

Transformational Leadership and Motivation on Performance Mediated by Discipline at Probolinggo Education Department

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ABSTRACT

Managing human resources effectively is a daily challenge for government offices to provide good public services. This study aims to analyze how transformational leadership and work motivation affect employee performance, while testing work discipline as a mediating variable. We conducted this research at the Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City. We collected primary data by distributing printed questionnaires to all sixty-eight active employees. We analyzed the responses using a quantitative approach with structural equation modeling. Our analysis shows that transformational leadership and work motivation both have a positive and significant direct effect on employee performance. These two independent variables also positively and significantly increase work discipline among the staff. We find that work discipline itself directly boosts employee performance. When testing the indirect relationships, work discipline successfully mediates the effect of transformational leadership on employee performance. Work discipline also significantly mediates the effect of work motivation on employee performance. Improving employee performance in this government office requires leaders who set good examples, strong inner drive among the staff, and strict work discipline to manage daily tasks.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Work Motivation, Work Discipline, Employee Performance

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1. INTRODUCTION

Human resources play a very important role in running any government organization. The success of an office depends heavily on the quality of its people and how well they perform their daily jobs. Government employees carry a big responsibility because their work directly affects the quality of public services. They must work professionally and focus on helping the public. When employees perform well, they help the office achieve its targets and build strong public trust in the government system.

The Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City is a local government office with a huge task to manage education in the area. Every day, the employees face challenges related to educational planning, supervision, and policy evaluation. To handle these complex tasks, the staff must have a strong commitment. We observe that to maintain high work results, the office must pay close attention to several internal factors. The way the leaders manage the team, the

inner drive of the workers, and how well they follow the rules all interact to shape the final quality of their service.

Literature Review and Previous Research. Transformational leadership is an autonomous leadership style that changes how followers think by fulfilling their personal needs and boosting their motivation (Abu-Mahfouz, 2023). In our research object, this means a leader who guides the staff and gives them a clear vision. We measure this variable by looking at how the leader provides a good example, inspires the team, stimulates new ideas, and gives personal attention. Previous research supports the importance of this leadership style. A study by Apriani, Kusmayadi, and Suroso (2024) confirmed that a transformational leader strongly and positively influences the final performance of the employees.

Work motivation represents the internal and external push that makes someone willing to spend their time and energy on their job. For the staff at the Department of Education and Culture, motivation is the passion that keeps them working hard to finish their duties. We look at indicators such as the salary they receive, the safety of their work environment, and the recognition they get from their bosses. Many researchers highlight how crucial this drive is for an office. Akbar, Syahril, Rohman, and Oruw (2025) found that work motivation acts as a major factor that drives employees to improve their performance significantly.

Work discipline reflects a person's readiness to follow all the rules and norms established within an office (Sutrisno, 2017). In this government department, discipline shows the level of awareness and compliance the staff have toward official regulations (Nazara, Casriyanti, & Fauzi, 2023). We measure this discipline by checking their punctuality, their obedience to office policies, and their responsibility in completing tasks. Past studies show that discipline forms the backbone of a productive office. A study by Satriya, Suswati, Mulyono, and Haritsar (2025) demonstrated that work discipline effectively mediates the relationship between leadership, inner motivation, and the actual work results produced by the team.

Employee performance is the actual quality and quantity of work a person achieves while completing their given responsibilities. At the Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City, good performance means the staff successfully manage educational policies and serve the public without delays. We evaluate this outcome using indicators like work quality, target completion, and work effectiveness. Understanding how to boost this outcome is the main focus of many management studies. Sugito (2025) proved that employee performance sees a massive improvement when it is backed by strong leadership, high personal motivation, and strict work discipline.

Gap Analysis and Novelty Statement. Many researchers have studied human resources, but there is still a gap in understanding how these exact factors blend together in a local government education department. Most previous studies observed different types of organizations with different daily pressures. For instance, Pinem and Sugiarto (2025) conducted their research at a public works office, while Arniah and Setiawan (2024) focused on employees in the health sector. Working in public works or health clinics brings different challenges compared to managing educational policies at the Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City. We need to test if the same management theories apply smoothly to an office dealing with education.

This study offers a clear novelty by placing work discipline as a specific bridge that connects transformational leadership and work motivation to employee performance in this local education setting. We involve all 68 active employees as our respondents to gather a complete and highly accurate picture of the whole office. Testing this exact combination of independent and mediating variables in Probolinggo City gives fresh and practical data. We hope our findings will provide direct and useful advice for government managers on how to build a more productive work environment.



Research Objectives. The primary goals of our research are to analyze the direct effect of transformational leadership and work motivation on employee performance at the Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City. We want to determine how transformational leadership and work motivation affect the work discipline of the staff. Our study aims to see if work discipline directly impacts employee performance. We also want to prove whether work discipline can successfully mediate the effect of transformational leadership and work motivation on the final employee performance.

Hypothesis. We propose several hypotheses based on our literature review and previous studies to guide our data analysis. We suspect that transformational leadership and work motivation each have a positive and significant direct effect on employee performance at the Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City. We suspect that transformational leadership and work motivation positively and significantly influence the work discipline of the staff. We hypothesize that work discipline itself has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. We believe that work discipline acts as a strong mediator, meaning it positively and significantly mediates the influence of both transformational leadership and work motivation on the final employee performance.

2. METHOD

We designed our study using a quantitative research method with a causal associative approach because our main goal is to measure and explain the cause-and-effect relationships between our variables (Rahmansyah et al., 2021, 2022). Specifically, we want to understand how transformational leadership and work motivation affect employee performance, and how work discipline plays a role in mediating these connections. We conducted this research at the Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City. When we observed the population, we found that there are exactly 68 active employees, consisting of both civil servants and government employees with employment agreements, who handle the daily operational tasks. Because this total number is relatively small and very manageable, we decided not to take a random portion of the group. Instead, we included every single active staff member to be part of our sample. The only person we excluded was the Head of the Department due to their highly busy schedule, which means our final sample size consists of exactly 68 employees. We chose this sampling method to ensure that our data truly captures the complete and real daily conditions inside the office without missing any valuable perspectives. To gather the necessary information, we collected primary data straight from these workers. We distributed structured questionnaires to all respondents and asked them to share their honest opinions about the transformational leadership of their superiors, their personal work motivation, their daily work discipline, and their overall employee performance. After we gathered all the filled questionnaires, we moved on to the data analysis phase using descriptive and statistical techniques. We analyzed the numerical data using the Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling approach. In our process, we first evaluated the outer model to verify the validity and reliability of our questionnaire items, making sure that our questions accurately and consistently measure what we intended to measure (Dhany & Rahmansyah, 2022; Hudzafidah, Dhany, et al., 2023; Rahmansyah, Hudzafidah, et al., 2024). Once we knew our data was solid and trustworthy, we evaluated the inner model to determine the strength of the relationships among our variables. Finally, we performed hypothesis testing by looking at the specific path numbers and significance levels to find out the direct and indirect impacts of transformational leadership, work motivation, and work discipline on employee performance (Dhany et al., 2025; Hudzafidah, Rahmansyah, et al., 2023; Rahmansyah, Dhany, et al., 2024; Rahmansyah & Dhany, 2023).



3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Table 1. Outer Loading Results

Item	(X1)	(X2)	(Y)	(Z)	Requirement	Status
X1.1	0.826				> 0.70	Valid
X1.2	0.853				> 0.70	Valid
X1.3	0.861				> 0.70	Valid
X1.4	0.822				> 0.70	Valid
X1.5	0.865				> 0.70	Valid
X1.6	0.892				> 0.70	Valid
X1.7	0.865				> 0.70	Valid
X1.8	0.828				> 0.70	Valid
X2.1		0.897			> 0.70	Valid
X2.2		0.857			> 0.70	Valid
X2.3		0.855			> 0.70	Valid
X2.4		0.777			> 0.70	Valid
X2.5		0.834			> 0.70	Valid
X2.6		0.807			> 0.70	Valid
X2.7		0.861			> 0.70	Valid
X2.8		0.823			> 0.70	Valid
X2.9		0.904			> 0.70	Valid
X2.10		0.833			> 0.70	Valid
Y1			0.859		> 0.70	Valid
Y2			0.867		> 0.70	Valid
Y3			0.839		> 0.70	Valid
Y4			0.823		> 0.70	Valid
Y5			0.748		> 0.70	Valid
Y6			0.890		> 0.70	Valid
Z.1				0.830	> 0.70	Valid
Z.2				0.874	> 0.70	Valid
Z.3				0.846	> 0.70	Valid
Z.4				0.885	> 0.70	Valid
Z.5				0.870	> 0.70	Valid

Table 1 presents the outer loading results to measure convergent validity. We see that the loading factor values for all indicators across the variables of Transformational Leadership, Work Motivation, Employee Performance, and Work Discipline are higher than the minimum standard of 0.70. This means every question item used in our research instrument is valid and properly measures the variables it is intended to represent.

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Results

No.	Variable	(AVE)	Requirement	Status
1	Transformational Leadership (X1)	0.725	> 0.50	Valid
2	Work Motivation (X2)	0.715	> 0.50	Valid
3	Employee Performance (Y)	0.704	> 0.50	Valid
4	Work Discipline (Z)	0.742	> 0.50	Valid

Table 2 shows the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for our research variables. Our results indicate that Transformational Leadership has a value of 0.725, Work Motivation has 0.715,



Employee Performance has 0.704, and Work Discipline has 0.742. Because all these values are greater than the 0.50 threshold, we conclude that all variables meet the requirements for convergent validity.

Table 3. Cronbach's Alpha Test Results

No.	Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Requirement	Status
1	Transformational Leadership (X1)	0.946	> 0.70	Reliable
2	Work Motivation (X2)	0.955	> 0.70	Reliable
3	Employee Performance (Y)	0.915	> 0.70	Reliable
4	Work Discipline (Z)	0.913	> 0.70	Reliable

Table 3 displays the Cronbach's alpha test results, which we use to measure the reliability of our variables. We find that the values for Transformational Leadership (0.946), Work Motivation (0.955), Employee Performance (0.915), and Work Discipline (0.913) are all well above the 0.70 standard. These numbers confirm that the indicators used in our questionnaire are highly consistent and reliable for gathering data.

Table 4. Composite Reliability Test Results

No.	Variable	Composite Reliability	Requirement	Status
1	Transformational Leadership (X1)	0.952	> 0.70	Reliable
2	Work Motivation (X2)	0.957	> 0.70	Reliable
3	Employee Performance (Y)	0.919	> 0.70	Reliable
4	Work Discipline (Z)	0.916	> 0.70	Reliable

Table 4 provides the composite reliability test results to further support the consistency of our model. The data shows that the composite reliability values for Transformational Leadership (0.952), Work Motivation (0.957), Employee Performance (0.919), and Work Discipline (0.916) are all greater than 0.70. We conclude from these figures that all our research variables have good reliability and can be trusted for the next stages of our data analysis.

Table 5. R-Square Test Results

Dependent Variable	R-square	Requirement	Status
Employee Performance (Y)	0.764	$R^2 > 0.67$ (Strong Model)	Strong Effect
Work Discipline (Z)	0.531	$0.33 < R^2 < 0.67$ (Moderate Model)	Moderate Effect

Table 5 details the R-square values for our dependent and mediating variables. Our data shows an R-square value of 0.764 for Employee Performance, which indicates a strong model where 76.4% of its changes are explained by the independent variables. We also find an R-square value of 0.531 for Work Discipline, meaning that 53.1% of its variance is explained by the independent variables, putting it in the moderate category.

Table 6. Effect Size (f-square) Results

No.	Relationship	Effect Size (f-square)	Requirement	Status
1	X1 -> Y	0.296	> 0.15	Moderate effect at structural level
2	X1 -> Z	0.703	> 0.15	Moderate effect at structural level
3	X2 -> Y	0.601	> 0.15	Moderate effect at structural level
4	X2 -> Z	0.498	> 0.15	Moderate effect at structural level
5	Z -> Y	0.295	> 0.15	Moderate effect at structural level

Table 6 presents the f-square test results used to measure the effect size of the relationships between our variables. The results show that the effect size for the path from Transformational Leadership to Employee Performance is 0.296, Transformational Leadership to Work Discipline is



0.703, Work Motivation to Employee Performance is 0.601, Work Motivation to Work Discipline is 0.498, and Work Discipline to Employee Performance is 0.295. Since all these values are greater than 0.15, we find that each structural relationship in our model has a moderate effect.

Table 7. Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing Results

Relationship	Original sample	t statistics	P values	Requirement	Status
X1 -> Y	0.345	5.279	0.000	> 1.96	Positive and significant
X1 -> Z	0.575	10.367	0.000	> 1.96	Positive and significant
X2 -> Y	0.461	9.189	0.000	> 1.96	Positive and significant
X2 -> Z	0.484	7.202	0.000	> 1.96	Positive and significant
Z -> Y	0.385	7.417	0.000	> 1.96	Positive and significant

Table 7 shows the results of our direct effect hypothesis testing. Our data reveals that Transformational Leadership and Work Motivation both have positive and significant direct effects on Employee Performance, with t-statistics of 5.279 and 9.189 respectively, and p-values of 0.000. We also find that Transformational Leadership and Work Motivation have positive and significant direct effects on Work Discipline. Work Discipline itself has a positive and significant direct effect on Employee Performance, as indicated by a t-statistic of 7.417 and a p-value of 0.000. All tested paths are accepted because they satisfy the requirement of having a t-statistic greater than 1.96 and a p-value less than 0.05.

Table 8. Indirect Effect Hypothesis Testing Results

Relationship	Original sample	t statistics	P values	Requirement	Status
X1 -> Z -> Y	0.222	5.432	0.000	> 1.96	Positive and significant
X2 -> Z -> Y	0.187	5.716	0.000	> 1.96	Positive and significant

Table 8 presents the results for our indirect effect hypothesis testing. We find that Work Discipline successfully mediates the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Employee Performance, showing a positive and significant indirect effect with a t-statistic of 5.432 and a p-value of 0.000. Similarly, Work Discipline mediates the effect of Work Motivation on Employee Performance, demonstrating a positive and significant indirect effect with a t-statistic of 5.716 and a p-value of 0.000. Both indirect paths are accepted based on these statistical values.

DISCUSSION

Transformational leadership is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City. Our results indicate that Transformational Leadership has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance. This means that when the leaders at the office apply a good and effective transformational style, the actual work results produced by the staff improve directly. We can see from our data that the leaders successfully act as good role models by showing a trustworthy and responsible attitude in their daily activities, which psychologically encourages the employees to work harder and take their duties seriously. This good example directly shapes the quality of the staff's work because the employees feel a strong push to finish their tasks with high quality and take full responsibility for the reports or services they deliver. In a government office like this, having a leader who shows the right way to act is very important because it sets the standard for everyone else. When the leader comes on time and works diligently, the staff naturally copy this behavior, which leads to better overall performance.

The success of the leaders in boosting work results is also driven by how they motivate the team and give clear directions. The leaders communicate the vision and goals of the office using simple and clear language, so the staff do not feel confused about what they need to achieve. This



clarity helps the employees stay focused, allowing them to meet the targets set by the government. The leaders also encourage the staff to think creatively and share their ideas when facing problems in the field, and because the employees feel that their voices are heard and receive personal guidance from their bosses, they develop a strong sense of loyalty. They are less likely to make fatal mistakes because they are closely guided by their superiors. This finding strongly supports the previous study by Satriya, Suswati, Mulyono, and Haritsar (2025), which proved that this leadership style significantly improves performance by shaping positive work behaviors. Our conclusion also matches the studies by Apriani, Kusmayadi, and Suroso (2024) and Sugito (2025), which confirmed that transformational leaders are highly effective in boosting employee performance through setting good examples, inspiring the team, and providing direct support to their subordinates.

Work motivation is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City. Our statistical tests show that Work Motivation has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance at the Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City. This finding simply means that when the staff feel a strong inner drive and high motivation, they will naturally produce much better work. In practical terms, we can trace this big impact by looking at how the office meets the basic needs of its workers through their responses in the survey. The employees feel that their current salary is enough to cover their daily living costs, and the office facilities provided to them are very helpful for completing their tasks. When these basic physical and financial needs are met, the employees experience a sense of security and comfort. This peace of mind is an economic basic; workers who are not constantly worried about their basic survival can focus all their energy and attention entirely on their jobs. This focus directly helps the employees work according to the official rules, follow the proper procedures, and finish their long list of daily tasks on time without feeling burdened.

The drive that comes from social needs and feeling appreciated also plays a massive role in improving how the employees perform. The staff at this government office state that they enjoy good relationships with their coworkers, creating a friendly and harmonious social climate. This good atmosphere makes it much easier for different divisions to coordinate and work together, which ultimately helps everyone reach the office targets faster. When employees feel that their hard work is valued and their achievements are recognized by their superiors, they develop a strong sense of belonging to the organization. As a result, they do not just work carelessly to pass the time; they become highly responsible and always try to deliver top-quality results. Our research findings are perfectly in line with the studies conducted by Satriya, Suswati, Mulyono, and Haritsar (2025), Akbar, Syahril, Rohman, and Oruw (2025), and Sugito (2025). These previous studies consistently stated that work motivation is a crucial factor that boosts the spirit, effort, and persistence of the employees in finishing their tasks, proving that highly motivated workers always perform much better than those with low motivation.

Transformational leadership is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on work discipline at the Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City. Our data analysis reveals that Transformational Leadership has a positive and significant effect on Work Discipline among the employees. This means that a highly effective transformational leader can directly create a more disciplined workforce. We can explain this strong relationship by looking at how the employees perceive their leaders in their daily activities. Leaders who set a strong and positive example in their own routines easily earn the trust and respect of their staff. When the head of the office shows up on time, follows the rules strictly, and works hard, the employees notice this behavior and use it as a benchmark for their own actions. This real-life example builds a sense of respect and self-awareness among the staff, pushing them to voluntarily decide to arrive at the office on time and leave according to the official schedule. They do this not out of fear of punishment, but because they respect the standard set by their leader. This kind of leadership



creates an environment where following the rules becomes a shared habit rather than a forced obligation.

Beyond just setting a good example, a transformational leader's habit of giving personal attention also plays a huge part in building solid work discipline. The leaders at this education department are known to pay close attention to the specific needs of each employee and are willing to provide private coaching when needed. This personal care makes the employees feel valued as human beings, rather than just as tools for the office. As a natural social response to this caring and persuasive supervision, the employees show a very high level of compliance. They feel motivated to do their best and avoid disappointing their supportive bosses. This loyalty is proven by their strong commitment to finishing both administrative and technical tasks within the strict deadlines given to them. Our findings heavily support the theoretical framework and confirm the previous studies by Pinem and Sugiarto (2025) and Arniah and Setiawan (2024). Both of these studies similarly concluded that transformational leadership successfully shapes disciplined behavior because leaders focus on encouraging compliance through consistent examples, directed supervision, and continuous personal motivation.

Work motivation is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on work discipline at the Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City. Our results indicate that Work Motivation has a positive and significant effect on Work Discipline at the Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City. This evidence shows us that an employee's discipline does not only come from strict rules or the fear of getting a warning letter from the human resources department. True discipline is heavily driven by the internal and external motivation that the employees feel. In simple economic logic, when workers feel that the organization fulfills their needs and provides good motivation, they naturally offer their compliance and obedience in return. When the staff feel that their salary matches their daily responsibilities, and they feel safe and comfortable at their desks, they build a much stronger commitment to the office rules. This fulfillment of basic rights creates a sense of fair exchange in the minds of the employees. Because the office takes good care of their welfare, the employees consciously choose to obey the basic regulations, which we can clearly see from their willingness to strictly follow the official arrival and departure times every single day.

The high motivation that stems from social connections, feeling respected, and having the chance to grow also serves as a strong foundation for creating excellent work discipline. Our survey responses show that employees who have good friends at the office and feel proud to be an important part of the organization will naturally try to protect their good reputation. This sense of pride makes them avoid breaking the rules or acting poorly. Because the office gives them opportunities to develop their skills and build a better career, the employees feel driven to stay focused on their duties instead of wasting time. This desire to grow translates directly into their ability to manage their daily schedules properly, ensuring they always complete their tasks before the deadlines set by their managers. These findings at the education department strongly align with the previous research conducted by Satriya, Suswati, Mulyono, and Haritsar (2025) and Arniah and Setiawan (2024). Those studies confirmed that high work motivation plays a very important role in shaping disciplined behavior, proving that highly motivated workers possess a much greater willingness to obey organizational rules and manage their time well.

Work discipline is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City. The results of our study show that Work Discipline has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance at this government office. This finding proves that discipline is much more than just a formal requirement to fill out attendance sheets; it is the main foundation that creates a smooth, efficient, and productive daily work rhythm. We can see the real economic value of this discipline by observing how the staff manage their time based on the survey data. Employees who possess a high level of discipline always arrive and leave the office exactly according to the rules. Because



they do not waste time, they have a full and effective work schedule, allowing them to manage their tasks properly. This excellent personal time management directly improves their ability to reach the goals set by the department. They can guarantee that every piece of paperwork, public service request, or educational report is finished exactly on time without any unnecessary delays, which makes the whole office operate much more smoothly.

The strict discipline in completing tasks on time also creates a massive positive impact on the quality of the work produced. When employees work regularly and avoid the bad habit of procrastinating, they actually have more spare time to double-check their work. They can review their reports carefully, fix any small errors, and ensure that the final result is of the highest quality. This strong culture of discipline, supported by the good examples shown by the leaders, builds a solid work ethic where employees actively try to improve their output every single day. In this situation, discipline acts as the direct engine that turns simple rule compliance into real and measurable work achievements. Our empirical findings here perfectly match the concepts and results of previous studies by Satriya, Suswati, Mulyono, and Haritsar (2025), Pinem and Sugiarto (2025), and Sugito (2025). These three studies consistently proved that work discipline plays a highly essential role in boosting the effectiveness and productivity of workers, confirming that disciplined staff can work in a much more organized, efficient, and responsible manner, which ultimately elevates the overall performance of the organization.

Work discipline is suspected to positively and significantly mediate the effect of transformational leadership on employee performance at the Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City. Looking at our indirect effect tests, our results show that Work Discipline positively and significantly mediates the effect of Transformational Leadership on Employee Performance. This means that discipline acts as a crucial bridge that translates the good leadership style of a boss into actual, high-quality work results from the staff. We can follow this logical chain by looking at the survey responses step by step. When the head of the office applies a great transformational style, such as leading by example and offering private coaching, it naturally builds a sense of respect and obedience among the workers. A leader who is trustworthy, encouraging, and firm makes the employees feel that they are being guided nicely but also watched closely. As a direct response to this caring yet firm leadership, the employees build a solid wall of discipline. They start following the office hours strictly and commit themselves to finishing all their assignments within the time limits given by their manager.

This deeply rooted disciplined behavior, which was originally sparked by the leader's actions, then becomes the exact reason why the employees perform so well. Because the staff are disciplined in managing their work hours, the daily operations of the education department run perfectly without any bottlenecks. This organized time management allows the employees to meet their work targets easily and deliver high-quality results. Because the leader has successfully planted the value of obedience, the workers naturally get used to following the correct procedures and taking full responsibility for their output. The flow is very clear: good transformational leadership creates disciplined employees, and that solid discipline is what actually prints the maximum performance for the office. These findings strongly support the theoretical basis and the previous research by Satriya, Suswati, Mulyono, and Haritsar (2025), which proved that work discipline successfully mediates the impact of transformational leadership on employee performance. This conclusion also aligns with Arniah and Setiawan (2024), who found that discipline is an absolute mechanism that connects a leader's effectiveness to the actual productivity of their subordinates in the public sector.

Work discipline is suspected to positively and significantly mediate the effect of work motivation on employee performance at the Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City. Our data analysis also reveals that Work Discipline positively and significantly mediates the effect of Work Motivation on Employee Performance. This finding shows us that inner drive and enthusiasm must first be transformed into strict daily discipline before they can produce



excellent work outcomes. We can understand this process using simple logic: even if an employee is highly motivated by a good salary or a friendly work environment, that motivation will not turn into good performance if the employee is lazy or lacks time management. When the government office successfully fulfills the staff's basic needs and provides a supportive social atmosphere, the employees feel a strong surge of motivation. This high motivation makes them realize that they need to protect their jobs and respect the organization. They show this respect by adopting a highly disciplined attitude, arriving at the office on time, respecting the rules, and focusing completely on their daily tasks instead of wandering around.

Once this strong work discipline is established through motivation, the positive impact on performance happens naturally. The motivated and disciplined employees use their working hours efficiently, which directly allows them to handle heavy workloads and finish complex educational reports accurately and on schedule. The inner drive to succeed pushes them to follow all operational standards carefully, leading to a massive improvement in the quality of their public service. Therefore, work discipline is the essential tool that converts raw motivation into real, visible productivity. A motivated worker uses discipline to organize their effort, and this organized effort is what creates top-tier performance. This logical connection in our research strongly aligns with the core ideas found in previous studies, such as the work by Satriya, Suswati, Mulyono, and Haritsar (2025) and Arniah and Setiawan (2024). These studies highlighted that motivation alone is not enough; it needs to be paired with strict work discipline to truly maximize the output of an employee, proving that discipline acts as a vital bridge connecting personal drive to the final success of the organization.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on our data analysis, we conclude that Transformational Leadership has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance at the Department of Education and Culture of Probolinggo City. Our results show that Work Motivation has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance. We also find that Transformational Leadership has a positive and significant effect on Work Discipline. The data then indicates that Work Motivation has a positive and significant effect on Work Discipline. Moving to the next variable, Work Discipline has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance. When testing the indirect relationships, we discover that Transformational Leadership has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance mediated by Work Discipline. Similarly, Work Motivation has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance mediated by Work Discipline. For future research, we suggest expanding the scope of the study by increasing the sample size and adding other potential factors that may influence employee performance in the workplace.

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