

The Role of Work Motivation in Mediating the Influence of Work Ethic on Teacher Performance in Schools State Vocational School 1 Stabat

Murti Khairani Lubis, Kiki Farida Ferine, Yohny Anwar

Abstract

Teacher performance is factor key in increase quality education , especially in schools Intermediate Vocational (SMK) which demands readiness competence graduates . Teacher performance is influenced by various factors factors , including ethos work and motivation work . However , the relationship between ethos teacher work and performance is not always nature directly , but rather can mediated by motivation work . Research This aim For analyze influence ethos Work to teacher performance , influence ethos Work to motivation work , influence motivation Work to teacher performance , as well as role motivation Work in mediate influence ethos Work to Teacher performance at State Vocational School 1 Stabat. Research This use approach quantitative with method survey . Population study consists of from all ASN teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Stabat are 89 people, all of whom are made into sample (research population). Data collected through questionnaire with Likert scale and analyzed use Partial Least Squares (PLS) method via application SmartPLS . Research results show that ethos Work influential positive and significant to teacher performance and motivation work . In addition , motivation work also has an effect positive and significant to teacher performance . Test results influence No direct show that motivation Work play a role as variables significant mediation in connection between ethos teacher work and performance . Research This conclude that improvement teacher performance can achieved through strengthening ethos work supported by motivation high work . Findings This expected can become base for party schools and stakeholders policy in formulate improvement strategies teacher performance in general sustainable.

Keywords: Ethos Work , Motivation Work , Teacher Performance

Murti Khairani Lubis

¹Master's Student in Management, Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi, Indonesia
e-mail: murtikhairanilubis@gmail.com

Kiki Farida Ferine, Yohny Anwar

^{2,3}Master of Management, Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi, Indonesia
e-mail: kikifaridaferinesyarif@ymail.com, yohny.anwar@yahoo.com

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Introduction

Education is a key pillar in developing quality human resources. The success of the educational process is largely determined by the performance of teachers, the primary actors in learning activities. Teachers serve not only as transmitters of material but also as educators, mentors, and role models for students. Therefore, teacher performance is a strategic factor in improving educational quality, particularly in Vocational High Schools (SMK), which focus on competency mastery and graduate job readiness.

As a vocational education institution, SMK Negeri 1 Stabat has a significant responsibility in preparing competent, competitive graduates who are ready to enter the workforce. This challenge requires teachers to perform optimally, as reflected in their ability to plan lessons, implement the learning process effectively, conduct evaluations, and continuously develop professional competencies. However, in practice, teacher performance does not always meet expectations. Variations in discipline, work enthusiasm, learning creativity, and achievement of performance targets are still found.

One factor believed to influence teacher performance is work ethic. Work ethic reflects an individual's attitudes, values, and behaviors toward their work, such as responsibility, hard work, discipline, honesty, and commitment to their duties. Teachers with a strong work ethic tend to demonstrate strong dedication to their roles, strive to improve the quality of learning, and consistently achieve educational goals. However, a strong work ethic does not necessarily directly result in optimal performance if it is not supported by strong internal motivation.

In this context, work motivation plays a crucial role. Work motivation is an internal and external drive that drives teachers to work optimally, achieve excellence, and achieve predetermined goals. Teachers with high work motivation will demonstrate enthusiasm, initiative, and perseverance in carrying out their duties. Work motivation can emerge from a strong work ethic, where positive values toward work encourage individuals to work harder and be more responsible.

Several studies have shown that the relationship between work ethic and performance is not always direct, but can be influenced by psychological factors such as work motivation. In other words, a teacher's work ethic has the potential to increase work motivation, which in turn impacts teacher performance. Therefore, work motivation can act as a mediating variable, bridging the influence of work ethic on teacher performance.

Based on this description, it is important to conduct research that examines the role of work motivation in mediating the influence of work ethic on teacher performance at SMK Negeri 1 Stabat. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of human resource management studies in education, as well as practical contributions for schools and policymakers in formulating strategies to improve teacher performance by continuously strengthening work ethic and motivation.

Literature Review

Teacher Performance

Understanding Teacher Performance

According to Janah et al. (2020), teacher performance is the results achieved by teachers in carrying out their assigned tasks, based on their skills, experience, dedication, and time management. Good performance is seen when teachers demonstrate loyalty and high commitment to teaching duties, developing teaching materials, discipline, creativity,

collaboration with the school community, exemplary leadership for students, and responsibility in their duties.

Factors Affecting Teacher Performance

According to Janah et al (2020), factors that influence teacher performance include:

1. Teacher Competence
Competence is a set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that teachers must possess in carrying out their profession. According to Law No. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, there are four main teacher competencies.
2. Work motivation
Motivation is an internal (intrinsic) or external (extrinsic) drive that makes teachers enthusiastic in carrying out their duties.
3. Work ethic
Work ethic is the spirit, mental attitude, and values that encourage a person to work diligently, with discipline, and with full responsibility.
4. Work environment
The work environment includes the physical, social and psychological atmosphere at school:
 - a. Physical : adequate classrooms, learning facilities, IT facilities.
 - b. Social : harmonious relationships with fellow teachers, principals, and staff.
 - c. Psychological : a conducive work climate, support, and open communication.
5. Training and Professional Development
The work environment includes the physical, social and psychological atmosphere at school:
 - a. Physical: adequate classrooms, learning facilities, IT facilities.
 - b. Social: harmonious relationships with fellow teachers, principals, and staff.
 - c. Psychological: a conducive work climate, support, and open communication.

Teacher Performance Indicators

According to Janah et al. (2020), teacher performance indicators encompass several important aspects that demonstrate the quality of their professional performance. Based on this explanation, the following are the main indicators:

1. High Loyalty and Commitment to Teaching Duties
Teachers are expected to be consistent and highly dedicated in carrying out their teaching responsibilities.
2. Mastery and Development of Study Materials
Teachers not only master learning materials but also continue to develop their teaching materials so that they remain relevant and interesting.
3. Discipline in Teaching
The aspects of punctuality, compliance with rules, and consistency in carrying out the learning process are very important.
4. Creativity in Teaching Implementation
Teachers are required to find innovative and varied teaching approaches, not monotonous ones.
5. Collaboration with the Entire School Community

Collaboration with colleagues, parents, and the school is an important part of the performance indicators.

6. Leadership that Becomes a Role Model for Students

The proactive attitude and inspiring leadership of teachers are role models and motivators for students.

7. Responsibility for Professional Duties

Teachers must have a high sense of responsibility towards their duties – both administrative and pedagogical.

Work motivation

Understanding Work Motivation

According to Robbins & Judge (2022), work motivation is a process that explains an individual's intensity, direction, and persistence in achieving a goal. Therefore, in the context of teacher motivation, it is the internal and external drive that drives a teacher to carry out their educational duties whether teaching, educating, guiding, or carrying out other professional responsibilities with enthusiasm, consistency, and a focus on achieving educational goals in the school.

Work Motivation Indicators

According to Robbins & Judge (2022), work motivation indicators consist of:

1. Intensity
How much effort does the teacher put into preparing and implementing learning?
2. Direction
To what extent do teachers' efforts focus on educational goals & the formation of students' character.
3. Perseverance
Teacher consistency in teaching despite facing limited facilities or diverse student conditions.

Work ethic

Understanding Work Ethic

According to Sutrisno (2020), work ethic is an attitude rooted in fundamental beliefs accompanied by total commitment to the chosen work paradigm. In the context of teachers, this definition emphasizes how teachers' attitudes, commitments, and professional values form the basis of their behavior at school.

Work Ethic Indicator

1. Discipline
Discipline is a key characteristic of a teacher's work ethic, demonstrated by adherence to school rules, punctuality in attendance, and consistency in implementing the teaching schedule. Disciplined teachers not only maintain regular learning but also serve as positive role models for their students.
2. Responsibility
Teachers with a strong work ethic demonstrate a sense of responsibility in carrying out their professional duties, from teaching and mentoring to assessing and completing

administrative obligations effectively. This responsibility demonstrates the teacher's commitment to supporting the achievement of educational goals.

3. Hard Work

Hard work is reflected in a teacher's dedication to preparing materials, selecting appropriate learning methods, and seeking solutions to emerging challenges. Teachers with a strong work ethic will strive to ensure the learning process runs effectively.

4. Honesty and Integrity

Work ethic is also evident in honesty and integrity, both in assessing student achievement and in daily interactions at school. Teachers with integrity and honesty serve as moral role models for students and maintain trust within the educational environment.

5. Commitment and Dedication

Commitment is demonstrated through teachers' loyalty to their profession, while dedication is reflected in their dedication to carrying out their duties despite facing various limitations. Teachers with a strong commitment will remain enthusiastic about carrying out their roles to ensure student success.

6. Cooperation and Care

The teacher's ability to collaborate with colleagues, the principal, and parents, and demonstrate concern for student development, both academically and non-academically. Good collaboration supports the creation of a conducive learning environment.

Conceptual Framework

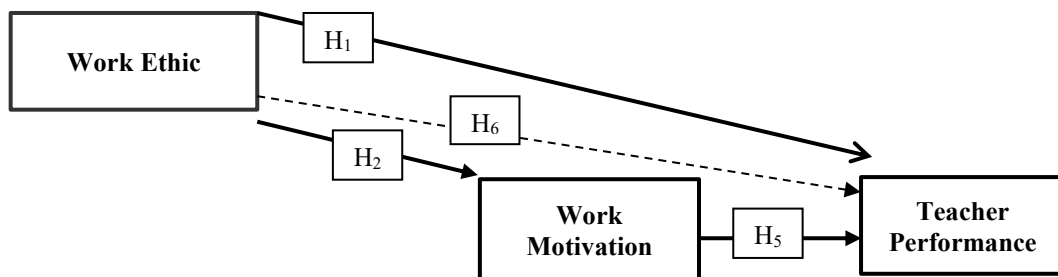


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Research Hypothesis

H₁: Work ethic has a positive and significant influence on teacher performance at State Vocational High School 1 Stabat.

H₂: Work ethics has a positive and significant effect on work motivation at State Vocational High School 1 Stabat.

H₃: Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance at State Vocational High School 1 Stabat.

H₄: Work ethic has a positive and significant influence on teacher performance through work motivation at State Vocational High School 1 Stabat.

Research Methods

Types of research

The type of research used by the researcher is quantitative research. According to Sugiyono (2022), quantitative research can be defined as a method based on the philosophy of

positivism, used to research a specific population or sample. The sampling technique is generally random, data collection uses research instruments, and data analysis is quantitative/statistical in nature with the aim of testing predetermined hypotheses. This type of quantitative research was conducted to create a study that aims to adjust a research and to analyze the role of work motivation in mediating work ethic on teacher performance at State Vocational High School 1 Stabat.

Research Location and Research Time

The research location was State Vocational High School 1 Stabat, located on Jl. KH Wahid Hasyim, Stabat District, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra. The research period was carried out for 3 months, from October to December 2025.

Population and Sample

According to Arikunto (2025) if the subject is less than 100, it is better to take all of them so that the research is a population study. In this study, the population is all ASN employees at Stabat 1 State Vocational High School, consisting of 68 Civil Servants (PNS) and 21 Government Employees with Contract Agreements (PPPK), so that the total population is 89 people. Because the population is less than 100 people, referring to Arikunto's opinion (2025), all populations are used as samples, which is also known as population research.

Research Data Sources

The data sources used in this study are primary data.

Data collection technique

Data were collected by distributing questionnaires to respondents using a Likert scale with primary data sources.

Results

Outer Model Analysis

Outer Model Analysis using the PLS Algorithm , produces:

Validity Test

Table 1. Outer Loadings Values

	Teacher Performance	Work Ethic	Work Motivation
X2.1		0.846	
X2.2		0.929	
X2.3		0.877	
X2.4		0.928	
X2.5		0.926	
X2.6		0.890	
Y.1	0.749		
Y.2	0.856		
Y.3	0.607		
Y.4	0.914		

Y.5	0.900		
Y.6	0.868		
Y.7	0.855		
Z.1			0.945
Z.2			0.885
Z.3			0.851

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

Based on the values in Table 1 above, the results of the outer model testing using loading factor/ outer loadings show that all indicators in each variable have loading values ≥ 0.60 . This indicates that each indicator measured is valid and robust. Therefore, it can be concluded that all items in the questionnaire have met the validity criteria, as can be seen in the following figure.

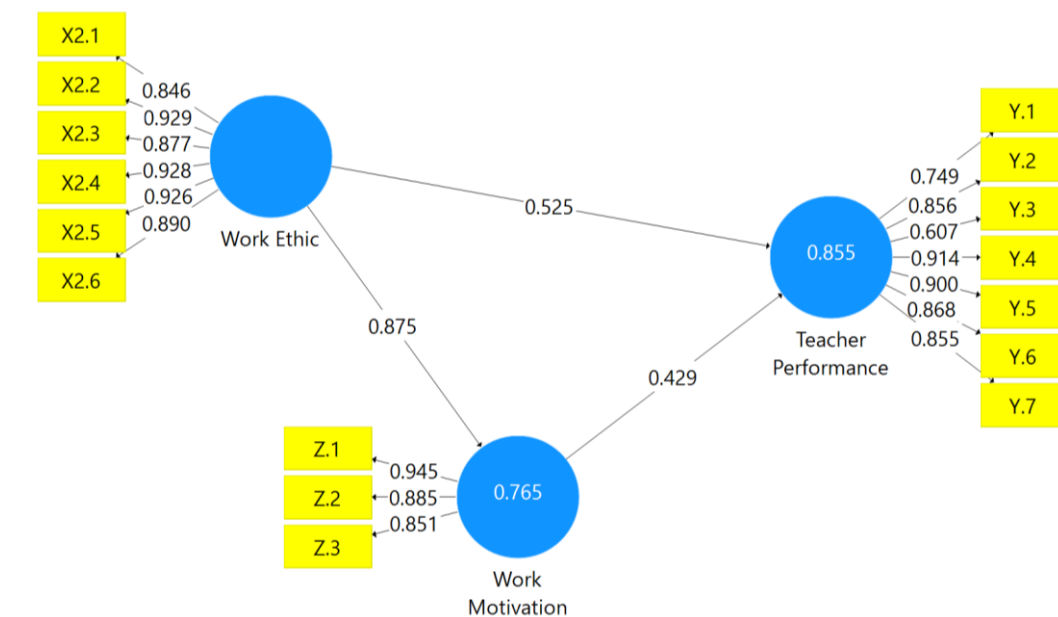


Figure 2. Outer Loading

Reliability Test

Table 2. Construct Reliability and Validity Test

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Teacher Performance	0.920	0.933	0.937	0.684
Work Ethic	0.953	0.954	0.962	0.810
Work Motivation	0.875	0.891	0.923	0.800

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

Table 2 above shows that the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values for all constructs are above 0.70. This indicates that all indicators have high internal consistency and can be relied upon to measure their respective constructs. Therefore, the research instrument is deemed reliable and suitable for use in testing the structural model.

Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Evaluating a model with PLS begins by examining the R-square for each dependent latent variable. The table below shows the results of R-square estimation using SmartPLS.

Table 3. R Square Results

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Work Motivation	0.765	0.763
Teacher Performance	0.855	0.852

Source: Smart PLS, 2025

In table 3 there is an R square value for both dependent variables for the work motivation variable there is an R square value of 0.765 meaning the influence of work ethic is 0.765 or 76.5% the rest is on other variables outside the model. The R square value of teacher performance is 0.855 meaning work ethic and work motivation are 0.855 or 85.5% the rest is on other variables outside the model.

Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

Hypothesis Testing

Direct Influence Between Variables

The direct influence between variables can be seen in the path coefficients . The data processing results show the direct influence values, which can be seen in the following table.

Table 4. Path Coefficients (Direct Effect)

	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Conclusion
Work Ethics -> Teacher Performance	0.525	3,828	0,000	Accepted
Work Ethic -> Work Motivation	0.875	13,376	0,000	Accepted
Work Motivation -> Teacher Performance	0.429	3,324	0.001	Accepted

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

In the results of Table 4, there are direct influence values as follows:

1. Work ethic has a positive and significant influence on teacher performance with a t-statistic value of 3.828. above 1.96 and a significance of 0.001 below 0.05, meaning that work ethic has a significant effect on teacher performance because the significance value is below 0.05. The results of this study are in line with the results of previous studies, namely that work ethic has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance (Ferine & Handoko, 2025).
2. Work ethic has a positive and significant effect on work motivation with a t-statistic value of 13.376 above 1.96 and a significance value of 0.000 below 0.05, meaning that work ethic has a real effect on work motivation because the significance value is above 0.05. The results of this study are in line with the results of previous studies, namely that work ethic has a positive and significant effect on work motivation (Novita et al ., 2023).
3. Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on performance with a t-statistic value of 3.324 above 1.96 and a significance value of 0.001 below 0.05, meaning that work motivation has a real effect on performance because the significance value is below 0.05. The results of this study are in accordance with the results of previous studies, namely that

work motivation has a positive and significant effect on performance (Tarigan & Anwar , 2024).

Indirect Influence Between Variables

The indirect influence between variables can be seen in the specific indirect effects values . The data processing results show the indirect effect values, as shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Specific Indirect Effects

	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Conclusion
Work Ethics -> Work Motivation -> Teacher Performance	0.376	3,593	0,000	Accepted

Source: Smart PLS, 2025

In table 5 there is an indirect influence between variables which will be explained as follows:

1. Work ethic has a positive and significant effect on performance through work motivation, with a t-statistic value of 3.593 above 1.96 and a significance value of 0.000 below 0.05. This indicates that work motivation acts as an intervening variable between transformational leadership and performance. The results of this study also align with previous research (Lamere et al., 2021).

Conclusion

1. Work ethic has a positive and significant influence on teacher performance at State Vocational High School 1 Stabat.
2. Work ethic has a positive and significant influence on work motivation at State Vocational High School 1 Stabat.
3. Work motivation has a positive and significant influence on teacher performance at State Vocational High School 1 Stabat.
4. Work ethic has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance through work motivation at State Vocational High School 1 Stabat.

Suggestion

1. Teacher performance with statement mark lowest That is, " I arrive at class on time according to the teaching schedule." Therefore, the suggestion is to make punctuality a primary indicator of teacher performance assessment, and support it with a classroom attendance system directly supervised by the curriculum representative. This will encourage teachers to be more disciplined because there are clear consequences and rewards.
2. The lowest-scoring work motivation statement was "I continue to carry out my teaching duties despite facing various difficulties." In this case, SMK Negeri 1 Stabat needs to build a mentoring and support program for teachers (e.g., mentoring, a forum for sharing difficulties, and access to counseling), so that when teachers face various obstacles, they still feel supported and motivated to carry out their teaching duties well.
3. The work ethic with the lowest score statement is "I have a high commitment to teaching and student development duties." SMK Negeri 1 Stabat needs to provide awards and professional development opportunities (such as training, workshops, or strategic job promotions) for teachers who demonstrate a high commitment to teaching and student

development, so that this commitment is maintained and becomes an example for other teachers.

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