

Workload, Transformational Leadership, and Work Motivation as Determinants of Employee Performance at the Environmental Service of Kaimana Regency

Mohamad Rohim Efendi*, Sukesi

Department of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Dr. Soetomo, Surabaya, Indonesia

*Corresponding author. Email: sukesi@unitomo.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Employee performance in local public organizations depends not only on individual ability but also on the way work demands, leadership practices, and employee motivation are managed. This study examines the effects of workload, transformational leadership, and work motivation on employee performance at the Environmental Service of Kaimana Regency. A quantitative causal-associative design was used, and data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to all 46 employees; therefore, the study applied a census sampling approach. The research instruments were tested for validity and reliability, and the hypotheses were examined using multiple linear regression. The findings show that workload has a negative and significant effect on employee performance, whereas transformational leadership and work motivation have positive and significant effects. Simultaneously, the three independent variables explain 69.2% of the variance in employee performance. These results indicate that employee performance can be strengthened through proportional workload allocation, clearer leadership communication and supervision, and motivational practices that recognize employee needs, achievement, and self-development. The study contributes to public-sector human resource management by integrating job demands, leadership behavior, and motivational factors in one empirical model.

Keywords: Workload, transformational leadership, work motivation, employee performance, public organization.

1. INTRODUCTION

Human resources are central to the continuity and effectiveness of public organizations. In local government institutions, the quality of public service delivery is strongly influenced by the ability of employees to complete tasks accurately, on time, and in accordance with institutional standards. Environmental agencies face increasingly complex responsibilities, including waste management, environmental monitoring, community service, administrative reporting, and coordination with other local development programs. Such responsibilities require employees who are not only technically capable but also supported by manageable work demands, effective leadership, and strong motivation.

Employee performance is commonly understood as the quality and quantity of work achieved by employees in carrying out their assigned responsibilities. In public institutions, performance is more than an individual outcome because it is directly connected with service reliability, accountability, and the achievement of government programs. The thesis that forms the empirical basis of this article describes several practical issues at the Environmental Service of Kaimana Regency, such as delays, incomplete task completion, insufficient direction regarding standard operating procedures, and the need for firmer leadership guidance. These conditions indicate that employee performance should be examined through organizational factors that can be managed by the institution.

Workload is one of the most important factors in explaining performance. Workload refers to the amount, difficulty, and time pressure of tasks that must be handled by employees. In the job demands-resources perspective, excessive job demands can reduce energy and concentration, which eventually weakens performance, while balanced demands can support productivity when sufficient resources are available (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). In a local government office, workload becomes critical because employees often handle administrative duties, field activities, public complaints, and reporting obligations simultaneously. When the volume or timing of tasks is not proportional to employee capacity, work quality and punctuality can decline.

Transformational leadership is also highly relevant to employee performance. Transformational leaders influence employees through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1994). In public organizations, this form of leadership is important because employees need clear direction, consistent communication, and encouragement to perform beyond routine compliance. Leaders who are able to communicate a vision, motivate subordinates, supervise work without creating fear, and control emotions can create a productive climate. Conversely, weak communication, limited supervision, and insufficient guidance may reduce employees' willingness to improve their performance.

Work motivation is the internal and external drive that encourages employees to act toward organizational goals. Motivation is closely associated with the fulfillment of needs, perceived recognition, work security, social belonging, and opportunities for self-actualization. Self-determination theory emphasizes that people perform better when their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are supported (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagne & Deci, 2005). For civil servants or local government employees, motivation can emerge from fair treatment, recognition from leaders, meaningful work, security, and the opportunity to contribute to society.

Previous studies have reported that workload, leadership, and motivation influence employee performance, but the direction and strength of their effects may differ across institutional contexts. In some settings, workload is associated with lower performance because it creates fatigue and pressure; in other settings, a certain level of workload can stimulate productivity when employees perceive it as a challenge. Similarly, transformational leadership and motivation generally have positive effects, yet their practical contribution depends on how they are experienced by employees. This study therefore converts the undergraduate thesis on the Environmental Service of Kaimana Regency into a concise scientific article and asks: to what extent do workload, transformational leadership, and work motivation influence employee performance both partially and simultaneously?

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a quantitative causal-associative approach. The design was appropriate because the objective was to test the influence of three independent variables, namely workload (X1), transformational leadership (X2), and work motivation (X3), on the dependent variable, employee performance (Y). The research was conducted at the Environmental Service of Kaimana Regency. The population consisted of all 46 employees in the institution, and because the population was relatively small, the study used a census technique in which all employees were included as respondents.

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Workload was measured through indicators related to targets that must be achieved, working conditions, and work standards. Transformational leadership was measured using indicators of decision-making ability, motivational ability, communication, ability to control subordinates, and emotional control. Work motivation was measured through physical needs, security needs, social needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. Employee performance was measured using quality of work, quantity of work, timeliness, effectiveness, and commitment.

Before hypothesis testing, the instruments were examined using validity and reliability tests. All indicators were declared valid, and the reliability values were high, with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.908 for workload, 0.888 for transformational leadership, 0.872 for work motivation, and 0.897 for employee performance. The classical assumption tests showed that the regression residuals were normally distributed based on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov significance value of 0.072, and the model did not indicate multicollinearity because tolerance values were above 0.10 and VIF values were below 10. The data were then analyzed using multiple linear regression, the t-test for partial effects, the F-test for simultaneous effects, and the coefficient of determination to evaluate the explanatory power of the model.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The respondent profile shows that the institution is dominated by male employees, representing 60.9% of the respondents, while female employees represent 39.1%. Most respondents were in the productive mature-age category, with 47.8% aged 36-45 years and 41.3% above 45 years. In terms of education, the majority of respondents held higher education qualifications, with 71.7% having completed bachelor, master, or doctoral education. This profile is important because educational background and work maturity may support the ability to understand organizational procedures, respond to leadership direction, and evaluate workload conditions realistically.

The descriptive results indicate that the mean score for workload was 4.26, transformational leadership was 4.11, work motivation was 3.81, and employee performance was 4.10. These values suggest that respondents generally gave favorable assessments of the institutional conditions and their own performance. However, descriptive agreement does

not automatically imply that all organizational factors contribute positively to performance. The regression model provides a more precise explanation because it evaluates the direction and significance of each independent variable while controlling for the other variables.

Table 1. Multiple regression and model summary

Predictor / Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t / F	Sig.
Constant	0.887	0.336	-	2.638	0.012
Workload (X1)	-0.251	0.118	-0.305	2.119	0.040
Transformational leadership (X2)	0.242	0.116	0.290	2.076	0.044
Work motivation (X3)	0.296	0.101	0.343	2.934	0.005
Model summary	R = 0.832	R ² = 0.692	Adj. R ² = 0.670	F = 31.387	0.000

The regression equation generated by the data is $Y = 0.887 - 0.251X_1 + 0.242X_2 + 0.296X_3$. The coefficient of determination shows that workload, transformational leadership, and work motivation jointly explain 69.2% of the variance in employee performance, while the remaining 30.8% is explained by other variables outside the model. The F value of 31.387 with a significance level of 0.000 confirms that the three predictors simultaneously influence employee performance. This relatively high explanatory power indicates that employee performance at the Environmental Service of Kaimana Regency is strongly linked to the internal work environment, especially how tasks are distributed, how leaders guide employees, and how employee motivation is maintained.

The first finding shows that workload has a negative and significant effect on employee performance ($B = -0.251$; $p = 0.040$). This result means that when workload pressure increases, employee performance tends to decline, assuming transformational leadership and motivation remain constant. The finding is theoretically consistent with the job demands-resources model, which explains that excessive job demands can consume employees' physical and psychological resources and thereby reduce work outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). In the context of a public environmental agency, employees may face simultaneous demands related to administrative documentation, field supervision, waste handling, public reporting, and coordination with other agencies. If these demands are not accompanied by sufficient time, role clarity, and supporting resources, performance indicators such as punctuality, effectiveness, and quality of output may deteriorate.

This finding does not imply that workload should be eliminated. Public organizations require work targets to maintain accountability. The more relevant implication is that workload should be proportional, measurable, and supported by adequate work systems. A workload that is too light may reduce productivity, but a workload that is too heavy may produce fatigue, error, and delayed task completion. The descriptive data show that employees tended to agree with statements regarding workload conditions, yet the regression coefficient indicates that workload remains a risk factor for performance when analyzed together with leadership and motivation. This suggests that management should regularly review job descriptions, workload distribution, and the match between task volume and available human resources.

The second finding demonstrates that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance ($B = 0.242$; $p = 0.044$). This result supports the proposition that leadership is a central driver of performance in public organizations. Transformational leaders can improve employee performance by clarifying goals, providing motivation, communicating expectations, supervising fairly, and encouraging employees to view work as meaningful. Theoretically, transformational leadership enhances performance because it changes employees' perception of work from mere task execution to contribution toward a shared mission (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1994). Podsakoff et al.

(1990) also emphasized that transformational leader behavior can strengthen trust, satisfaction, and willingness to go beyond formal role requirements.

For the Environmental Service of Kaimana Regency, this finding is practically meaningful because the thesis background indicates the need for stronger direction, clearer SOP communication, and firmer guidance for employees who do not complete work on time. Leadership in this setting is not limited to formal authority; it also involves the ability to build discipline and morale through consistent communication. When leaders provide direction politely but firmly, explain work standards, and follow up on employee responsibilities, employees are more likely to align their behavior with organizational expectations. Therefore, transformational leadership can operate as a social resource that offsets some of the negative effects of workload.

The third finding reveals that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance ($B = 0.296$; $p = 0.005$). Among the three predictors, work motivation has the strongest partial relationship with performance, as indicated by the highest partial correlation (0.412). This means that employees who feel motivated through the fulfillment of needs, recognition, social appreciation, security, and self-development opportunities tend to show higher performance. Motivation influences not only the willingness to work but also the persistence to complete tasks, the initiative to solve problems, and the readiness to maintain service quality. This supports motivation theories that emphasize psychological needs and internalized goals as drivers of work behavior (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagne & Deci, 2005).

In the public sector, motivation may have a distinctive meaning. Employees are not always driven by financial rewards alone; they may also be motivated by public service values, recognition from leaders, a sense of usefulness, career development, and a work climate that respects their contribution. The relatively high mean score of work motivation in this study suggests that employees already have a motivational base, but the regression result indicates that further strengthening of motivation can still improve performance. Practical strategies include providing fair appreciation, involving employees in problem solving, offering opportunities for innovation, and creating a work environment in which employees feel safe to communicate obstacles.

The simultaneous effect of workload, transformational leadership, and work motivation provides an integrated picture of employee performance. Workload represents job demands, while leadership and motivation represent organizational and psychological resources. The model therefore suggests that performance will be optimal when job demands are controlled and resources are strengthened. If workload increases without sufficient leadership support and motivation, performance may decrease. Conversely, when leaders communicate clearly and employees are motivated, the organization is better positioned to manage workload pressure and maintain service output.

The findings also have implications for human resource policy. First, the agency should conduct a periodic workload analysis to identify units or employees with disproportionate task burdens. Second, supervisors should strengthen transformational behaviors by improving decision-making speed, communication quality, constructive supervision, and emotional control. Third, motivation programs should not be limited to monetary aspects; they should also include recognition, role clarity, development opportunities, and meaningful involvement in environmental service programs. These interventions are likely to produce a more disciplined and performance-oriented work culture.

From a theoretical perspective, this study confirms that employee performance in a local government institution is a multidimensional outcome. It cannot be explained by individual motivation alone, nor by leadership alone. Performance emerges from the interaction between job demands and the organizational resources that help employees cope with those demands. The strong R-square value indicates that the selected variables provide a substantial explanation of performance in the examined institution. Nevertheless, 30.8% of the variance remains unexplained, which opens opportunities for future research to examine additional variables such as organizational culture, competence, work discipline, digital administrative systems, employee engagement, and perceived organizational support.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that workload, transformational leadership, and work motivation significantly influence employee performance at the Environmental Service of Kaimana Regency. Workload has a negative effect, indicating that higher workload pressure can reduce performance when task demands exceed employee capacity or are not supported by adequate organizational resources. Transformational leadership has a positive effect, showing that leaders who communicate clearly, motivate employees, make appropriate decisions, and supervise constructively can improve employee performance. Work motivation also has a positive effect and appears to be the strongest partial predictor in the model, suggesting that motivated employees are more likely to deliver quality, timely, and effective work.

Simultaneously, the three variables explain 69.2% of employee performance. The practical implication is that the institution should manage workload proportionally, strengthen transformational leadership practices, and develop motivational systems that support recognition, security, social belonging, and self-development. Future research may expand the model by adding organizational culture, competence, discipline, employee engagement, and digital work systems, and may compare several local government institutions to improve the generalizability of the findings.

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