



## Impact of Transformational Leadership and Work Motivation on Performance with Work Ethic Mediation

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### Abstract

The study aims to determine the effect of transformational leadership and work motivation on employee performance with work ethic as a mediator variable at PT Bank Mandiri (Persero) Tbk Samarinda Branch. This study uses a quantitative approach with 136 employees of PT Bank Mandiri (Persero) Tbk - Samarinda Branch. The analytical tool used in this research is the SmartPLS version 3.2.9 application. The data analysis process in this study was carried out with the measurement model (outer model), structural model (inner model) and hypothesis testing using Bootstrapping. The results of this study indicate that transformational leadership (X1) has a positive and significant effect on work ethic (Z), work motivation (X2) has a positive and significant effect on work ethic (Z), transformational leadership (X1) has a positive and significant effect on employee performance (Y), work motivation (X2) has a positive and significant effect on employee performance (Y), work ethic (Z) has a positive and significant effect on employee performance (Y), this study also proves that work ethic (Z) is able to mediate the effect of transformational leadership (X1) on employee performance (Y), and work ethic (Z) is able to mediate the effect of work motivation (X2) on employee performance (Y).

## Introduction

The development of the globalization era driven by technological advances indicates that the world has entered a period of "disruption". This era encourages companies to continue to develop and improve the business that has been running in order to remain relevant and compete with similar competitors (Marinova, 2020). Moreover, the world is currently faced with conditions of rapid change, unpredictability, and uncertainty, known as the VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity) phenomenon (Bennett & Lemoine, 2014). These changes do not only occur at the local or regional level, but also globally, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, the contribution of human resources becomes very important to face challenges in this condition of uncertainty. Bank Mandiri, as one of the largest banks in Indonesia, is facing regulatory changes and intense competition, which requires employees to master the latest technology and improve work efficiency. However, employee performance at the Samarinda branch is still fluctuating, particularly from a financial, development and customer perspective (Indriastuti et al., 2020; Zainurossalamia et al., 2024).

There are several aspects that influence the improvement of employee performance in achieving these targets, including the role of leaders. Leadership plays a crucial role in determining success and good performance. Effective leadership can be a key determinant that drives growth, innovation, and the achievement of overall organizational goals (Alrowwad et al., 2020; Saputra, 2021). Conversely, weak or ineffective leadership can hinder organizational development, create uncertainty, and even negatively impact employee performance. One of

the reasons why leadership plays such an important role is because leaders hold the responsibility of directing, inspiring, and motivating the team or members of the organization. A good leader is able to clearly articulate the vision and goals of the organization, as well as develop appropriate strategies to achieve these goals. Through good communication skills, leaders can build strong relationships with employees, help them understand their role in achieving common goals, and inspire them to give their best (Salas-Vallina et al., 2021). The success or failure of an institution is highly dependent on the quality of leadership, because it is the leader who controls and determines the direction that the institution will take in achieving the set goals. This leadership style emphasizes the importance of teamwork in achieving group goals, sharing common values and beliefs, and working together in an integrated manner (Marbun et al., 2023).

Factor to improve employee performance is work motivation. According to (Robbins & Judge, 2018) the concept of motivation can be explained as a person's willingness to give maximum effort in achieving organizational goals. This motivation is influenced by the ability of individuals to meet their various personal needs. In this context, motivation becomes an internal drive that encourages individuals to behave in accordance with the organizational goals to be achieved, while according to (Dachner et al., 2021), motivation is a process that stimulates performance, which results in stimulation for people to take action and achieve the desired performance (Parashakti et al., 2020). Motivated employees tend to work harder and are dedicated to achieving better results. The drivers of motivation are closely related to the needs and desires of employees. Bank Mandiri understands the importance of fulfilling employee needs, both financially and non-financially, as well as providing opportunities for employees to develop themselves and reach their full potential. One of the ways that Bank Mandiri provides motivation is through the provision of compensation in accordance with employee performance. Employees who achieve good results in completing their tasks are rewarded with adequate compensation, as a form of appreciation and incentive to continue to excel. The other hand the role of work ethic plays a very important role in improving employee performance (Aflah et al., 2021). Work ethic refers to a person's attitude, values, and commitment to their work. When employees have a strong work ethic, they tend to be more dedicated, passionate, and focused in carrying out their tasks. One of the direct impacts of a high work ethic is increased productivity. Employees who have a good work ethic tend to work more efficiently and effectively. They have strong intrinsic motivation to achieve the best results in their work. They are able to complete tasks in a timely manner and with good quality, which ultimately contributes to improved overall performance (Barrick et al., 2013).

High Work Ethic Mediates Transformational Leadership and Motivation's Impact on Employee Performance, Bank Mandiri is able to face business challenges more efficiently and effectively. Dedicated and passionate employees will work harder, be more focused and more results-oriented. This can lead to better operational efficiency, improved service to customers, and enhance the company's ability to achieve long term strategic goals (Lee, 2021). In addition, a strong work ethic can also create a positive and inspiring work environment at Bank Mandiri. When employees feel motivated and have a high work ethic, they are also more likely to collaborate as a team, share innovative ideas, and support each other in achieving common goals. This spirit of cooperation and collaboration can generate synergy among team members, strengthen an inclusive corporate culture, and create a positive and pleasant work atmosphere (Anderson et al., 2021; Srimulyani et al., 2023).

Based on research conducted by (Hardi, 2020) and (Larosa et al., 2022) showed that transformational leadership has a significant influence on work ethic. In addition, (Ginting, 2022) also found that transformational leadership and work motivation affect employee work

ethic. Other research conducted by (Larosa et al., 2022) and (Pragiwani & Bran Hans, 2017) show that work motivation has a positive and significant influence on work ethic. In addition, the findings in research (Ginting, 2022) also show that motivation affects employee work ethic. On the other hand, research by (Prabowo et al., 2017) show different results, namely transformational leadership has no significant effect on employee performance. However, research conducted by Budur & Demir, 2022) shows that transformational leadership has a significant effect on employee performance. (Prabowo et al., 2017) and (Jufrizen & Erika, 2021.) found that work motivation has a significant effect on employee performance. Overall, research by (Aini et al., 2021) and (Permana & Dewi, 2022) showed that work ethic has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. Based on the explanation of previous research and the absence of research on employee performance at PT Bank Mandiri (Persero), Tbk - Samarinda Branch, the researcher then wishes to gain a deeper understanding of employee performance at PT Bank Mandiri (Persero), Tbk - Samarinda Branch. This research raises the title "The Effect of Transformational Leadership and Work Motivation on Employee Performance with Work Ethic as a Mediator Variable".

## Methods

### Research Design

The research in the current study was conducted using a quantitative research approach in order to establish the impact of transformational leadership and work motivation to performance; Work ethic was used as the antecedent variable. Cross-sectional survey research design was employed; this involved gathering of information at one point with participants being employees of PT Bank Mandiri (Persero) Tbk Samarinda Branch. This design was chosen to measure the associations between the variables of interest and to examine the research hypotheses using structural equation modelling.

### Population and Sampling

The population for this study was all the 136 employees of PT Bank Mandiri (Persero) Tbk Samarinda Branch. Sweep sampling was used because all units in the population were selected in the study sample. This approach means that the results that are obtained are as close as possible to the whole population thus reducing sampling bias. Due to relatively small population census sampling was deemed proper in order to obtain a maximum coverage and statistical significance.

### Data Collection

The data for this study was collected using a structured questionnaire designed specifically to measure the four primary constructs of interest: such variables as transformational leadership, work motivation, work ethic and employee performance. The items for the questionnaire were derived from other existing and standardised questionnaires in the literature, making an effort to use reliable and valid instruments.

Table 1. Instrument Development and Measurement

Construct	Source	What it Investigates	Scale
<b>Transformational Leadership</b>	Bass & Avolio (1995), Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)	Investigates leadership behaviors that inspire, motivate, and intellectually stimulate employees	5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

<b>Work Motivation</b>	Robbins & Judge (2018), Motivation Scale	Investigates the intrinsic and extrinsic factors driving employees to achieve organizational goals	5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)
<b>Work Ethic</b>	Miller, Woehr, & Hudspeth (2002), Work Ethic Inventory	Investigates the level of diligence, reliability, and commitment to work among employees	5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)
<b>Employee Performance</b>	Viswesvaran & Ones (2000), Organizational Performance Scale	Investigates the efficiency, quality, and productivity of employees in their job performance	5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

To make assurance that the items in the study were relevant according to the context create by the study and fully understood by the respondents, was subjected to pilot testing. The pilot test targeted 15 employees from the same branch which were not among the sample of the study. These participants were requested to fill in the questionnaire and comment on the clarity, relevance and length of the items.

According to the feedback received, some of the items were modified to make the language clearer, and to make the questions and questions' answers more specific concentrating only on the experience of PT Bank Mandiri (Persero) Tbk Samarinda Branch. For example technical terms were avoided or reduced and some of items were reformulated in understanding the cultural or organizational context of the respondents.

After the development of the questionnaire was complete, the questionnaire was given to all the 136 employees in PT Bank Mandiri (Persero) Tbk Samarinda Branch. The study questionnaire was both an online and a hard copy to ensure that everyone preferred their comfortable mode of completing the questionnaires. The electronic version was sent through e-mail as an attached . pdf file including a hyperlink to an online survey and the paper copies was distributed through the Human Resource department.

The respondents were given a week to fill the questionnaire. At this time, the mobilization emails were sent, in an attempt to remind people to complete the questionnaire; extra hardcopies of the questionnaires were also provided to those who had not filled the online form. The HR department was also helpful in arranging the returns of the paper questionnaires after the completion by the respondents.

The survey data was collected over two weeks to allow the respondents to complete the survey during working hours and thereby maximise the response rate. As such, the study obtained 128 completed questionnaires out of the 135 distributed, giving a response rate of 94 percent. 1%. This high response rate has probably facilitated the representativeness of the samples used as well as the reliability of the subsequent analysis.

All the completed questionnaires were later kept and secured and all the names and identification numbers were also removed before the questionnaires were keyed into SmartPLS for analysis. Concerning data entry process, procedures of completeness and consistency checks were applied, all doubts were defined and the data which raised doubts was examined before the analysis.

## **Data Analysis**

Data analysis for this study were accomplished by Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) via the software SmartPLS version 3. 2. 9 software. SEM was chosen for the analysis because of its strengths to examine relationships between the observed and unobserved variables. This is particularly useful where the study under consideration involves the mediation analysis since the method returns multiple dependence relationships, which offers an integrated picture of direct and indirect effects of the model under consideration.

The analysis proceeded in two primary stages: This comprises the assessment of the measurement model which is also referred to as the outer model and the assessment of the structural model, which is also called the inner model.

### ***The Outer Model or the Measurement Model Assessment***

The first step that was involved in this study was testing the measurement model in order to check on the reliability as well as the validity of the constructs that were incorporated in the study. In order to ensure the reliability of the items, composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha were computed. Composite reliability was used to measure the internal consistency of the constructs, and the cutoff value of 0.7. Of them seven are considered acceptable (Hair et al., 2010). Cronbach's alpha was also checked to see the reliability based on the inter correlations of the observed CV indicator variables. In this research, all the constructs obtained Cronbach's alpha scores above the required, and they were as follows with a mean inter-item correlation of 0.7 which showed internal consistency.

Convergent validity is the extent to which two measures that operationalise the same construct has similar factor loadings, coefficients or correlations. It is statistically tested using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), variances captured by a construct relative to the amounts of error. An AVE value above 0.5 can be interpreted as the composite goodwill of the brand affecting customers and exceeding the initial attractiveness created by the brand. 0.5 substantiates the convergent validity since the construct explains more than half of the variance of its indicators (Kumar et al., 2022). Moreover, cross loadings of each indicator on its corresponding construct were examined and those loadings above 0.5. These are the number of students scoring 7 or more which show good convergent validity.

Discriminant validity, which checks whether the constructs are unique from one another, was analysed by the Fornell Larcker criterion and cross loadings. The Fornell Larcker criterion specifies that the values of the AVE of each construct should be higher than the highest value of the correlation between this construct and all the other constructs. The cross loadings were also analyzed and checked to determine to which extent the indicators load more than on the corresponding construct. This step is important in ensuring that the indicators developed for a particular construct are not in any way, measuring another construct, before the intended one.

### ***The assessment of the Structural Model is also known as Inner Model***

The second aspect of this stage looked at assessing the structural model in order to determine the interconnectivity of the latent variables. The goodness of the structural model was tested by evaluating the R-square ( $R^2$ ) coefficients which are the proportion of the dependent variable variances that may be accounted for by the independent variable in the model. If the value is closer to 1, then the model derived is found to have a good explanatory power while if the value is closer to zero, then the model derived possesses very little predictive power. In the present work,  $R^2$  values given the measure of each of the dependent variables made it possible to test

the strengths of the predictors, namely, transformational leadership, work motivation, and work ethic as predictors of employee performance.

In addition, path coefficients, or the desired effects of the relationships of the latent variables, were also estimated. These coefficients were found statistically significant using the bootstrapping method, resampling at 5000. Bootstrap analysis is a resampling technique that does not require the normality of the data making it appropriate especially on the establishment of the reliability and stability of the estimated path coefficients. Consequently, the statistical importance of the path coefficients was assessed by reference to t-statistics and p-values, where a t-value greater than 1. was rated at 96 for 95 % confidence level thus making the findings statistically significant.

Moreover, the analysis was done considering direct and indirect effects for testing of mediation by work ethic. The indirect effects were examined to decide if work ethic moderated the interaction between transformational leadership, work motivation, and employee performance. Bootstrapping was also conducted in order to ascertain the indirect effects within the model as well as the mediators of these effects. The findings of these analyses were instrumental in unraveling the leadership and motivation relationships, work attitudes, and performance, the findings which provided theoretical and practical contributions to the field.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Overview of the Research Object**

PT Bank Mandiri was officially established as a state owned enterprise through Deed No. 9 on October 2, 1998, and is commonly referred to as PT Bank Mandiri (Persero). The establishment of PT Bank Mandiri (Persero) was part of the Indonesian government's banking restructuring efforts. In July 1999, four state owned banks Bank Bumi Daya, Bank Dagang Negara, Bank Ekspor Impor Indonesia, and Bank Pembangunan Indonesia were merged to form Bank Mandiri. Each of these banks had played a crucial role in Indonesia's economic development. Today, Bank Mandiri continues a legacy of over 140 years of contributing to Indonesia's banking sector and economy.

Following comprehensive consolidation and integration processes in all aspects, Bank Mandiri successfully built a strong organizational structure and adopted a new integrated core banking system, replacing the separate core banking systems of the four legacy banks. Since its inception, Bank Mandiri's performance has consistently improved, as evidenced by significant profit growth from IDR 1.18 trillion in 2000 to IDR 5.3 trillion in 2004. On July 14, 2003, Bank Mandiri conducted an initial public offering, releasing 20% of its shares, equivalent to 4 billion shares.

Based on the results of research to 136 respondents through questionnaires distributed, a picture of the characteristics of respondents has been obtained. The results showed that as many as 61,03% of respondents were male and 38,97% were female. The full details can be seen in the table below:

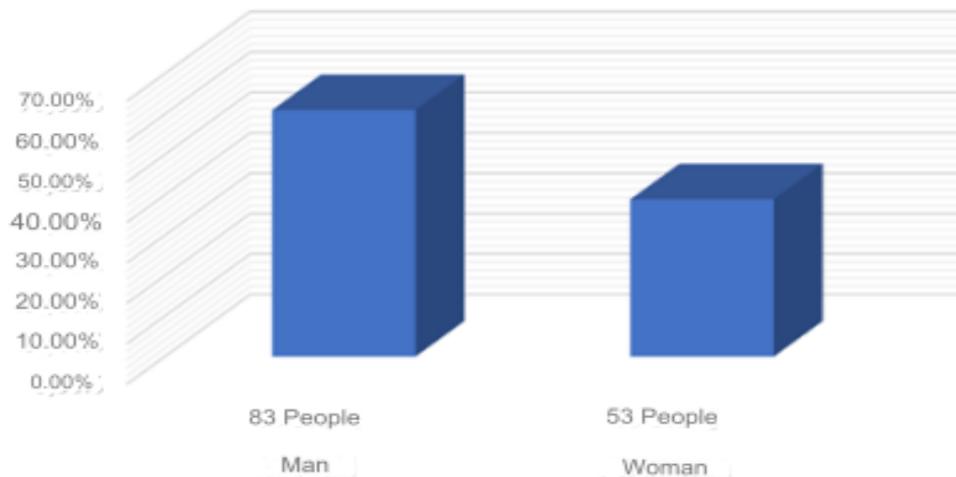


Figure 1. Respondents' Gender Answers

### Education

The results showed that as many as 8,82% of respondents had S2 education, 60,29% had S1 education, 26,47% had D1-D3 education, and 4,41% had high school education / equivalent, in full can be seen in the table below:

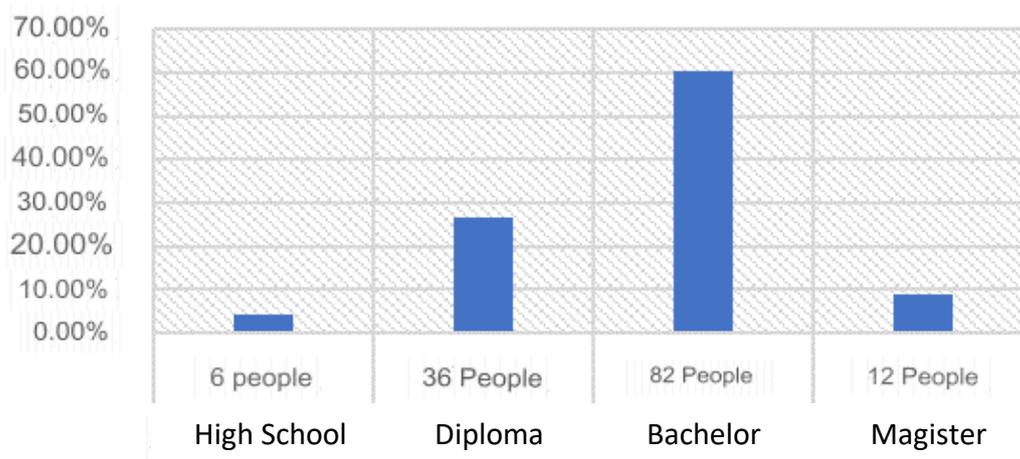


Figure 2. Respondents' Educational Answers

### Description of Respondent's Answer

#### Description of Respondent Answer Employee Performance (Y)

Description of respondents' answers to the employee performance variables, namely:

Table 1. Description of Respondents' Answers Regarding Employee Performance

No.	Statement	Answer					Average	Category
		STS	TS	CS	S	SS		
1	(Y.1)	0	5	22	72	36	4.01	Good
		0	4%	16%	53%	26%		
2	(Y.2)	0	10	13	82	28	3.90	Good
		0	7%	10%	60%	21%		
3	(Y.3)	0	5	24	74	32	3.96	Good

		0	4%	18%	54%	24%		
4	(Y.4)	0	18	4	63	51	4.08	Good
		0	13%	3%	46%	38%		
5	(Y.5)	0	11	12	65	45	4.01	Good
		0	8%	9%	48%	33%		
6	(Y.6)	0	13	21	63	37	3.88	Good
		0	10%	15%	46%	27%		
7	(Y.7)	0	15	14	59	43	3.88	Good
		0	11%	10%	43%	32%		
<b>Total</b>							<b>3.96</b>	<b>Good</b>

Source: Data Processing Results

The table above illustrates respondents' responses regarding employee performance variables. Based on the processing results presented in the table above, it can be seen that the average total score for the employee performance variable (Y) is 3.96. If you look at the interval category table, this value is in the good category. So it can be concluded that the respondents' responses regarding performance are in the good category.

#### ***Description of Respondent Answer Work Ethic (Z)***

Description of respondents' answers to the work ethic variables, namely:

Table 2. Description of Respondents' Answers Regarding Work Ethic

No.	Statement	Answer					Average	Category
		STS	TS	CS	S	SS		
1	(Z.1)	0	4	26	67	33	3.86	Good
		0	3%	19%	49%	24%		
2	(Z.2)	0	4	23	66	38	3.94	Good
		0	3%	17%	49%	28%		
3	(Z.3)	0	4	34	65	30	3.85	Good
		0	3%	25%	48%	22%		
4	(Z.4)	0	13	7	64	46	3.96	Good
		0	10%	5%	47%	34%		
5	(Z.5)	0	6	9	64	51	4.09	Good
		0	4%	7%	47%	38%		
6	(Z.6)	0	7	9	59	49	3.93	Good
		0	5%	7%	43%	36%		
<b>Total</b>							<b>3.94</b>	<b>Good</b>

Source: Data Processing Results

Based on the processing results listed in the table above, it can be concluded that the respondents' responses to the work ethic variable were evaluated. The average total score for the variable (abbreviated as Z) is 3.94. With reference to the relevant interval category table, this value is consistently in the "good" category. Therefore, the conclusion can be drawn that the response given by the respondents to work ethic can be classified as good.

**Description of Respondent Answer Transformational Leadership (X1)**

Description of respondents' answers to the transformational leadership variables, namely:

Table 3. Description of Respondents' Answers Regarding Transformational Leadership

No.	Statement	Answer					Average	Category
		STS	TS	CS	S	SS		
1	(X1.1)	0	2	8	85	41	4.21	Good
		0	1%	6%	63%	30%		
2	(X1.2)	0	1	7	76	52	4.32	Good
		0	1%					
3	(X1.3)	0	3	15	84	34	4.10	Good
		0	2%					
4	(X1.4)	0	2	7	80	47	4.26	Good
		0	1%					
<b>Total</b>						<b>4,23</b>	<b>Good</b>	

Source: Data Processing Results

The table above depicts the respondents' responses regarding the transformational leadership variable. Based on the results presented in the table, the total average score for the transformational leadership variable (X1) is 4.23. According to the interval category table, this score falls into the "good" category. Therefore, it can be concluded that the respondents' perceptions of transformational leadership are considered good.

**Description of Respondent Answer Work Motivation (X2)**

Description of respondents' answers to the work motivation variables, namely:

Table 4. Description of Respondents' Answers Regarding Work Motivation

No.	Statement	Answer					Average	Category
		STS	TS	CS	S	SS		
1	(X2.1)	0	6	26	62	41	4	Good
		0	4%	19%	46%	30%		
2	(X2.2)	0	7	17	64	45	4.04	Good
		0	5%	13%	47%	33%		
3	(X2.3)	0	10	26	61	34	3.80	Good
		0	7%	19%	45%	25%		
4	(X2.4)	0	8	31	54	40	3.88	Good
		0	6%	23%	40%	29%		
5	(X2.5)	0	8	24	65	33	3.82	Good
		0	6%	18%	48%	24%		
<b>Total</b>						<b>3,91</b>	<b>Good</b>	

Source: Data Processing Results

The table above illustrates the respondents' responses regarding the work motivation variable. Based on the results presented in the table, the total average score for the work motivation variable (X2) is 3.91. According to the interval category table, this score falls into the "good" category.

category. Therefore, it can be concluded that the respondents' perceptions of work motivation are considered good.

**Outer Model**

Table 5. Outer Loading

	<b>X1</b>	<b>X2</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Z</b>
X1.1	0,798			
X1.2	0,874			
X1.3	0,844			
X1.4	0,794			
X2.1		0,789		
X2.2		0,869		
X2.3		0,788		
X2.4		0,870		
X2.5		0,830		
Y.1			0,861	
Y.2			0,895	
Y.3			0,827	
Y.4			0,894	
Y.5			0,833	
Y.6			0,858	
Y.7			0,879	
Z.1				0,902
Z.2				0,909
Z.3				0,890
Z.4				0,859
Z.5				0,860
Z.6				0,881

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2024

Based on the results of the analysis above, it can be seen that all outer loading values are above 0.7 (> 0.7), this can be stated that it has met the elements of convergent validity testing, thus it can be stated that all indicators in this study can meet the elements of validity by having been analyzed based on convergent validity testing analysis.

**Discriminant Validity**

Table 6. Cross Loading

	<b>X1</b>	<b>X2</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Z</b>
X1.1	0,798	0,280	0,373	0,232
X1.2	0,874	0,327	0,342	0,286
X1.3	0,844	0,259	0,354	0,381
X1.4	0,794	0,237	0,264	0,350
X2.1	0,317	0,789	0,421	0,403
X2.2	0,313	0,869	0,513	0,315
X2.3	0,252	0,788	0,319	0,207

X2.4	0,286	0,870	0,576	0,367
X2.5	0,190	0,830	0,427	0,215
Y.1	0,334	0,401	0,861	0,372
Y.2	0,316	0,381	0,895	0,391
Y.3	0,396	0,359	0,827	0,315
Y.4	0,380	0,425	0,894	0,376
Y.5	0,309	0,337	0,833	0,422
Y.6	0,339	0,657	0,858	0,469
Y.7	0,364	0,669	0,879	0,419
Z.1	0,350	0,403	0,488	0,902
Z.2	0,420	0,394	0,470	0,909
Z.3	0,275	0,288	0,382	0,890
Z.4	0,343	0,306	0,374	0,859
Z.5	0,334	0,247	0,348	0,860
Z.6	0,265	0,320	0,353	0,881

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2024

Based on the analysis conducted on the table above, it can be noted that in each row, the crossloading value of all indicators associated with variables X1, X2, Y, and Z consistently shows a higher number than the cross loading value of indicators connected to other latent variables in the same row. This provides a strong indication that the research instrument used is able to clearly distinguish between each latent variable in the measurement framework being carried out.

**Composite Reliability, Cronbach's Alpha dan Average Variance Extracted (AVE)**

Table 7. Composite Reliability, Cronbach's Alpha and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>rho_A</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>	<b>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</b>
X1	0,847	0,853	0,897	0,686
X2	0,888	0,907	0,917	0,689
Y	0,944	0,959	0,954	0,747
Z	0,944	0,955	0,955	0,781

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2024

The test results that can be seen in the table above show that the cronbach's alpha values all have values above 0.7 so that it can be said that all variables are reliable, besides that the cronbach's alpha results which are all above 0.7 indicate that composite reliability has been achieved, and the average variance extracted (AVE) value on all variables is above 0.50 so that it can be stated that all latent variables have a good level of reliability.

**Inner Model**

Evaluation of the structural model (inner model) basically aims to predict the relationship between later variables, where the inner model benchmark can be seen through the R-Square (R2) value. The results of testing the inner model can be seen in the table below:

Table 8. R Square

	<b>R Square</b>	<b>R Square Adjusted</b>
Y	0,413	0,399
Z	0,215	0,203

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2024

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that employee performance can be explained by transformational leadership and work motivation of 0.413 or 41.3%. This value indicates that the employee performance variable can be explained by the variables used in this study by 41.3% while the remaining 58.7% is explained by other variables outside this study. Meanwhile, work ethic can be explained by transformational leadership and work motivation by 0.215 or 21.5%. This value indicates that the work ethic variable can be explained by the variables used in this study by 21.5% while the remaining 78.5% is explained by other variables outside this study.

**Results of Hypothesis Test**

Determining the direct effect between variables is done with a bootstrapping procedure. This procedure uses all the original samples. The significance value used is 1.96 (5% significance level) by using T-Statistics. The results of testing the direct effect hypothesis can be seen in Figure 1 and Table 4 below:

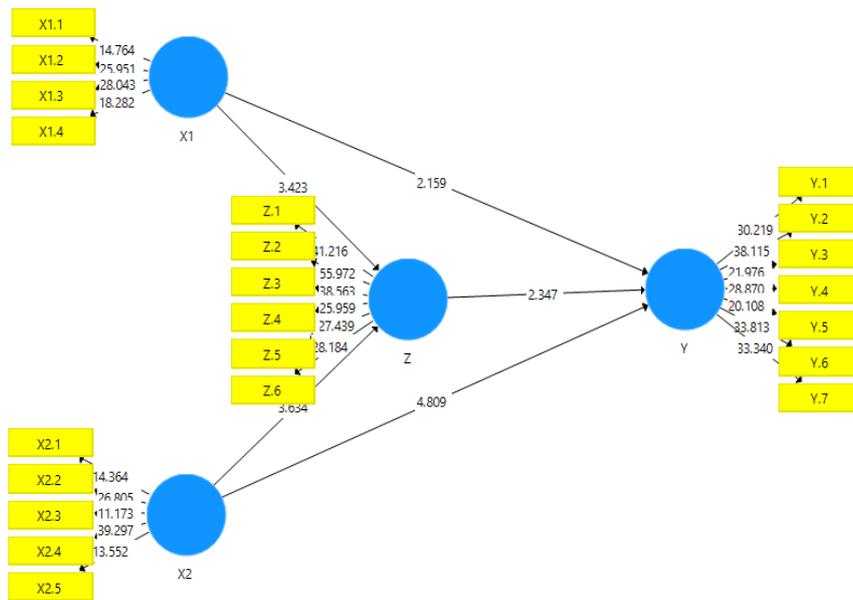


Figure 3. Path Coefficient Output

Table 9. Path Coefficient Output

	<b>Original Sample (O)</b>	<b>Sample Mean (M)</b>	<b>Standard Deviation (STDEV)</b>	<b>T Statistics ( O/STDEV )</b>	<b>P Values</b>
X1 -> Y	0,175	0,176	0,081	2,159	0,016
X1 -> Z	0,287	0,296	0,084	3,423	0,000
X2 -> Y	0,411	0,412	0,085	4,809	0,000
X2 -> Z	0,281	0,290	0,077	3,634	0,000
Z -> Y	0,242	0,245	0,103	2,347	0,010

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2024

All effects were expressed significantly with T-Statistics > 1.96 and p-values < 0.05 and positive values, indicating a positive and relevant influence between variables X1, X2, Z and Y.

### Testing the Hypothesis of the Role of Mediation (Indirect Effect)

Testing the effect of mediation or indirect effects basically aims to find out whether the mediating variable is able to mediate the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Testing the role of mediation using SmartPLS software can be done by examining the results of indirect effects after being analyzed using the PLS algorithm. The mediation effect is considered significant if the t-statistics value > 1.96 (greater than the t-table value) and the p-value is less than 0.05. The following is the output of indirect effects generated from analysis using SmartPLS.

Table 10. Output SmartPLS Indirect Effect

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
X1 -> Z -> Y	0,069	0,073	0,039	1,794	0,037
X2 -> Z -> Y	0,068	0,071	0,037	1,847	0,033

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2024

Based on this output, it can be interpreted as follows: (1) The results of testing the transformational leadership variable on employee performance mediated by work ethic show a path coefficient value of 0.069 with a t-statistics value of 1.794 and a p-value of 0.037. From these results it can be seen that the t-statistics value is greater than 1.96 and the p-value is smaller than 0.05. This indicates that work ethic (Z) is able to mediate the effect of transformational leadership (X1) on employee performance (Y) (included in the partial mediation category); (2) The results of testing work motivation variables on employee performance mediated by work ethic show a path coefficient value of 0.068 with a t-statistics value of 1.847 and a p-value of 0.033. From these results it can be seen that the t-statistics value is greater than 1.96 and the p-value is smaller than 0.05. This indicates that work ethic (Z) is able to mediate the effect of work motivation (X2) on employee performance (Y) (included in the partial mediation category).

### Effect of Transformational Leadership (X1) on Work Ethic (Z)

CSOs' finding indicates that work ethic (Z) is positively influenced by transformational leadership (X1) with T-Statistics value of =3.41, and a p-level of 0.000. As evident from the positive path coefficient of 0.287, the research confirms that the transformational leadership practices play a core part in promoting the culture of hard working in organizations. This is in line with the studies by Hardi (2020) and others which include Larosa et al. (2022), Ginting (2022) who have asserted that transformational leadership improves ethical standards and employees' commitment in organisations.

There is ample research evidence on the link between TL and work ethic. Transformational leaders, through the appeal to higher ideals, through the use of ideas, through individualised consideration establish ethical organizational culture that is based on trust and respect (Bass & Avolio, 1995; Yukl, 2013). To this line of research, this study contributes empirical data and analysis specifically in the banking industry in Indonesia.

The consequence of these findings is relevant to leadership and human resource management executives and practitioners. Perhaps organizations ought to engage in building transformational leadership skills due to a relation with creating a strong work ethic. Training activities that are aimed at refining leaders' skills to influence their subordinates, evoke the right attitude, and provide intellectual stimulation can improve ethical standards of the personnel and overall organisational performance (Ullah et al., 2021; Dey et al., 2022).

Thus, though the study offers rather compelling evidence for the relationship between transformational leadership and work ethic, it may be reasonable to consider the hypothesis regarding the interaction of the leadership style with the organisation type. For example, the effect of transformational leadership may be lower in organisations having a very strong bureaucratic culture because people give priority to the leader's visions in the case of appreciating bureaucratic characteristics rather than obeying managerial-directions. Finally, the study fails to examine the moderating role of organizational culture or variables of employees which could tell about specific circumstances under which the transformational leadership ethic has the greatest value (Marinova, 2020; Pujiono et al., 2020).

### **Effect of Work Motivation (X2) on Work Ethic (Z)**

The study further proves that work motivation (X2) has a positive correlation with work ethic (Z) the T-Statistics value is 3. Mean Score of 634 and a P- Value of 0. 000. The path coefficient of 0. 281 means that where employees have a positive attitude they will work hard and be committed to work. This is in concordance with the conclusion of Pragiwani & Bran Hans (2017); Larosa et al. (2022); and Ginting (2022) whereby self-motivation was found to have a positive relationship with ethical standards.

Simultaneous, the positive correlation between work motivation and work ethic was supported by the Self-determination theory laid down by Deci & Ryan (1985) upholding that motivation in specific intrinsic motivation escalates individuals' adherence to ethical standards. It means that the individuals who are intrinsically and extrinsically motivated are the ones that would easily imbibe on the organizational values and work hard and even go the extra mile as expected of them (Robbins & Judge, 2018).

To managers and organizations, these findings pinpoint the importance of concern on motivational interventions that would create and sustain high levels of both, performance and ethical practices. Ethical concepts should be highly relevant to performance management and reward systems, as well as career management practices as a means of encouraging only positive organizational behaviour (Dachner et al., 2021).

All in all, given the focus of the research, it gives a rather convincing picture about the reasons behind higher work ethic owing to work motivation, although, possibly, more differentiation in types of motivation should be made. First of all, the work does not make a clear distinction between attitude to work due to internal motivation and that due to external motivation, the relevance of which to ethical commitment may be quite different. For example, intrinsic motivation is considered more enduring and less liable to be sabotaged in comparison to extrinsic motivation which might also increase in parallel with the expectancy of external reinforcement (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Gagné & Deci, 2005). More future research can explore these differences in order to offer a context of understanding of how different motivational factors affect work ethic.

### **Effect of Transformational Leadership (X1) on Employee Performance (Y)**

The present research reveals that the first form of transformational leadership (X1) has a significant positive relationship with the concerned measure of employee performance (Y) and this positive relationship has a T-Statistics value of 2+. 159, and a P-Value of '0'. 016. Path coefficient was found to be 0. 175 indicates a fairly, but notably, strong relationship between transformational leadership and performance. The outcome of this study supports the research done by Budur & Demir (2022) and found a positive association between transformational leadership and increase in employee productivity.

Transformational leadership and employee performance relationship is conjugated according to leadership theories. Organisation transformational leaders are particularly seen to encourage employees to go over their standard levels of productivity because of their increased sense of responsibilities and advocacy of the organisational objectives (Bass & Avolio, 1995). From the existing literature, this research seeks to establish two hypotheses in this field and hence, contributes to the existing literature by establishing this relationship within the banking sector in Indonesia (Usman et al., 2022).

The practical implications of these findings are clear: that organisations should pay particular emphasis on the acquisition of transformational leadership skills among their managers. Organizational management courses that stress visioning, communications, and Japanese management with individual attention for employees tend to result in an increased effectiveness of work productivity, especially in fast paced and increasing strain sector such as the banking sector.

Consequently, on the basis of the provided data, it would be possible to conclude that, although the results are positive, transformational leadership is not the sole, or perhaps even the most decisive, factor that defines employee outcome. Other factors like job satisfaction, organisational commitment and external environmental factors may also help influence performance results (Judge et al., 2002). In addition, the study does not also control for possible moderation variables like, employee tenure, role complexity and team dynamics that might actually intensify the leadership performance relationship. Future research could build on these aspects to give a more real picture of when transnational leadership is most efficacious.

### **The Effect of Work Motivation (X2) on Employee Performance (Y)**

The research also shows that work motivation (X2) has a positive correlation with employee performance (Y) with the T-Statistics value of 4. Different market structures at spatial scale 809, and a P-Value of 0. 000. The path coefficient of 0 had close to significance level of . South on the self-generated measure of motivation with a correlation score of 411 suggests that the higher the levels of motivation, the higher the performance level among the workers, which agrees with findings made by Prabow et al. (2017) as well as Jufrizen & Erika (2021) where the premier motivated workers have higher productivity.

This finding is in concordance with motivational theories including Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's two factor theory that posited that motivation was instrumental in influencing behaviours as well as performance of the employees (Kumari et al., 2021; Maslow, 1943). Engaged, committed and motivated employees are willing to work to the extremes in order to get the highest results.

Implications of these findings for HR practitioners and organisational leaders are that there is need to ensure that they create an environment that enhances motivation at the workplace. This could involve inclusion of employees in meaningful tasks, skill enhancement, and reward of

performance since they are likely to improve the performance of the employees (Dachner et al., 2021).

Even though the study includes the fact that motivation enhances the employee's performance it does not embrace the negative side of motivation. Performance driven motivation especially where material incentives are availed often has some negative consequences that include The misfortune associated with overly relying on performance approach goals is that after a while, the reward system can turn into a poison pot, encouraging unethical conducts, loss of self-generated interest and intent in tasks and ultimate burn out among those who were initially enthusiastic about the task or project. Also, future research could increase the generalisability of the findings by distinguishing between the source of motivational reinforcement, for example, is performance improved by intrinsic or extrinsic motivation or both and investigating moderating effects including job satisfaction or work life balance.

### **The Effect of Work Ethic (Z) on Employee Performance (Y)**

The analysis reveals that the measure of work ethic has a positive impact on the degree of performance with a T-Statistics of 2. 71 and an F-Value of 3. 00 and P-Value of 0. 010. The path coefficient which comes to 0. Figure 2 continued that the work ethic correlates positively with higher performance that supports the view of Aini et al. (2021) and Permana & Dewi (2022).

This is consistent with the works on, where numerous researchers have found that those employees who are provident, dependable, and who have commitment on the job are likely to perform better in that job (Barrick et al., 2013). Thus, this paper contributes to the literature by showing this relationship in the context of banking where ethical behaviours are especially necessary.

The implications for practice are clear of these, organizations are encouraged to ensure that they promote hard working culture among their employees. This could involve issues such as cascading the standards and expectations, undertaking training of ethical decision making and rewarding those employees who have a good ethics standard and work hard (Miller et al., 2002).

While the research proves that there is a direct relationship between work ethic and performance, the research might still stand to gain from a more detailed consideration of specific areas of work ethic as punctuality, reliability and commitment. However, as will be discussed, a strong work ethic is generally perceived as a positive attribute and it is thus important to note some of the negative impacts of work ethic that may actually reduce performance in the long run; a few of which are exhaustion and reduced quality of working life (Schaufeli et al., 2009). It is therefore recommended that future research should take into account these factors to give a more comprehensive perspective to the work ethic-performance nexus.

### **Effect of Transformational Leadership (X1) on Employee Performance (Y) with Work Ethic (Z) as a Mediator Variable**

Organizational work ethic (Z) is discovered to moderate the link between transformational leadership (X1) and employee performance (Y) to a certain extent with a path coefficient of 0. Group 069 at a T-Statistics Level of 1. 1943, AICC 792, and a P-Value of 0. 037. This finding corroborates the findings of Aini et al. (2021) and Jufrizen & Erika (2021) on work ethicfulness because this revealed that functional relation link between leadership and work performance is mediated by work ethic.

The mediated effect of work ethic supports ethical leadership theory according to which; leaders impact performance both directly and indirectly through the ethical standard and organizational behaviors of individuals in their subordination (Bass & Avolio, 1995). To the best of the author's knowledge, this study is among the first to offer evidence of this mediation effect in the context of the banking industry.

To the organizations, it can be deduced that for enhanced performance, leadership must embrace transformational practices, and more so, the employees must embrace work ethic practices. The programs such as Leadership development focusing on the ethical leadership along with the work ethic reinforcement enhance lasting improvements to organisational performance (Chesley, 2010).

The study accordingly affirms the mediating effect of work ethic, although the practical significance is moderate; there is therefore the likelihood of other mediators. The study could be further enhanced by relating the impact of other variable mediators like job satisfaction, organizational commitment or psychological empowerment which would furnish more detail about the ways in which transformational leadership affects self and other performance (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Also, the research hypothesises that work ethic plays a moderator role between leadership and performance across all organisational settings and all employees, and this is open for more research.

#### **The Effect of Work Motivation (X2) on Employee Performance (Y) with Work Ethic (Z) as a Mediator Variable**

Likewise, the study establishes that work ethic is a mediator of the work motivation (X2) and employee performance (Y) relationship; this has a path coefficient of 0.47. The AP a T-Statistics value of 0.68 or 1. The Post-Printing TDCO amounted to \$423,127 and the Pre-Printing TDCO of \$424,847 with a P-Value of 0.033. In line with Aini et al. (2021) and Jufrizen & Erika (2021), the present study also revealed the following significant mediation effects in the context of an organization.

On the basis of the motivation theories, work ethic as a component of high performance explains the mediating position of work ethic in motivation-performance relationship (Robbins & Judge, 2018). Hence, this research fills this gap in the literature by showing this mediation effect in a banking institution to reinforce the importance of work ethic as a mediator in converting motivation into performance results.

These declines could well signify that while motivation should be encouraged, so must work ethic in order to bring about positive performance outcomes: for practitioners, such is the reality of motivation. This may include extending ethical codes into motivational practices in reference to performance management and reward system with a view of emphasizing the interrelation between motivation, ethics, and performance (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Heinrich & Marschke, 2010).

Thus, the results confirm the mediating effect of work ethic, although the minor standardized coefficient means that work ethic might not be the only mediator. Other variables that can moderate the relationship between motivation and performance can include job satisfaction, organizational culture or even employee engagement and these should therefore be looked at in the future research. Furthermore, the study does not control for any moderation of this mediation by employee or organisational subtypes that would have been useful in establishing the nature of the work ethic and motivation interaction in relation to performance (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

## Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis, it is concluded that transformational leadership and work motivation have a positive and significant effect on work ethic and employee performance. Work ethic also mediates the effect of transformational leadership and work motivation on employee performance. Therefore, companies are advised to develop a transformational leadership style through regular coaching sessions, as well as increase work motivation by strengthening an inclusive work culture, providing recognition, providing career development opportunities, and ensuring open communication. Given that there are still other variables that affect employee performance by 58.7%, further research needs to develop a more comprehensive model to understand these factors in depth. In addition, it is recommended to expand the research location to all of East Kalimantan to provide deeper insights and more relevant recommendations for companies.

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