even though his needs are personal.
2. Work ethic with the statement "I keep working with enthusiasm even though I face pressure.". Here employees face pressure with the workload assigned to them, here superiors need to pay more attention to the needs of their employees in working so that the pressure they feel can be overcome and their work enthusiasm is maintained.
3. For work motivation with the statement "I try hard to finish the job well.". It is better for the leadership of the Financial and Regional Asset Agency of North Sumatra Province to pay more attention to their employees in working, especially employees who are constrained by their work, both technically and non-technically, and a way out can be found.
4. Employee performance with the statement "I am fully responsible for the results of the work I do". It turns out that employees feel that the responsibilities they have carried out have not been maximized so that the agency pays more attention to employees who are less responsible for the tasks they must carry out. They need to be given support to work as well as possible according to their respective responsibilities.

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