

Beyond Performance: The Mediating Role of Motivation in the Nexus of Leadership, Culture, and Teacher Welfare

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Abstract

Teacher performance quality remains a strategic issue in elementary education, particularly in regions with large and diverse teacher populations such as West Java. This study examines the influence of transformational leadership, organizational culture, and teacher welfare on teacher performance quality, with work motivation as a mediating variable. A quantitative explanatory approach was employed using a cross-sectional survey design. The respondents were public elementary school teachers in West Java Province, selected through proportionate stratified cluster random sampling across several regional clusters. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling with AMOS. The findings indicate that teacher welfare plays the most important role in improving both work motivation and teacher performance quality. Work motivation also mediates the relationship between teacher welfare and teacher performance quality, showing that welfare improvement can strengthen teacher performance by enhancing motivation. In contrast, transformational leadership does not show a significant influence on either work motivation or teacher performance quality. Organizational culture has a negative effect on work motivation, suggesting that a demanding school culture without adequate support may reduce teachers' intrinsic motivation. These findings highlight that improving teacher welfare, strengthening psychosocial recognition, ensuring workload fairness, and creating a supportive school culture are essential strategies for improving teacher performance quality. This study contributes to educational management literature by emphasizing teacher welfare and work motivation as central mechanisms in strengthening elementary school teacher performance.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership; Organizational Culture; Teacher Welfare; Work Motivation; Teacher Performance Quality; SEM-AMOS

JEL Classification: I21; I28; M12; M54

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

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Education is the primary foundation of quality human resource development. In the era of globalization and the rapidly evolving Industry 4.0 revolution, improving educational quality has become an urgent national priority agenda. Teachers, as the frontline of the educational process, play a highly strategic role in determining student success. Teacher performance quality is not merely measured by classroom teaching ability; it encompasses broader dimensions including pedagogical competence, professionalism, innovation capacity, and dedication to the profession.

West Java Province, as the most populous province in Indonesia, faces complex challenges in managing its elementary schools. National education statistics indicate that West Java has one of the largest numbers of elementary schools, teachers, and students in Indonesia, making it a strategically important province for improving the quality of basic education ([Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2024](#)). This situation demands an effective and accountable school management system to ensure that teacher performance quality can be continuously and equitably improved across all regions, both urban and rural.

Empirical observations indicate that elementary school teacher performance quality in West Java still faces numerous challenges, including low levels of instructional innovation, limited mastery of educational technology, insufficient self-development initiatives, and minimal commitment to continuous quality improvement in teaching. Additionally, demographic profiles reveal that 42.5% of teachers receive monthly incomes below IDR 2.5 million, and 42% maintain side businesses to supplement their income—signaling that economic welfare remains a critical unresolved issue.

This study addresses the research gap by developing a comprehensive model that integrates transformational leadership, organizational culture, and teacher welfare as predictors of teacher performance quality, mediated by work motivation, specifically in the context of West Java elementary schools. Although this study focuses on elementary school management, broader institutional studies have shown that engagement and participation are essential mechanisms for building shared responsibility and sustainable development. For example, [Wijaya et al. \(2026\)](#) found that participatory approaches can strengthen community engagement, empower young actors, and support sustainable institutional outcomes through collaborative narratives and stakeholder involvement.

1.2 Research Problems and Objectives

This study examines the following research questions: (1) Does transformational leadership significantly affect teacher work motivation? (2) Does organizational culture significantly affect teacher work motivation? (3) Does teacher welfare significantly affect teacher work motivation? (4) Does transformational leadership significantly affect teacher performance quality? (5) Does teacher welfare significantly affect teacher performance quality? (6) Does work motivation mediate the relationships between these predictors and teacher performance quality?

The primary objective is to empirically test a structural model in which teacher welfare, organizational culture, and transformational leadership—mediated by work motivation—determine the quality of elementary school teachers' performance in West Java.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Teacher Performance Quality

Teacher performance quality refers to the holistic outcomes achieved by teachers in executing their professional responsibilities, encompassing pedagogical competence, personality, social competence, and professional competence as mandated by Indonesian [Law No. 14/2005](#) on Teachers and Lecturers. [Colquitt, LePine, and Wesson \(2019\)](#) emphasize that performance is determined by task performance, citizenship behavior, and the absence of counterproductive behavior. In this study, teacher performance quality is operationalized through nine indicators derived from Permendiknas No. 41/2007 on Learning Standards: interactive classroom management, inclusive classroom climate, assessment utilization, technology/AI integration, subject matter mastery, social engagement, classroom action research and self-evaluation, KKG (teacher working group) participation, and openness to feedback. In the Indonesian human resource management context, performance is commonly understood as the quality and quantity of work achieved by an individual in carrying out responsibilities assigned by the organization ([Mangkunegara, 2017](#)).

2.2 Transformational leadership

Transformational leadership theory, originally introduced by [Burns \(1978\)](#) and operationalized by [Bass \(1985\)](#) and [Bass & Avolio \(1994\)](#), describes leaders who elevate followers' motivation and performance beyond ordinary expectations. The four core dimensions—Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration—have been extensively validated in educational settings. [Leithwood and Jantzi \(2005\)](#) found that transformational school leadership significantly affects teacher commitment and capacity. [Wahab, Wirawan, and Widodo \(2022\)](#) confirmed positive effects on teacher performance mediated by intrinsic motivation in Indonesian schools. In the Indonesian elementary school context, principal leadership and organizational culture have also been associated with teacher performance, suggesting that school-level managerial factors remain important predictors of instructional quality ([Masaong & Tilome, 2022](#)).

2.3 Organizational culture

[Schein \(2010\)](#) defines organizational culture as a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solves external adaptation and internal integration problems. [Deal and Peterson \(1999\)](#) argue that a positive and strong school culture significantly influences teacher motivation and performance. [Robbins and Judge \(2022\)](#) identify seven cultural characteristics: innovation and risk-taking, attention to detail, outcomes orientation, people orientation, team orientation, aggressiveness, and stability. In school contexts, [Hargreaves \(2019\)](#) found that collaborative culture positively correlates with teaching quality, although overly intensive collaboration without adequate support may generate professional stress. Previous research also shows that school climate is closely related to teacher stress, job satisfaction, and teaching efficacy, indicating that organizational conditions in schools can either support or undermine teachers' psychological readiness to perform effectively ([Collie et al., 2012](#)).

2.4 Teacher welfare

Teacher welfare encompasses the physical, psychological, social, and professional fulfillment of teachers in performing their duties. [Ryan and Deci's \(2001\)](#) Self-Determination Theory (SDT) posits that genuine well-being derives from satisfying three basic psychological needs: competence, autonomy, and relatedness. [Indonesian Law No. 14/2005](#) mandates that teachers are entitled to adequate income, professional recognition, protection, and development opportunities. [Supriatna, Musadad, and Kurniasih \(2023\)](#) found a significant positive

correlation between teacher welfare and both work motivation and performance quality among elementary school teachers in West Java. Teacher welfare is also closely connected to teachers' professional lives, resilience, and long-term commitment, as teachers' capacity to maintain performance depends not only on competence but also on the quality of support they receive in their working environment ([Day & Gu, 2010](#)). From an occupational psychology perspective, welfare is not limited to financial compensation but also includes psychological well-being, meaningful work, and supportive employment conditions that shape employees' mental health and work functioning ([Warr, 1987](#)).

2.5 Work motivation

Work motivation, defined by [Robbins and Coulter \(2021\)](#) as the process explaining the intensity, direction, and persistence of individual effort toward goals, serves as the critical mediating mechanism in this study. [Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory \(1959\)](#) distinguishes between intrinsic motivators (achievement, recognition, the work itself) and extrinsic hygiene factors (company policy, working conditions, salary). [Deci and Ryan's \(2000\)](#) SDT emphasizes intrinsic motivation stemming from autonomy and competence. In educational contexts, [Han and Yin \(2016\)](#) identify four dimensions of teacher motivation: utilitarian extrinsic, intrinsic, social, and mastery-based motivation.

2.6 Research Hypotheses

Based on the theoretical review, this study proposes ten hypotheses (H1–H10):

- H1: Transformational leadership positively and significantly affects teacher work motivation.
- H2: Organizational culture positively and significantly affects teacher work motivation.
- H3: Teacher welfare positively and significantly affects teacher work motivation.
- H4: Transformational leadership positively and significantly affects teacher performance quality.
- H5: Organizational culture positively and significantly affects teacher performance quality.
- H6: Teacher welfare positively and significantly affects teacher performance quality.
- H7: Teacher work motivation positively and significantly affects teacher performance quality.
- H8: Work motivation mediates the effect of transformational leadership on teacher performance quality.
- H9: Work motivation mediates the effect of organizational culture on teacher performance quality.
- H10: Work motivation mediates the effect of teacher welfare on teacher performance quality.

3. Research Method

3.1 Research Design and Setting

This study employed a quantitative explanatory approach using a cross-sectional survey design. The analytical method was Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The research was conducted in West Java Province, covering 27 districts and cities organized into six geographical clusters. West Java was selected as the research setting because it has one of the largest numbers of elementary schools and teachers in Indonesia. A quantitative explanatory design was selected

because this study aimed to test the causal relationships among latent variables based on a predefined theoretical model ([Creswell, 2014](#)).

3.2 Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

The population comprised public elementary school teachers in West Java Province. Proportionate stratified cluster random sampling was employed across six regional clusters: Bogor Raya Megapolitan, Bandung Raya, Ciayumajakuning, North West Java/Industrial, East Priangan, and South/West Java. The minimum sample size was determined following [Hair et al.'s \(2019\)](#) recommendation of a 5:1 to 10:1 respondent-to-indicator ratio. With 22 final indicators, the minimum required sample ranged from 110 to 220 respondents. A total of 162 valid responses were obtained, meeting the minimum requirement for SEM analysis

3.3 Data Collection and Validity/Reliability

Data were collected via an online questionnaire (Google Form) distributed through WhatsApp groups of Teacher Working Groups (KKG) and academic networks across West Java. Instrument validity was assessed using Pearson Product-Moment correlation ($r_{\text{table}} = 0.1543$ at $df=160$, $\alpha=0.05$). All 22 indicators were declared valid ($r_{\text{count}} > 0.1543$, $p < 0.01$). Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha: X1 ($\alpha=0.910$), X2 ($\alpha=0.808$), X3 ($\alpha=0.633$), Z ($\alpha=0.741$), Y ($\alpha=0.911$) — all exceeded the 0.60 threshold ([Hair et al., 2019](#)), confirming adequate reliability

3.4 Research Indicators

Five key variables were operationalized: Transformational Leadership (X1, 4 indicators: charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individual consideration); Organizational Culture (X2, 4 indicators: collaboration, innovation, professional integrity); Teacher Welfare (X3, 2 indicators: workload fairness, Psychosocial recognition); Teacher Work Motivation (Z, 3 indicators: achievement drive, work responsibility, content motivation); and Teacher Performance Quality (Y, 9 indicators: covering pedagogical, professional, social, and personality competencies). All measured on a 5-point Likert scale.

4. Findings and Discussions

Prior to hypothesis testing, model fit evaluation was conducted. Results from SPSS AMOS are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Goodness-of-Fit Indices of the Structural Model

Fit Index	Result	Threshold	Category	Remark
CMIN/DF	1.560	< 2.0	Good Fit	Excellent parsimony
RMSEA	0.059	< 0.08	Good Fit	Near very-good threshold
GFI	0.838	> 0.80	Marginal Fit	Acceptable for 22-indicator model
AGFI	0.812	> 0.80	Marginal Fit	Acceptable
CFI	0.938	> 0.90	Good Fit	Exceeds threshold
TLI	0.934	> 0.90	Good Fit	Exceeds threshold
IFI	0.938	> 0.90	Good Fit	Exceeds threshold
RMR	0.037	< 0.08	Good Fit	Very good

Fit Index	Result	Threshold	Category	Remark
Bollen-Stine p	0.119	> 0.05	Good Fit	Model accepted (Bootstrap)

Source: processed (2026)

The three most credible indices—RMSEA (0.059), CFI (0.938), and TLI (0.934)—all satisfy good-fit criteria. Bollen-Stine Bootstrap (2,000 samples) confirmed model acceptance ($p=0.119>0.05$). The model is therefore suitable for hypothesis testing.

4.1 Direct Effects (H1–H7)

Table 2 presents the direct effect results from AMOS regression weight estimates.

Table 2. Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing Results

H	Path	Estimate	Std. Est.	p-value	Decision
H1	X1 → Z (Leadership → Motivation)	-0.307	-0.484	0.189	Rejected (Not Significant)
H2	X2 → Z (Culture → Motivation)	-0.369	-0.394	0.041	Rejected (Sig., but Negative)
H3	X3 → Z (Welfare → Motivation)	1.998	1.652	<0.001***	Accepted (Positive)
H4	X1 → Y (Leadership → Performance)	-0.231	-0.401	0.116	Rejected (Not Significant)
H6	X3 → Y (Welfare → Performance)	1.291	1.172	<0.001***	Accepted (Positive)

Note: *** $p < 0.001$.

Source: processed (2026)

The findings reveal that teacher welfare (X3) is the most powerful predictor in the model. Its effect on motivation ($\beta=1.652$, $p<0.001$) and directly on performance ($\beta=1.172$, $p<0.001$) is highly significant. Notably, transformational leadership (X1) did not produce statistically significant effects on either motivation ($p=0.189$) or performance ($p=0.116$), rejecting H1 and H4. Organizational culture (X2) showed a statistically significant but negative effect on motivation ($\beta=-0.394$, $p=0.041$), rejecting H2 in its hypothesized direction.

4.2 Mediation Effects (H8–H10)

Mediation was tested using Bollen-Stine Bootstrap (2,000 samples). Results are presented in Table 3

Table 3. Mediation (Indirect Effect) Hypothesis Testing Results

H	Mediation Path	Std. Indirect	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	Decision
H8	X1 → Z → Y	-0.263~-0.322	-0.833	0.023	Rejected (CI crosses zero)
H9	X2 → Z → Y	-0.252~-	-0.976	-0.034	Partial Accept (Neg.)

H	Mediation Path	Std. Indirect	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	Decision
		0.319			mediation)
H10	X3 → Z → Y	0.770~0.941	0.519	2.725	Accepted (p=0.001)

Note: BC = Bias-Corrected Bootstrap.

Source: processed (2026)

The strongest finding is H10: teacher welfare → work motivation → performance quality. The positive confidence interval confirms that work motivation significantly mediates this welfare-to-performance pathway. Because teacher welfare also has a significant direct effect on performance quality, this relationship is best interpreted as partial mediation. This finding is consistent with Self-Determination Theory ([Ryan & Deci, 2001](#)) and [Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory \(1959\)](#).

H9 achieved statistical significance (p=0.026–0.031), but the entirely negative CI indicates that organizational culture reduces motivation, which in turn reduces performance—a counter-theoretical finding. This "pressure culture" phenomenon is consistent with [Hargreaves' \(2019\)](#) observations that highly demanding collaborative cultures without adequate support can generate professional stress, counterproductively suppressing intrinsic motivation.

H8 was rejected; the CI crossed zero, confirming that motivation does not mediate the leadership–performance relationship. This is coherent with the non-significant direct effects of transformational leadership found in the model.

4.3 Discussion

The non-significant effect of transformational leadership contradicts findings by [Wahab et al. \(2022\)](#) and [Nguni et al. \(2006\)](#). Several contextual explanations are plausible: (1) the sample is dominated by teachers from the industrial cluster (Karawang-Purwakarta), which experiences frequent principal turnover, preventing leadership style internalization; (2) leadership may operate through indirect long-term pathways ([Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005](#)) that cross-sectional designs cannot capture; and (3) nominal adoption of transformational rhetoric without substantive practice may dilute the effect.

The negative organizational culture effect invites critical reflection on school culture theory. In schools where collaborative norms are enforced without commensurate emotional and resource support, teachers may experience increased performance anxiety and reduced intrinsic motivation. This nuances [Schein's \(2010\)](#) and [Deal & Peterson's \(1999\)](#) frameworks, suggesting that the direction and magnitude of cultural impact depend critically on contextual conditions.

Teacher welfare emerges as the dominant determinant—both directly and via motivation—underscoring the practical urgency of welfare reform. For West Java's elementary school teachers, particularly non-civil-servant (honorer) teachers, empirical evidence now clearly supports welfare improvement as the highest-return policy investment for enhancing instructional quality.

4.3.1 Transformational Leadership and Teacher Motivation/Performance

Transformational leadership (X1) did not significantly affect teacher work motivation (Estimate

= -0.307; $p=0.189$) or performance quality (Estimate = -0.231; $p=0.116$), rejecting H1 and H4. The standardized estimate for the leadership–motivation path ($\beta = -0.484$) carries a relatively large standard error (S.E. = 0.234), indicating high estimation uncertainty. Bootstrap mediation tests further confirmed the non-significance: the indirect path $X1 \rightarrow Z \rightarrow Y$ yielded $p = 0.073-0.079$ with a confidence interval crossing zero [-0.833; 0.023], confirming that motivation does not mediate leadership's effect on performance (H8 rejected). This finding diverges from [Wahab et al. \(2022\)](#) and [Nguni et al. \(2006\)](#), who reported significant positive leadership effects. The non-significance may be explained by frequent principal turnover in the industrial cluster (Karawang, Purwakarta), insufficient time for leadership internalization, or the possibility that leadership practices remain essentially transactional despite transformational rhetoric ([Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005](#))

4.3.2 Organizational Culture and Teacher Motivation

Organizational culture (X2) showed a statistically significant but negative direct effect on teacher motivation (Estimate = -0.369; $\beta = -0.394$; $p = 0.041$), rejecting H2 as hypothesized. This counterintuitive finding is reinforced by the indirect effect analysis: Bootstrap BC testing confirmed that organizational culture exerts a significant negative indirect effect on motivational indicators Z1–Z3 (Std. IE ranging from -0.252 to -0.319; $p = 0.026-0.031$; Bootstrap CI entirely negative at [-0.976; -0.034]), yielding partial negative mediation (H9). Theoretically, this can be interpreted through [Herzberg's \(1959\)](#) Two-Factor Theory and [Hargreaves' \(2019\)](#) 'pressure culture' concept: an overly demanding, bureaucracy-heavy culture with limited teacher autonomy may erode intrinsic motivation. Self-Determination Theory ([Deci & Ryan, 2000](#)) further supports this: a highly controlling environment undermines autonomous motivation.

4.3.3 Teacher Welfare as the Dominant Determinant

Teacher welfare (X3) emerged as the strongest determinant across all tested pathways. Its direct effect on teacher work motivation (Estimate = 1.998; $\beta = 1.652$; $p < 0.001$) represents the largest coefficient in the entire model, while its direct effect on performance quality (Estimate = 1.291; $\beta = 1.172$; $p < 0.001$) is the strongest predictor of Y, supporting H3 and H6. The exceptionally high correlations among exogenous variables ($r = 0.757-0.829$) and the standardized estimates exceeding 1.0 for welfare pathways indicate multicollinearity, accompanied by a Heywood case (negative error variance $e23 = -0.021$) that renders the solution technically non-admissible. These technical limitations must be explicitly noted. Nevertheless, the direction and dominance of welfare effects remain consistent across multiple estimation approaches, aligned with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Self-Determination Theory ([Ryan & Deci, 2001](#)), and findings by [Supriatna et al. \(2023\)](#).

4.3.4 Mediation Effects

Regarding mediation effects, H10 was strongly supported: teacher work motivation significantly mediates the welfare–performance relationship ($p = 0.001$; BC-CI = [0.812; 2.725], entirely positive). The Standardized Indirect Effects ranged from 0.770 (Y9) to 0.941 (Y3) across all performance indicators. Because the direct effect $X3 \rightarrow Y$ is also significant, this constitutes partial mediation: welfare improves performance both directly and by elevating motivation. This is the most robust and substantively meaningful finding in the model, aligning with Maslow's and Herzberg's foundational theories. H9 received partial support with a negative direction ($p = 0.026-0.031$; Bootstrap CI entirely negative), indicating that

organizational culture's negative motivation effect is statistically verified. H8 was rejected ($p = 0.074-0.204$; CI crossing zero), consistent with the non-significant leadership direct effects.

5. Conclusion

This study examined the structural relationships between transformational leadership, organizational culture, teacher welfare, work motivation, and teacher performance quality among elementary school teachers in West Java. Using SEM with 162 respondents, three major conclusions emerge.

First, teacher welfare is the strongest determinant of both work motivation and performance quality, with work motivation partially mediating the welfare–performance relationship.

Second, organizational culture exerts a significant but negative effect on motivation ($\beta = -0.394$, $p = 0.041$), suggesting that highly demanding school cultures without adequate support create a "pressure culture" that suppresses intrinsic motivation. Partial mediation through motivation was confirmed but in a negative direction (H9 partially accepted).

Third, transformational leadership showed no significant effect on motivation or performance quality in this sample (H1, H4, H8 rejected). This contextually specific finding challenges the universal applicability of transformational leadership theory and calls for more context-sensitive leadership approaches in heterogeneous Indonesian educational settings.

Practically, policymakers should prioritize comprehensive welfare improvement programs — including accelerating conversion of contract teachers to permanent status, reviewing professional allowances, and instituting psychological well-being support. School principals should conduct participatory cultural audits to identify bureaucratic or controlling cultural elements that demotivate teachers. Leadership development programs should emphasize welfare-oriented and autonomy-supportive practices. Future research should employ longitudinal designs, qualitative exploration of the negative culture–motivation mechanism, and PLS-SEM as an alternative robust to multicollinearity

Policy implications are clear: provincial and national educational authorities should prioritize comprehensive teacher welfare improvements—financial (adequate remuneration), psychosocial (professional recognition), and workload management—as the most evidence-based intervention for improving elementary school teacher performance in West Java. School culture audit programs are also recommended to transform "pressure cultures" into genuinely supportive collaborative environments.

Limitations include an unequal cluster distribution (Cluster 4 constituted 42% of the sample), cross-sectional design, and potential social desirability bias in self-reported measures. Future research should employ longitudinal designs, larger representative samples, and mixed-methods approaches to deepen understanding of the contextual mechanisms identified here.

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