

## The Role of Work Motivation as a Mediator on the Influence of Education-Training and Leadership Style on Employee Performance in Ministry of Education at Timor-Leste

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**Key words:** Education-training, leadership style, motivation, employee performance, Ministry of Education, Timor-Leste

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**Abstract:** This study offers an empirical study of the role of work motivation in mediating the effect of education-training and leadership style on the performance of Ministry of Education employees in Timor-Leste. Data were obtained from 86 employees as samples through questionnaires. We applied the SEM-PLS to analyze the proposed relationship model. Empirical results show that work motivation mediates the influence of leadership style on employee performance but not for education-training. The results can provide valuable insight for public service management.

## INTRODUCTION

Timor-Leste which had been part of the State of Indonesia, since, 1976 under the name Timor-Timor, officially became an independent and sovereign state in 2002. This country began its independence among the poorest countries in the world. Even so, the quality of public services has not undergone significant changes. From various studies of public services in Timor-Leste<sup>[1-5]</sup> apparently did not work linearly with reforms carried out in various sectors so that the country's economic growth instead moved to negative direction<sup>[6, 7]</sup>. Since, its independence, population growth in Timor-Leste along with relatively moderate GDP growth means that per capita income is decreasing while poverty rates are increasing<sup>[8]</sup>. Facing this situation, the focus of attention is on the quality of human resources. With the end of the UN mission in post-conflict Timor-Leste in December, 2012 providing opportunities for state development in

practice. Progress has varied, from building state bureaucracies and government machinery, democracy and participation, building institutions including the rule of law and controlling corruption and transparency<sup>[9]</sup>.

In this era of globalization, modern business primarily driven by intellectual capital and human capital helps organizations to build and maintain competitive advantage<sup>[10]</sup>. Munawaroh *et al.*<sup>[11]</sup> identified the factors that influence employee performance including individual performance, quantity and quality of work, responsibilities and needs for achievement. Education-Training is one measure of employee development. The right type of education is very important for skill development and its effectiveness depends on training pedagogy<sup>[12]</sup>. For education-training programs to be successful and achieve their goals, the training process must be designed in such a way as to give confidence to participants that they can apply in the workplace all that is learned in their training; provide

practical examples of the knowledge and skills taught that can be applied in conditions that simulate the actual work environment of employees and present the 'framework' of behavior that employees must follow so that training content can be implemented efficiently in their work<sup>[13]</sup>.

In community service-oriented organizations such as the Ministry of Education Office, organizational success is highly dependent on the role of the leader because leaders influence the emotions, attitudes and behavior of employees<sup>[14]</sup> and how employees interact with service users<sup>[15]</sup>.

### **Literature review**

**Education-training:** Capabilities, skills and competencies are very important for employees to work effectively and efficiently. To realize this, it is necessary to empower human resources as planners and implementers in organizations, one of which is to provide education-training to employees. The education-training program for employees is expected to provide motivation for employees to improve their performance skills, so that, they can further improve their work performance<sup>[16]</sup>. In a different context, previous research has shown that education-training is able to change the way a person views his work. For example, education-training motivates entrepreneurial performance<sup>[17, 18]</sup>. Therefore, the first hypothesis is proposed:

- H<sub>1</sub>: education-training are positively related to employee motivation

Employee ability is an integral part of the entire human resource system. These abilities include reading, writing, mathematics, computer skills and software, problem solving, critical thinking, the ability to participate in meetings and report writing<sup>[19]</sup>. Lack of employee skills can affect productivity, accidents, errors and increased costs of rework<sup>[20]</sup>. There is an opinion that training is important not only because it is needed to build and maintain an effective workforce but also because it encourages corporate well-being and improves organizational performance<sup>[21, 22]</sup>. However, participants must first apply and transfer what they learn in training at work. Previous research has confirmed the existence of a positive relationship between education-training with individual or group performance, both for private employees<sup>[23, 24]</sup> and civil servants. Research on education-training in the public sector has been carried out a lot, especially because the education-training program is one program that is intended to empower civil servants. Therefore, the second hypothesis is proposed:

- H<sub>2</sub>: education-training affect employee performance through motivation

**Leadership style:** Work motivation has been alluded to in several studies that relate it to transformational leadership<sup>[25-27]</sup>. Koh and Hia<sup>[28]</sup> found hypothesis support for employee motivation, commitment and their trust in leaders in the Singapore banking industry. Schaubroeck *et al.*<sup>[29]</sup> show that the influence of leader behavior on team performance is fully mediated by the beliefs and psychological state of the team. Ozarall<sup>[30]</sup> found that transformational leadership contributes to the prediction of subordinate empowerment and that the more team members experience team empowerment, the more effective the team will be. Burns<sup>[31]</sup>, the originator of transformational leadership theory, proposes that transformational leaders are compared to transactional leaders, motivating their followers in such a way that their main motive is to fulfill self-actualization needs rather than other needs that are lower in Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Transformational leaders expand their "portfolio of needs" in Maslow's hierarchy of needs theories. Bass<sup>[32]</sup> argues that the follower's extra effort shows how much leaders motivate them to act outside contractual expectations. Thus, the emphasis on satisfying self-actualization needs reflects the types of needs that underlie the motivation of followers and extra effort results from higher levels of motivation<sup>[33]</sup>. Therefore, the following third hypothesis is proposed:

- H<sub>3</sub>: leadership style affects employee motivation

The success of an organization is determined by many things including leadership styles that take place within the organization. The leader is said to be successful if he is able to become the creator or driver of his subordinates by creating a work atmosphere that can spur the growth and development of the performance of his subordinates. Such leaders have the ability to have a positive effect on their subordinates to do appropriate work directed in order to achieve the stated goals. Leadership behavior influences subordinate's performance, as supported in the findings of previous research<sup>[34]</sup>. The meta-analysis of Judge and Piccolo<sup>[35]</sup> reports that leadership styles are positively correlated with group and organizational performance.

Transformational leadership theory explains that leaders as agents of change are able to produce performance beyond expectations by assigning challenging tasks to direct and motivate themselves and

others to achieve higher levels of performance<sup>[36, 37]</sup>. Team collectivism shows a better positive effect of transformational leadership on team potential<sup>[38, 39]</sup>. Wang *et al.*<sup>[40]</sup> have also confirmed the positive influence of transformational leadership on team performance and for each level of the organization. Transformational leaders also motivate and inspire followers to achieve performance beyond expectations by changing attitudes, beliefs and values of their followers<sup>[41, 42]</sup>. The direct influence of transformational leadership on subordinate's performance has also been confirmed by Krisnanda and Surya<sup>[43]</sup>.

While in different settings, a number of researchers show an indirect relationship between leadership style and subordinate performance which is mediated by organizational culture<sup>[44]</sup>, work environment<sup>[45]</sup>, job-fit<sup>[46]</sup>, conflict<sup>[47]</sup>, training, leader-subordinate exchange<sup>[48]</sup>, employee involvement<sup>[49, 50]</sup>, self-efficacy<sup>[51]</sup>, behavior of organizational citizenship<sup>[52]</sup>, knowledge sharing<sup>[53]</sup>, organizational commitment<sup>[54]</sup>, trust<sup>[29, 38]</sup>, work motivation<sup>[25, 55]</sup> and job satisfaction<sup>[56]</sup>.

If a leader is able to combine appropriate and effective leadership styles within the organization, this will give employees a sense of empowerment and as a result, employees can carry out their duties more efficiently and effectively, so that, their creative and innovative abilities spur which ultimately lead on improving performance. The importance of motivating employee work from the leadership style applied is to improve employee performance. This assumption is supported by the results of Manik<sup>[25]</sup> and Mavhungu and Bussin<sup>[55]</sup>. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is proposed:

- H<sub>4</sub>: leadership style affects employee performance through motivation

**Employee motivation:** Work motivation is an inner strength that encourages employees to achieve personal and organizational goals<sup>[57]</sup>. Previous findings have proven that individuals who are motivated in their work will have a positive impact on improving their performance<sup>[25, 58]</sup>. The importance of motivating civil servants in public organizations has been discussed in previous studies<sup>[59-62]</sup>. Motivation of public services refers to the motives of employees to do good for others and shape people's welfare<sup>[63]</sup>. This also means as trust, values and attitudes that go beyond self-interest and the interests of the organization (Fig. 1). Therefore, the fifth hypothesis is proposed:

- H<sub>5</sub>: employee motivation affects employee performance

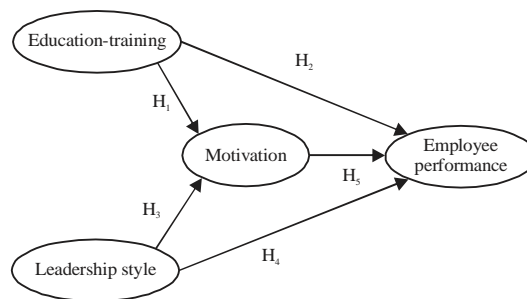


Fig. 1: Conceptual framework

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research is a type of explanatory research which intends to explain the position of the variables studied and the relationships between variables. The purpose of this study is to explain the role of work motivation in mediating the effect of education-research and leadership style on employee performance.

The research was carried out at the Office of the Ministry of Education of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (República Democrática de Timor-Leste) with Civil Servants (Funcionário Público) in five directorates as research respondents. The choice of location is supported by several reasons. First, the education sector has a very important role in preparing quality human resources in developing national development in Timor Leste. Second, the scarcity of current research that investigates the behavior of public organizations in Timor Leste, especially in the Ministry of Education sector. Third, the results of this study are expected to provide information and practical implications for the phenomenon of employee performance at the Ministry of Education Office, Timor-Leste.

The population in this study included all employees totaling 436 employees. The sampling technique uses no probability sampling with Purposive-judgment sampling type. This study uses an analytical tool in the form of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Partial Least Square (PLS) approach. SEM-PLS tests the causal relationship between the research variables which have not been many there is much theoretical support or the research is explanatory. The steps in the PLS analysis consist of an evaluation of the structural model measurement and evaluation model, based on Hair *et al.*<sup>[64]</sup>.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Measurement evaluation:** In estimating and testing the proposed research model, we followed the two-step procedure suggested by Anderson and Gerbing<sup>[65]</sup>.

Structural equation modeling or SEM with SmartPLS is used to analyze survey data. Table 1 shows that the Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability coefficients of the construct exceed the rule of thumb rules which are generally known to be 0.70<sup>[66, 67]</sup>.

Thus, we conclude that our theoretical constructs show adequate reliability. We build a measurement model through PLS algorithm procedures to assess convergent validity of each measurement scale<sup>[67]</sup>. Table 1 shows that all indicators in each construct have a significant factor loading ( $p < 0.01$ )  $> 0.50$  which indicates convergent validity of theoretical constructs<sup>[65]</sup>.

**Structural evaluation:** Based on Table 2, the direct effect of education-training on work motivation results in a coefficient value of 0.038 and the t-statistical value (0.317) is smaller than the specified t-table value (1.96). That is, there is no significant direct effect of education-training on work motivation. Thus, the first hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is rejected.

The direct effect of education-training on employee performance results in a coefficient value of 0.313 and a t-statistic value (3.784) which is greater than the specified t-table value (1.96). That is, there is a significant direct effect of education-training on employee performance. However, the indirect effect of education-training on employee performance through work motivation produces a coefficient of 0.010 and a t-statistic value (0.316) which

is smaller than the specified t-table value (1.96). That is, there is no significant effect of education-training on employee performance through work motivation. Thus, the second hypothesis ( $H_2$ ) is rejected.

The direct influence of leadership style on work motivation results in a coefficient value of 0.322 and a t-statistic value (5,041) that is greater than the specified t-table value (1.96). That is, there is a significant direct effect of leadership style on work motivation. Thus, the third hypothesis ( $H_3$ ) is accepted.

The direct influence of leadership style on employee performance produces a coefficient value of 0.300 and a t-statistic value (2.736) which is greater than the specified t-table value (1.96). That is, there is a significant direct effect of leadership style on employee performance. Likewise, the indirect influence of leadership style on employee performance through work motivation results in a coefficient of 0.087 and a t-statistic value (2.978) which is greater than the specified t-table value (1.96). That is, there is a significant effect of leadership style on employee performance through work motivation. Thus, the fourth hypothesis ( $H_4$ ) is accepted. The direct effect of work motivation on employee performance produces a coefficient value of 0.269 and a t-statistic value (3.691) which is greater than the specified t-table value (1.96). That is, there is a significant direct effect of work motivation on employee performance. Thus, the fifth hypothesis ( $H_5$ ) is accepted (Fig. 2).

Table 1: Construct reliability and validity results

Variables/Indicators	Loadings	Alpha	CR	AVE
<b>Education-training</b>				
Formal	0.902	0.774	0.868	0.687
Non-Formal	0.826	0.660	0.854	0.745
<b>Leadership style</b>				
Transformational	0.977	0.832	0.890	0.671
Transactional	0.618	0.596	0.818	0.696
<b>Work motivation</b>				
Esteem Needs	0.771	0.475	0.792	0.655
Self-Actualization needs	0.937	0.793	0.866	0.617
Safety needs	0.727	0.687	0.860	0.756
<b>Employee performance</b>				
Quality	0.780	0.671	0.818	0.601
Quantity	0.833	0.688	0.829	0.619
Timeliness	0.839	0.707	0.836	0.631
Effectivity	0.794	0.735	0.882	0.790
Independence	0.897	0.796	0.868	0.623

Table 2: PLS results of the structural model

Exogen variables	Moderator	Endogen variables	Direct effect (t-values)	Indirect effect (t-values)	VAF	Conclusion
Education-training	-	Motivasi Kerja	0,038 (0.317)	-	-	$H_1$ rejected
Education-training	Motivasi Kerja	Kinerja Pegawai	0,313 (3.784)	0.010 (0.316)	0.031	$H_2$ rejected
Leadership style	-	Employee performance	0.322 (5.041)	-	-	$H_3$ accepted
Leadership style	Work Motivation	Employee Performance	0,300 (2.736)	0.087 (2.978)	0.224	$H_4$ accepted
Work motivation	-	Employee Performance	0,269 (3.691)	-	-	$H_5$ accepted

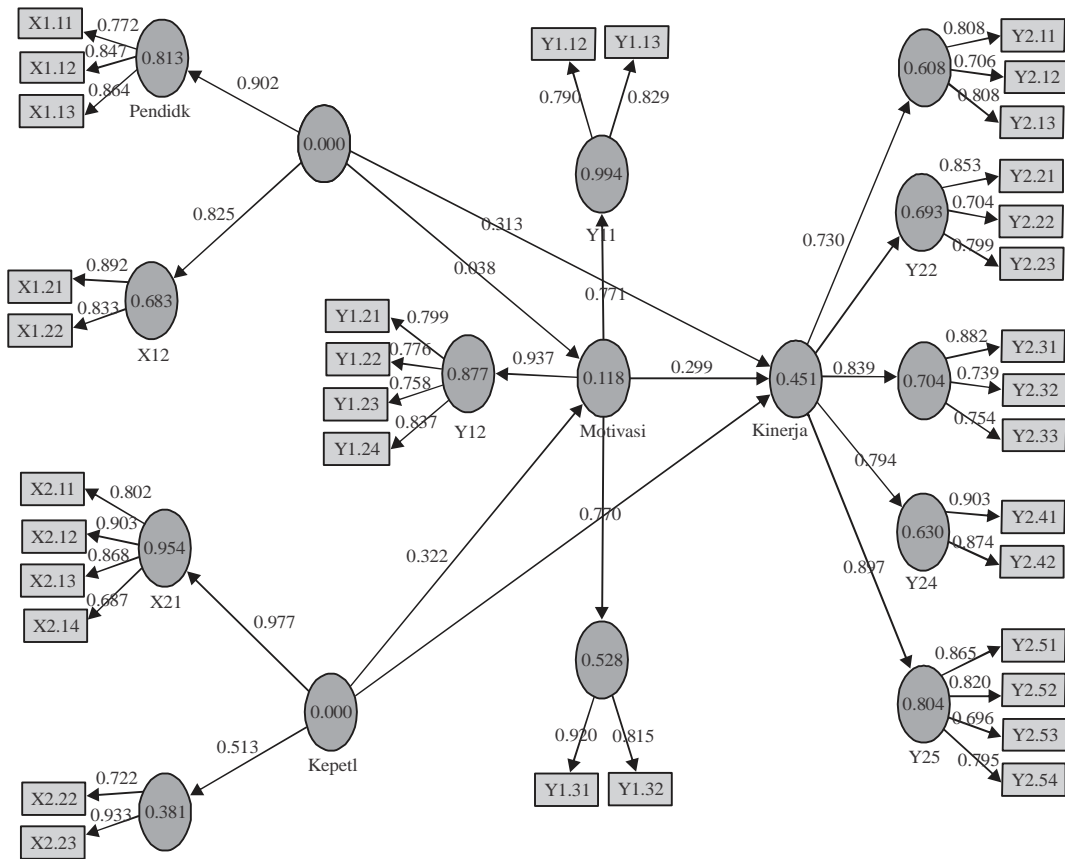


Fig. 2: Structural equation modeling results

**CONCLUSION**

The results of the study provide a general conclusion that work motivation mediates the influence of leadership style on employee performance but does not mediate the effect of education-training on employee performance at the Ministry of Education Office of Timor-Leste. There are five specific conclusions from the results of this study. First, education-training has no effect on work motivation which indicates that although there is an increase in education-training but it does not directly increase employee motivation. Second, education-training does not affect employee performance through work motivation which indicates that work motivation does not mediate the effect of education-training on employee performance. Third, leadership style influences work motivation which shows that the better the leadership style that is applied it will directly increase employee motivation. Fourth, leadership style influences employee performance through work motivation which shows that work motivation mediates the effect of leadership style applied to employee performance. Fifth, work motivation has an effect on employee performance which shows that the higher the work motivation will directly improve employee performance.

The results of this study indicate that the performance of employees at the Ministry of Education Office of Timor-Leste is directly influenced by education-training, leadership style and work motivation. An effective and efficient leadership style can motivate employees so that employees can work better which can ultimately improve their performance. Even though the employee is not motivated by the education-training program provided by the organization, the education-training of employees remains an important factor that determines the level of employee performance. So, organizations do not provide education-training programs to motivate employees to improve their performance but the organization helps employees to improve the intelligence and skills of employees in their jobs.

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