

The Impact of Transformational Leadership Style of School Principals and Work Motivation on Teacher Performance: An Empirical Study

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aims to examine the influence of principals' transformational leadership and teachers' work motivation on the performance of senior high school teachers in Keerom Regency, Papua. The study addresses concerns regarding suboptimal teacher performance, limited instructional innovation, and leadership practices that remain largely administrative rather than transformational.

Research Method: This study employed a quantitative approach with descriptive and inferential designs. The population consisted of 113 senior high school teachers in Keerom Regency, of whom 88 were selected using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error. Data were collected through structured questionnaires based on indicators of transformational leadership, work motivation, and teacher performance. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression to examine the partial and simultaneous effects of the independent variables.

Results and Discussion: The findings show that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. Work motivation also has a positive and significant effect, emerging as the dominant factor. Simultaneously, transformational leadership and work motivation significantly contribute to improving teacher performance.

Implications: The findings suggest that principals should strengthen transformational leadership practices, while policymakers should support teacher motivation through professional development and conducive work environments.

Originality: This study contributes by examining teacher performance in the specific context of the geographically challenging border areas of Keerom Regency, Papua.

Keywords: transformational leadership; work motivation; teacher performance.

1. Introduction

Education is widely recognized as a fundamental determinant of human development and national competitiveness. As emphasized by Dewi (2024), the quality of education systems is closely linked to the effectiveness of teachers as the primary agents of learning. Teachers serve as the frontline actors who directly shape students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor outcomes. However, in practice, teachers often encounter multifaceted challenges, including excessive workloads, evolving curriculum demands, and complex school environments (Asyarotun, 2025). These challenges highlight that



improving educational quality depends not only on teacher competence but also on systemic and organizational factors, particularly school leadership.

In the Indonesian context, the government has introduced various policies and programs to enhance educational quality, with a strong emphasis on improving teacher performance. Nevertheless, empirical evidence suggests that teacher performance is influenced not only by individual capacity but also by school principals' leadership. School leaders play a strategic role as instructional leaders, fostering a culture of continuous professional development. Without strong leadership and supportive institutional policies, efforts to improve teacher performance tend to stagnate, ultimately affecting overall educational outcomes. Effective and constructive feedback mechanisms have also been identified as critical in motivating both teachers and students when implemented consistently (Hayati, 2023).

Leadership style, particularly transformational leadership, has been widely acknowledged as a critical determinant of organizational performance in educational settings. Melya (2023) defines leadership style as a systematic approach used by leaders to influence team members in achieving organizational goals. Transformational leadership, characterized by inspiration, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence, has been shown to affect teacher performance (Rahaju, 2023) positively. This leadership approach encourages innovation, strengthens professional commitment, and fosters a shared vision within schools. In addition to leadership, work motivation is another essential factor influencing teacher performance. According to Hartono (2025), motivated teachers are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of commitment, responsibility, and productivity in carrying out their duties. Work motivation not only drives teachers to meet performance standards but also contributes to improved educational quality. Various factors influence teacher motivation, including working conditions, incentives, professional recognition, and organizational climate. Therefore, integrating transformational leadership practices that enhance teacher motivation can be considered a strategic approach to improving teacher performance. Theoretically, teacher performance results from the interaction between leadership influence and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. A school principal who can inspire, guide, and empower teachers can create a conducive work environment that enhances motivation and performance simultaneously. Conversely, weak leadership combined with low motivation may lead to suboptimal performance outcomes.

Previous empirical studies have consistently demonstrated the significant relationship between transformational leadership, work motivation, and teacher performance. Fikri (2025) found that transformational leadership and work motivation simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. Similarly, Hasna and Agustina (2025) reported that both variables partially contribute significantly to improving teacher performance. Rahaju Supandi (2023) further confirmed the significant influence of transformational leadership on teacher and staff performance, while Fitriani (2020) highlighted that leadership style and motivation jointly affect teacher performance. Despite these consistent findings, a critical research gap remains. Most existing studies have been conducted in relatively developed and accessible regions, particularly in western Indonesia, limiting the generalizability of their findings to more remote and underdeveloped areas.

This gap is particularly evident in the context of Keerom Regency, Papua, which presents unique geographical, socio-cultural, and infrastructural challenges. Preliminary observations and interviews with school supervisors and teachers indicate a significant discrepancy between expected and actual conditions regarding leadership effectiveness and teacher performance. Teacher performance in this

region tends to be inconsistent and below optimal levels, largely influenced by geographical constraints, limited facilities, and economic challenges.

Leadership issues further exacerbate the situation. In several schools, leadership positions are held by acting principals without optimal appointment mechanisms, resulting in rigid, administrative, and less transparent leadership practices. Additionally, subjective decision-making, limited recognition for high-performing teachers, weak collaboration, and low stakeholder involvement contribute to a less supportive organizational climate. From a motivational perspective, teachers face psychological pressures and declining enthusiasm for their work, partly due to the removal of performance-based incentives and limited access to professional development programs. Consequently, many teachers struggle to adapt to curriculum changes and consistently fail to develop comprehensive teaching plans.

These conditions indicate that the implementation of transformational leadership has not been fully realized, and teacher motivation remains insufficiently supported. The interplay between weak leadership and declining motivation has contributed to suboptimal teacher performance. Furthermore, existing literature remains limited in its ability to address these dynamics in remote and disadvantaged regions such as Papua (Dammen & Safira, 2022), highlighting the urgency of context-specific research. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by empirically examining the influence of transformational leadership style and work motivation on teacher performance in senior high schools in Keerom Regency, Papua. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on a geographically and socioeconomically marginalized region, providing a more contextualized understanding of how leadership and motivation interact to shape teacher performance. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of more adaptive and inclusive educational policies, particularly for improving teacher performance in remote areas.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 provides a literature review and hypothesis development. Section 3 presents the research method and design. Section 4 provides the results and discussion. Section 5 provides Concluding Remarks and Recommendations.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Management Theory

Management is a fundamental concept in organizational life, serving as a systematic process for achieving goals effectively and efficiently. Chamidah (2025) defines management as a series of activities encompassing planning, organizing, directing, and controlling resources to attain predetermined objectives. This definition aligns with the classical perspective proposed by George R. Terry, who conceptualizes management as an integrated process consisting of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. These four managerial functions form the backbone of organizational governance, where planning determines strategic direction, organizing structures tasks and authority, actuating mobilizes human resources through leadership and motivation, and controlling ensures alignment between performance and established standards (Chamidah, 2025).

The evolution of management theory reflects a shift from classical administrative approaches toward more dynamic and adaptive paradigms. Modern management theory views organizations as open systems that continuously interact with their external environment. Outhwaite and Simon (2023) emphasize that contemporary organizations must develop adaptive capacities to respond to rapid environmental changes while maintaining internal integration of managerial functions. This systemic

perspective highlights the interdependence between internal organizational components and external factors such as socio-economic conditions, technological advancement, and cultural dynamics.

Furthermore, contingency theory provides a critical extension to management thought by rejecting the notion of a universal management approach. Mehrad and Al Harrasi (2025) argue that managerial effectiveness depends on the alignment between leadership style, organizational structure, and environmental conditions. This implies that management practices must be situationally responsive rather than rigidly standardized. In addition, the emergence of performance-based management underscores the importance of measurable outcomes, where organizational success is evaluated not only by processes but also by tangible results (Mulyani, 2021). Thus, contemporary management theory integrates classical functions with adaptive, systemic, and performance-oriented approaches, providing a comprehensive framework for understanding organizational effectiveness.

2.2 Educational Management Theory

Educational management has developed as a specialized field derived from broader management theories, adapting them to the unique context of educational institutions. Haddar et al. (2026) explain that educational management has evolved through various theoretical paradigms in response to changing societal and educational demands. One of the earliest influences comes from Frederick W. Taylor's Scientific Management, which introduced principles of efficiency, standardization, and task specialization. In the educational context, this approach is reflected in a structured division of roles within schools, where principals serve as managers and teachers as instructional implementers, alongside standardized curricula and uniform teaching methods. However, this approach has been criticized for its mechanistic nature, as it tends to overlook the humanistic and dynamic aspects of teaching and learning processes.

In response to these limitations, modern educational management incorporates leadership perspectives, particularly transformational leadership theory developed by James MacGregor Burns and further expanded by Bernard M. Bass (Haddar *et al.*, 2026). This theory emphasizes the leader's role in inspiring, motivating, and intellectually stimulating followers while providing individualized support. In school settings, transformational leadership enables principals to move beyond administrative functions to build shared visions, foster teacher innovation, and create a collaborative and dynamic school culture. Consequently, educational management today integrates managerial efficiency with visionary leadership to address complex educational challenges.

2.3 Transformational Leadership Style

Leadership is a central element in organizational success, particularly in educational institutions where leaders influence both structural and human dimensions. Mustotiah *et al.*, (2025) define leadership as the ability to influence, guide, and direct individuals toward achieving organizational goals. Similarly, Ulum et al. (2020) view leadership as a process of influencing others to work collaboratively in achieving shared objectives. Within this framework, transformational leadership emerges as a highly relevant approach in the educational sector, as it focuses on inspiring followers to transcend personal interests for the benefit of the organization (Priyanto, 2024).

Leadership style refers to the pattern or approach leaders use to influence subordinates. Taher et al. (2023) describe leadership style as a system employed to motivate and direct team members to

perform optimally. Among various leadership styles, transformational leadership has been identified as particularly effective in improving organizational performance through fostering learning and innovation (Ulum *et al.*, 2020). Fitriani (2020) further categorizes leadership styles into charismatic, transactional, transformational, and visionary styles, with transformational leadership distinguished by its emphasis on communication, empowerment, and innovation.

Transformational leadership theory highlights the leader's role as a change agent who inspires and motivates followers to achieve higher levels of performance. According to Bastian (2023), transformational leaders encourage followers to prioritize organizational goals, enhance their self-development, and approach problems from new perspectives. This leadership style is characterized by four key dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Windiawan *et al.*, 2024). These dimensions collectively foster trust, innovation, and personal development among followers. Therefore, transformational leadership is widely regarded as an effective strategy for improving teacher performance by fostering a supportive, motivating work environment.

2.4 Work Motivation

Work motivation is a critical determinant of individual performance within organizations. Yanti *et al.* (2023) define motivation as the willingness to exert effort toward achieving organizational goals, conditioned by the ability to fulfill individual needs. This perspective is reinforced by Fitriani (2020), who views motivation as an internal drive that directs individual behavior. Mustotiah (2025) further explains motivation as a psychological and physiological process that initiates and sustains goal-oriented actions. In the context of education, motivated teachers are more likely to demonstrate commitment, creativity, and persistence in performing their professional duties (Ulum *et al.*, 2020).

Theoretical perspectives on motivation provide deeper insights into the factors influencing work behavior. Maslow's hierarchy of needs posits that individuals are driven by a progression of needs, from basic physiological needs to self-actualization (Mu'arif & Priyatmono, 2025). Herzberg's two-factor theory distinguishes between intrinsic motivators (achievement, recognition) and extrinsic hygiene factors (salary, working conditions), suggesting that true motivation arises from intrinsic satisfaction rather than external conditions alone. Meanwhile, McClelland's theory emphasizes the role of achievement, power, and affiliation needs in shaping motivation. At the same time, McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y highlight managerial assumptions about employee behavior and their implications for motivation strategies.

In educational settings, teacher motivation is influenced by both internal and external factors, including professional recognition, working conditions, interpersonal relationships, and organizational policies (Fitriani, 2020). High motivation significantly improves teacher performance, as motivated individuals tend to exhibit greater responsibility, discipline, and innovation. Thus, motivation functions as both a driving force and a directional mechanism that shapes work behavior and performance outcomes.

2.5 Teacher Performance

Teacher performance is a key indicator of educational quality and effectiveness. Fitriani (2020) defines performance as the measurable outcome of an individual's work in relation to predetermined standards.

In the educational context, Mariatie *et al.*, (2021) define teacher performance as the ability to conduct teaching and learning activities effectively to achieve instructional objectives. This includes planning lessons, implementing instructional strategies, managing classrooms, and assessing student outcomes. Bastian (2023) further emphasizes that teacher performance encompasses instructional planning, classroom management, and evaluation of student learning.

Teacher performance is influenced by multiple factors, both individual and organizational. Pratiwi *et al.* (2021) identify key determinants, including personality, professional development, teaching competence, communication skills, discipline, and work environment. Additionally, leadership plays a significant role in shaping teacher performance by providing direction, support, and motivation (Asyarotun *et al.*, 2025). Organizational factors such as work systems, facilities, and institutional culture also contribute to performance outcomes. Performance measurement in education relies on specific indicators to assess effectiveness. Hasna and Agustina (2025) categorize teacher performance into four dimensions: pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies. These dimensions reflect the comprehensive role of teachers as educators, professionals, and members of the educational community. Effective performance evaluation enables organizations to identify strengths and weaknesses, ensuring continuous improvement in educational quality. Therefore, teacher performance is not only a reflection of individual capability but also an outcome of leadership effectiveness, motivational factors, and organizational support systems.

3. Research Method

3.1 Study Design

This study employed a quantitative research design grounded in the positivist paradigm, which emphasizes objective measurement and statistical analysis to test hypotheses (Sugiyono, 2022). The quantitative approach was selected because it enables examination of causal relationships among variables, specifically the influence of transformational leadership style and work motivation on teacher performance. The research design integrates both descriptive and inferential approaches. The descriptive component aims to provide an empirical overview of the levels of transformational leadership, work motivation, and teacher performance. In contrast, the inferential component is used to test the proposed hypotheses and determine the magnitude and significance of relationships among variables.

This research focuses on public and private senior high schools in Keerom Regency, Papua, particularly in the districts of Skanto, Arso, West Arso, and Waris. These areas represent a strategic and unique educational context due to their geographic proximity to the Papua New Guinea border, which presents distinctive challenges for educational management and leadership practices. Therefore, this study design is considered appropriate for capturing both the contextual and empirical dynamics of leadership, motivation, and performance within this setting.

3.2 Sample Population or Subject of Research

The population in this study consisted of all senior high school teachers in Keerom Regency, Papua, totaling 113 individuals across seven schools. According to Sugiyono (2020, as cited in Suryani & Subando, 2025), population refers to a generalization area consisting of subjects or objects with specific characteristics determined by the researcher. The selection of this population reflects the relevance of

teachers as key actors in the educational process and as primary respondents for assessing leadership and motivational dynamics.

Given the relatively large population, sampling was conducted using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error to ensure representativeness and statistical reliability. The calculation yielded a sample size of 88 teachers, which is considered adequate for proportional representation of the population. This sampling approach ensures that the findings can be generalized to the broader population of teachers in the region while maintaining methodological rigor (Sugiyono, 2020, Suryani & Subando, 2025).

3.3 Data Collection Technique and Instrument Development

This study utilized both primary and secondary data sources to ensure data completeness and validity. Primary data were collected directly from respondents using structured questionnaires designed based on established theoretical indicators of transformational leadership, work motivation, and teacher performance. According to Waruwu (2025), primary data are obtained directly from the first source to address research objectives, while Haifa (2025) emphasizes that such data provide direct empirical evidence for hypothesis testing.

The questionnaire instrument was developed using a Likert scale with five response categories, ranging from strongly disagree to agree strongly. This scaling method is widely used to measure attitudes, perceptions, and opinions quantitatively (Zakiah, 2025). The indicators for transformational leadership were adapted from Windiawan *et al.*, (2024) and covered dimensions such as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Work motivation indicators were based on Maslow's theory as operationalized by Mu'arif and Priyatmono (2025), encompassing both internal and external motivational factors. Meanwhile, teacher performance indicators were derived from Hasna and Agustina (2025) and included pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies. To ensure inclusivity and accessibility, the questionnaires were distributed via both online (Google Forms) and offline (printed) methods, given the limited internet access in certain areas of Keerom Regency. In addition to primary data, secondary data were collected from official educational documents, school records, academic journals, and relevant literature to support theoretical development and contextual analysis (Siahaan, 2025).

3.4 Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis in this study involved both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive analysis was conducted to summarize and present the characteristics of each variable using measures such as frequency distributions, mean scores, and percentages. This analysis provides an overview of the levels of transformational leadership, work motivation, and teacher performance among respondents. Before conducting inferential analysis, the ordinal data obtained from the Likert scale were converted into interval data using the Method of Successive Interval (MSI). This transformation is necessary because parametric statistical techniques, such as regression analysis, require interval-level data (Hidayah, 2021). The MSI procedure involves calculating frequency distributions, determining proportions and cumulative proportions, identifying Z-scores based on the standard normal distribution, and generating new interval scores for each response category.

Inferential analysis was performed using multiple linear regression to examine the partial and simultaneous effects of transformational leadership (X1) and work motivation (X2) on teacher performance (Y). This technique allows identification of the strength and direction of relationships between variables, as well as the contribution of each independent variable to explaining variation in the dependent variable. The analysis was conducted using SPSS, following data tabulation and cleaning performed in Microsoft Excel. Through these analytical procedures, the study ensures methodological rigor and statistical validity in testing the proposed hypotheses, thereby providing empirical evidence on the determinants of teacher performance in remote educational settings.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Analysis Results

4.1.1 Validity Test

The validity test is conducted to determine the extent to which the questionnaire items measure the intended construct. The validity test in this study was conducted using the Pearson product-moment correlation technique with SPSS. An item is declared valid if the calculated r value is greater than the table r value at a certain significance level.

With a total of 88 respondents and a significance level of 5%, the table value of r obtained is 0.210. An item is declared valid if the calculated $r > 0.210$. The results of the validity test on all items of the transformational leadership style variable (X1), work motivation (X2), and teacher performance (Y) are presented in the following table A1 (Appendix). Based on the validity test results, all statement items for the variables of transformational leadership style, work motivation, and teacher performance have calculated r values greater than the table r value of 0.210. Thus, all statement items are declared valid and suitable for use as research instruments. This indicates that each question item represents the measured variable indicators. Therefore, all items can be used in the next stage of analysis without deletion or revision.

4.1.2 Reliability Test

After the instrument is declared valid, the next step is to test reliability to determine the level of internal consistency among items within a variable. The reliability test in this study was conducted using the Cronbach's Alpha method through SPSS Version 23. An instrument is declared reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value is greater than 0.60. This value indicates that the instrument has an adequate level of consistency in measuring the research variable. The results of the reliability test for each variable are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Result Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Threshold	Description
Transformational Leadership Style	0.972	> 0.6	Reliable
Work Motivation	0.956	> 0.6	Reliable
Teacher Performance	0.970	> 0.6	Reliable

Source: Compiled data (2026)

Based on the results of the reliability test, the Cronbach’s alpha values for the transformational leadership style variable, work motivation, and teacher performance were 0.972, 0.956, and 0.970, respectively. All of these values exceed the minimum threshold of 0.60. Thus, it can be concluded that all research instruments have a very good level of internal consistency and are declared reliable. This means that the questionnaire used in this study can be trusted as a data-collection tool for measuring the variables of transformational leadership style, work motivation, and teacher performance.

4.1.3 Multiple Linear Regression

This study uses multiple linear regression analysis to examine the influence of transformational leadership style and work motivation on teacher performance. This analysis is used to determine the extent of each independent variable's influence, both individually and jointly, on the dependent variable. Data processing in this study was conducted using SPSS. The results of the multiple linear regression analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Result Of Multiple Linear Regression

Variable	B	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Description
(Constant)	1.171				
Transformational Leadership Style	0.415	0.365	4.753	0.000	Significant
Work Motivation	0.751	0.561	7.321	0.000	Significant

Source: Compiled data (2026)

Based on the results of multiple linear regression analysis using SPSS, the regression equation obtained is:

$$Y = 1.171 + 0.415X_1 + 0.751X_2 \quad (1)$$

This equation indicates that the constant value of 1.171 represents the level of teacher performance when both transformational leadership style and work motivation are set to zero. Furthermore, the regression coefficient for transformational leadership style (0.415) suggests that each one-unit increase in transformational leadership will lead to a 0.415-unit increase in teacher performance, assuming other variables remain constant. Similarly, the regression coefficient for work motivation (0.751) implies that a one-unit increase in work motivation will improve teacher performance by 0.751 units under the same assumption. The positive coefficients of both independent variables demonstrate that better implementation of transformational leadership and higher levels of work motivation are associated with increased teacher performance.

4.1.4 Hypothesis Test

Based on the results of hypothesis testing using both partial (t-test) and simultaneous (F-test) analyses at the 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), the independent variables significantly influence teacher performance. The t-test results show that the transformational leadership style has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance, as indicated by a t-value of 4.753, which exceeds the t-table value of 1.988, and a significance value of 0.000, which is lower than 0.05. Similarly, work motivation demonstrates a positive and significant effect, with a t-value of 7.321 exceeding the critical t-value and

a significance level of 0.000. These findings confirm that both variables individually contribute to improving teacher performance, with work motivation ($\beta = 0.561$) having a stronger influence than transformational leadership style ($\beta = 0.365$).

Furthermore, the F-test results indicate that the regression model is statistically significant overall. The calculated F-value of 108.877, with a significance level of 0.000 (less than 0.05), confirms that the transformational leadership style and work motivation have a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. This implies that the combination of effective leadership and strong work motivation plays a crucial role in enhancing teacher performance, thereby supporting the acceptance of all proposed research hypotheses.

Table 3. Result Of Hypothesis Test

Variable	B	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	F-value	Sig. F	Description
(Constant)	1.171		0.502	0.617			Not Significant
Transformational Leadership Style	0.415	0.365	4.753	0.000			Significant
Work Motivation	0.751	0.561	7.321	0.000			Significant
Simultaneous Test (F-test)					108.877	0.000	Significant Model

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 The Influence of Transformational Leadership Style on Teacher Performance

Based on the results of the partial hypothesis test (t-test), the regression coefficient for transformational leadership style was 0.415, with a t-value of 4.753 (greater than the t-table value of 1.988) and a significance value of 0.000 (less than 0.05). These findings indicate that transformational leadership style has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance; therefore, the proposed hypothesis is accepted. This result is theoretically consistent with classical management theory, as proposed by George R. Terry, which emphasizes the managerial functions of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (Chamidah, 2025). In the school context, transformational leadership strengthens the actuating function, as principals not only direct but also inspire and empower teachers. This supports the modern management perspective that views organizations as adaptive systems requiring responsive leadership to environmental changes (Outhwaite & Simon, 2023).

Furthermore, this finding is consistent with educational management theory, particularly the transformational leadership concept developed by James MacGregor Burns and Bernard M. Bass, which highlights the importance of visionary and motivational leadership in educational institutions (Haddar *et al.*, 2026). A transformational principal plays a strategic role in building a shared vision, empowering teachers, fostering instructional innovation, and creating a conducive school climate. The positive influence identified in this study confirms that when principals demonstrate inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence, teachers are more encouraged to enhance their instructional quality and professional responsibility. This is in line with transformational leadership theory, which posits that these four dimensions significantly contribute to improving individual and organizational performance (Mulyani, 2021; Fitriani, 2020).

In relation to teacher performance theory, the findings also reinforce the argument that leadership is a critical determinant of teacher effectiveness. Teacher performance, which includes lesson planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning outcomes, is strongly influenced by leadership quality (Bastian, 2023; Asyarotun *et al.*, 2025). The results demonstrate that transformational leadership

contributes to the improvement of teachers' pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies, thereby enhancing overall educational quality. Moreover, from a contingency theory perspective, the effectiveness of transformational leadership in this study indicates its suitability to the specific contextual conditions of schools in Keerom Regency, Papua, where adaptive and inspirational leadership is required to address environmental challenges (Mehrad & Al Harrasi, 2025).

Empirically, these findings are consistent with prior studies, including Wang (2024), Papadakis (2024), and El Achi et al. (2025), which confirm a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and teacher performance. Similarly, Adriantoni (2023) found, using regression analysis, that transformational leadership significantly influences teacher performance. The present study not only supports these findings but also extends them by integrating work motivation into a simultaneous regression model, thereby providing a more comprehensive explanation of teacher performance. Overall, both theoretically and empirically, this study confirms that transformational leadership is a key factor in improving teacher performance, positioning school principals not merely as administrators but as change agents who drive improvements in educational quality.

4.2.2 The Influence of Work Motivation on Teacher Performance

Based on the results of the partial hypothesis test (t-test), the regression coefficient for work motivation was 0.751, with a t-value of 7.321, exceeding the t-table value of 1.988 and a significance level of 0.000, which is lower than 0.05. This indicates that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance; therefore, the proposed hypothesis is accepted. Furthermore, the standardized beta coefficient of 0.561 indicates that work motivation has a stronger influence than the transformational leadership style ($\beta = 0.365$). From a management theory perspective, this finding aligns with the classical theory of George R. Terry, particularly the actuating function, which emphasizes the importance of mobilizing human resources to achieve organizational goals (Chamidah, 2025). Work motivation represents a critical component of this function, as effective planning and organizing cannot be implemented without sufficient motivation. This result also supports the modern performance-based management approach, which highlights the importance of achieving measurable outcomes through effective human resource management (Mulyani, 2021).

In terms of motivation theory, the findings are consistent with several established frameworks. Maslow's hierarchy of needs posits that individuals are driven by the fulfillment of physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization needs; when these needs are satisfied, teachers are more likely to demonstrate greater commitment and professional performance (Mu'arif & Priyatmono, 2025). Similarly, Herzberg's two-factor theory suggests that intrinsic motivators such as achievement, recognition, and responsibility play a more significant role in enhancing performance than extrinsic factors, a pattern supported by the strong motivational influence observed in this study. McClelland's theory further reinforces this finding by emphasizing the importance of achievement, power, and affiliation needs in driving individual performance. At the same time, McGregor's Theory Y highlights that individuals possess inherent potential to grow when adequately motivated.

From the perspective of teacher performance theory, motivation is recognized as a key determinant influencing individual performance (Fitriani, 2020). Asyarotun et al. (2025) also emphasize that personal factors, including motivation and commitment, significantly affect teacher performance. The findings of this study confirm that teachers with higher levels of motivation tend to be more disciplined, responsible, and proactive in planning, implementing, and evaluating learning processes.

This implies that work motivation is a primary driver of the pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies of teachers.

In the context of educational management, high work motivation contributes to greater instructional innovation, increased participation in professional development, stronger collaboration among teachers, and an overall enhancement of the quality of educational services. This indicates that improving educational quality depends not only on structural or policy factors but also on teachers' internal drive as key actors in the learning process. Empirically, these findings are consistent with previous studies, such as Layek (2024), Heenan (2023), and Adriantoni (2023), which demonstrate that motivation significantly influences teacher performance. However, this study makes a more comprehensive contribution by examining work motivation alongside transformational leadership in a multiple regression model. Overall, both theoretically and empirically, the results confirm that work motivation is a dominant internal factor in improving teacher performance, and its effectiveness is further strengthened when combined with external factors such as leadership, thereby reinforcing its critical role in determining success within educational organizations.

4.2.3 The Influence of Transformational Leadership Style and Work Motivation on Teacher Performance

Based on the results of the simultaneous test (F-test), the calculated F value was 108.877 with a significance level of 0.000, which is lower than 0.05, indicating that transformational leadership and work motivation jointly have a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R Square) of 0.719 demonstrates that these two independent variables can explain 71.9% of the variance in teacher performance. In contrast, the remaining 28.1% is influenced by other factors in the research model. These findings confirm that the proposed hypothesis is accepted. From a theoretical perspective, this result is consistent with classical management theory, which emphasizes that organizational effectiveness is achieved through the integration of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling functions, where leadership represents the actuating function and motivation serves as the internal driving force of human resources (Chamidah, 2025). In the context of educational management, this finding supports the transformational leadership theory developed by Burns and Bass, which highlights the importance of visionary leadership, empowerment, and inspirational influence in improving organizational outcomes (Haddar *et al.*, 2026). The synergy between transformational leadership, an external factor, and work motivation, an internal factor, creates a conducive, productive school environment, ultimately enhancing teacher performance.

Moreover, this finding aligns with contingency theory, which posits that management effectiveness depends on the alignment between leadership style, individual characteristics, and organizational context (Mehrad & Al Harrasi, 2025). The significant combined effect suggests that the transformational leadership approach is contextually appropriate for the dynamic educational environment in the studied region. In relation to motivation and performance theories, the result corroborates the perspectives of Maslow, Herzberg, and McClelland, which assert that individuals perform optimally when their needs for recognition and self-actualization are fulfilled (Mu'arif & Priyatmono, 2025). Additionally, performance theory emphasizes that individual performance is influenced by a combination of ability, motivation, and leadership factors (Asyarotun *et al.*, 2025). Empirically, this study reinforces previous findings that transformational leadership and work motivation significantly improve teacher performance, while also offering novelty by examining both variables simultaneously in a multiple regression model. Therefore, it can be concluded that the integration of

transformational leadership and strong work motivation produces a synergistic effect that substantially enhances teacher performance, highlighting that improving educational quality requires not only administrative policies but also inspirational leadership and sustained motivation development.

5. Concluding Remarks and Recommendation

This study was conducted to examine teacher performance in relation to two important factors in educational management, namely transformational leadership style and work motivation. Specifically, this research addressed three questions: whether transformational leadership style affects teacher performance, whether work motivation affects teacher performance, and whether both variables simultaneously influence teacher performance. This study concludes that the implementation of transformational leadership and work motivation plays a crucial role in improving teacher performance in senior high schools in Keerom Regency, Papua. Descriptively, transformational leadership is generally perceived as good, particularly in rational and objective decision-making; however, aspects of inspirational communication and vision delivery still require optimization. Teacher work motivation is categorized as moderately good, with strengths in interpersonal relationships and work environment, yet intrinsic factors such as achievement drive, responsibility, and supervision effectiveness remain uneven. Teacher performance is also at a moderately good level, with strong pedagogical competencies but relatively weaker professional development and engagement in professional networks.

The value of this research lies in its theoretical, practical, and policy contributions. Theoretically, this study strengthens the understanding that teacher performance is shaped by both external organizational factors, represented by transformational leadership, and internal individual factors, represented by work motivation. Practically, the findings provide insight for school principals that improving teacher performance requires not only administrative supervision but also inspirational leadership, empowerment, recognition, and support for teachers' professional growth. In terms of policy implications, the results suggest that educational stakeholders should design leadership development programs for school principals and motivation-strengthening strategies for teachers, particularly in contexts that require adaptive and responsive educational management. The originality of this study is reflected in its simultaneous examination of transformational leadership style and work motivation in explaining teacher performance, thereby offering a more integrated perspective on efforts to improve educational quality.

This study has several limitations. First, it focused only on transformational leadership style and work motivation, while teacher performance may also be influenced by other factors such as organizational culture, school climate, compensation, professional development, teacher competence, work discipline, and availability of educational facilities. Second, the study used a quantitative approach, which limits deeper exploration of teachers' personal experiences and contextual realities in schools. Third, the research was conducted in a specific regional context, so the findings should be interpreted with caution and not generalized too broadly across all educational settings. Future researchers are encouraged to include additional variables, employ mixed-methods or qualitative approaches, and conduct comparative studies across regions or school levels. Such studies may provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that contribute to teacher performance and support the development of more effective educational management strategies.

Statement of Use of Generative AI

During the preparation of this work, the author used ChatGPT to assist in improving clarity and readability of the text. The author reviewed and edited the output and takes full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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Appendix

Table A1. Result Validity Test

Variable	Item	r-calculated	r-estimated	Description
Transformational Leadership Style	X1.1	0.858	0.210	Valid
	X1.2	0.840	0.210	Valid
	X1.3	0.905	0.210	Valid
	X1.4	0.880	0.210	Valid
	X1.5	0.838	0.210	Valid
	X1.6	0.903	0.210	Valid
	X1.7	0.934	0.210	Valid
	X1.8	0.914	0.210	Valid
	X1.9	0.895	0.210	Valid
	X1.10	0.902	0.210	Valid
	X1.11	0.861	0.210	Valid
Work Motivation	X2.1	0.858	0.210	Valid
	X2.2	0.893	0.210	Valid
	X2.3	0.865	0.210	Valid
	X2.4	0.817	0.210	Valid
	X2.5	0.890	0.210	Valid
	X2.6	0.885	0.210	Valid
	X2.7	0.869	0.210	Valid
	X2.8	0.808	0.210	Valid
	X2.9	0.806	0.210	Valid
	X2.10	0.807	0.210	Valid
Teacher Performance	Y1	0.799	0.210	Valid
	Y2	0.795	0.210	Valid
	Y3	0.840	0.210	Valid
	Y4	0.874	0.210	Valid
	Y5	0.894	0.210	Valid
	Y6	0.907	0.210	Valid
	Y7	0.870	0.210	Valid
	Y8	0.881	0.210	Valid
	Y9	0.832	0.210	Valid
	Y10	0.884	0.210	Valid
	Y11	0.848	0.210	Valid
	Y12	0.882	0.210	Valid
	Y13	0.849	0.210	Valid