

Unpacking Teacher Performance: The Moderating Effect of Principal Leadership on Job Satisfaction, Motivation, and Religiosity

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ABSTRACT

Teacher performance is significantly shaped by factors such as job satisfaction, work motivation, and religiosity. This research seeks to evaluate the impact of these three elements on the effectiveness of educators at private junior high schools in Kudus Regency, while also investigating how principals' transformational leadership acts as a moderator. The foundation of this study lies in the critical need to elevate educational standards, which rely heavily on teacher efficacy, assuming interplay between psychological, spiritual, and leadership dynamics within schools.

A quantitative design was adopted, utilizing surveys with 170 teachers from private junior secondary schools, drawn via proportional random sampling from a total population of 416. Questionnaires, validated for reliability and validity, were used to gather data, which was then processed through Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis via SmartPLS software.

Findings reveal that job satisfaction and religiosity positively and significantly influence teacher performance, in contrast to work motivation, which shows no notable impact. Transformational leadership moderates the links between job satisfaction, work motivation, and performance, though it diminishes the influence of religiosity. These insights highlight the vital function of transformational leadership in optimizing teachers' psychological and spiritual aspects to boost outcomes in private educational settings.

Keyword: Job satisfaction, work motivation, religiosity, teacher performance, Transformational leadership

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INTRODUCTION

Educators play a pivotal role in driving the effectiveness of learning activities and realizing educational objectives, particularly in advancing national education quality. Beyond classroom instruction, teacher performance includes handling administrative tasks, pursuing professional growth, and fostering a positive school atmosphere. It is shaped by internal elements like professional skills and motivation, alongside external influences such as leadership, workplace conditions, and personal values including religiosity. Thus, investigating these performance determinants is crucial for elevating educational standards.

One factor that can influence teacher performance is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction refers to the degree of positive feelings an individual has toward their job, encompassing various aspects such as salary, relationships with colleagues, and working conditions. Robbins, S. P., & Judge (2013) stated that job satisfaction is a key factor in improving organizational performance. Suwuh et al. (2017) reported that some junior secondary school teachers experience dissatisfaction and low motivation in

their work. This indicates that job satisfaction and work motivation among private school teachers remain relatively low.

In the educational context, teacher job satisfaction directly affects teaching enthusiasm and the quality of instruction provided to students. A study by Luthans (2006) also demonstrated that job satisfaction contributes to improved individual performance across various sectors, including education. In addition, work motivation is another important factor influencing teacher performance. Motivation refers to the internal drive that encourages individuals to achieve specific goals. According to Herzberg (1959), high work motivation leads to optimal performance, as individuals feel encouraged to achieve success and organizational objectives. In education, strong work motivation contributes to enhanced teacher professionalism and more effective learning processes. Hodgkinson (2007) Deci and Ryan (2002), through their Self-Determination Theory, emphasized that intrinsic motivation characterized by autonomy and competence plays a crucial role in improving individual performance.

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Research by Hodgkinson (2007) indicates that religiosity values can influence professional behavior and individual performance within organizations. Didik and Kardoyo (2020: 109) defined religiosity as a system of beliefs, values, and behaviors derived from belief in God Almighty, aimed at achieving human well-being both in this world and the hereafter. Religiosity values refer to the extent to which individuals internalize and practice religious teachings in their daily lives.

These include belief in God, religious practices, and behaviors reflecting religious principles such as ethics, morality, and social responsibility. Religiosity values influence attitudes, motivation, and interactions with the surrounding environment, including within professional contexts such as education.

Job satisfaction, work motivation, and religiosity values play important roles in enhancing teacher performance; however, the influence of these factors may vary depending on the moderating role of school leadership. The principal's leadership functions as either a driving force or a barrier to the implementation and achievement of educational goals. Bass (1990), in his theory of transformational leadership, asserted that principals with a transformational leadership style can motivate and inspire teachers to achieve higher performance.

Schein (2010) further emphasized that effective transformational leadership can create a supportive climate that facilitates teachers' professional development. Therefore, principals' transformational leadership plays a crucial role in moderating the relationships between job satisfaction, work motivation, religiosity values, and teacher performance. Didik and Eni (2018: 28) identified several characteristics of transformational leadership, including: (1) acting as an agent of change; (2) trusting subordinates; (3) encouraging courage and risk-taking; (4) being a lifelong learner; (5) possessing the ability to manage complexity and uncertainty within organizations; and (6) demonstrating visionary leadership by anticipating future developments and adapting to advances in science and technology. Principals are expected to possess at least these fundamental characteristics of transformational leadership. In the dynamic landscape of modern education, teachers serve as vital pillars who must continually evolve to meet evolving societal demands and adapt to shifting environmental challenges. This requires them to exhibit high levels of professionalism, coupled with deep expertise in their subject areas and a nuanced understanding of diverse student profiles, including their learning styles, backgrounds, and needs.

As stipulated in Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia No. 19 of 2017, teachers are defined as professional educators tasked with core responsibilities across early childhood, primary, and secondary levels. These duties encompass educating and instructing students, providing guidance and direction, conducting training sessions, and performing assessments and evaluations to gauge progress and foster growth. Such

multifaceted roles underscore the teacher's position not merely as a knowledge transmitter but as a holistic developer of young minds, ensuring alignment with national educational goals amid rapid technological and cultural changes. Private junior secondary schools in Kudus Regency vary in terms of quality, achievement, and overall conditions. These differences are influenced by school management and foundation policies. There are 26 private junior secondary schools distributed across nine districts in Kudus Regency. Based on official data from the Kudus Regency Office of Education, Youth, and Sports, all 26 private junior secondary schools have undergone accreditation with varying results. Five schools received an "excellent" accreditation status, indicating comprehensive compliance with educational quality standards, including curriculum, learning processes, and supporting resources. This status reflects the schools' success in creating conducive learning environments and implementing effective and efficient educational management. Seven schools obtained a "good" accreditation status, suggesting compliance with minimum government standards but indicating room for further improvement, particularly in teacher quality, facilities, and learning management. Meanwhile, fourteen schools received a "fair" accreditation status, signaling the need for comprehensive quality improvement to better meet national education standards.

The current conditions of private junior secondary schools in Kudus Regency have not fully met expectations. In terms of job satisfaction, many teachers lack a sense of pride in their institutions. Limited recognition of teacher contributions, inadequate welfare, high workloads, and restricted opportunities for professional development contribute to low job satisfaction. These conditions are exacerbated by less harmonious working relationships and school policies that have not adequately supported work-life balance. Teacher work motivation is primarily sustained by intrinsic motivation, such as a personal calling to teach. However, this motivation has not been sufficiently reinforced by principals' leadership. Limited recognition, inadequate learning facilities, and scarce professional development opportunities have weakened teacher motivation and encouraged some teachers to seek more supportive work environments. The implementation of religiosity values in private schools has also been uneven. Although some schools and principals strive to instill religious values, these values are not fully reflected in teachers' work ethic, commitment, and professionalism. Limited appreciation of performance further contributes to weak discipline, responsibility, and interpersonal relationships within the school environment.

Teacher performance continues to face various challenges, particularly due to limited facilities, insufficient recognition, and a lack of feedback from principals.

These conditions hinder teachers' ability to improve instructional quality and classroom management effectiveness. Low job satisfaction and work motivation

result in some teachers performing their duties merely to fulfill obligations, without a drive for innovation.

Meanwhile, school leadership in private junior secondary schools in Kudus Regency has not fully demonstrated transformational leadership characteristics. Leadership styles that rely heavily on personal experience, limited support for teacher professional development, and insufficient capacity to create conducive working environments prevent principals from optimally enhancing job satisfaction, motivation, religiosity values, and teacher performance. The present research is motivated by conflicting results from prior studies, highlighting notable gaps in the literature on how job satisfaction, work motivation, religiosity, and transformational leadership influence performance outcomes. Empirical evidence remains divided, particularly regarding job satisfaction's role. For instance, several investigations have concluded that job satisfaction exerts no significant impact on employee or teacher performance (Annisa, Setyawan, & Susila, 2017; Nurhandayani, 2022; Sofyan, Prasada, & Akbar, 2020). These findings suggest that other factors might overshadow satisfaction in driving productivity. Conversely, Widayati et al. (2020) demonstrated a substantial positive relationship between job satisfaction and teacher effectiveness, implying contextual variables could moderate this link. Such discrepancies underscore the necessity for targeted studies in specific settings, like private schools in Indonesia, to reconcile these contradictions and refine theoretical models. Addressing these gaps can inform policy and leadership strategies to optimize educator performance amid diverse psychological and organizational influences.

Similar inconsistencies are observed regarding work motivation. Some studies concluded that work motivation has no significant effect on performance (Widjaja & Ginanjar, 2022; Hidayat, 2021; Pragiwani, Lestari, & Benny, 2020), while others found a positive influence (Aprida, Fitria, & Nurkhalis, 2020; Harmendi, Lian, & Wardarita, 2021). Inconsistencies are also found in studies examining the effect of religiosity on performance. Several studies reported no significant effect (Afriani, 2016; Huzaini, Rokan, & Syahriza, 2023), whereas others demonstrated a positive influence (Amrullah, 2008; Fathur & Mas'ud, 2022; Suhanda et al., 2022). In contrast, findings related to transformational leadership are relatively consistent, with numerous studies confirming its positive and significant effect on performance (Wote & Patalatu, 2019; Rifa'i, 2020; Hutagalung et al., 2020; Efendi, Sunaryo, & Harijanto, 2023). These inconsistencies indicate the presence of research gaps that warrant further investigation, particularly within different organizational and educational contexts.

Based on the identified research gaps, this study aims to address these gaps by exploring how transformational leadership moderates the effects of job satisfaction, work motivation, and religiosity values on teacher performance in private junior secondary schools in Kudus Regency area that has received limited attention in previous studies.

Theoretical gaps further indicate differing perspectives regarding which factors most strongly influence performance, whether internal factors such as personality or self-efficacy, or external factors such as organizational justice or job resources. The relationships among job satisfaction, work motivation, religiosity, and teacher performance have been explained through various theories, including: (1) Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), which distinguishes motivator and hygiene factors influencing job satisfaction and motivation; (2) Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964), which posits that performance depends on individuals' expectations of outcomes; and (3) Value Theory (Schwartz, 1992), which emphasizes the influence of religiosity values on work behavior. Integrating these theories provides a more comprehensive framework for explaining factors influencing teacher motivation and performance, particularly when religiosity values are considered as a key variable strengthening intrinsic motivation and professional commitment in values-based educational contexts.

However, limited studies have integrated these three theories into a single comprehensive model to explain teacher performance. In particular, research linking religiosity values to performance within Islamic educational institutions and modern pesantren contexts remains scarce. Therefore, a theoretical gap exists in testing a more holistic model using a moderating approach.

Teacher Performance

Baranwi and Arifin (2020: 14) define teacher performance as the level of success achieved by teachers in carrying out educational duties in accordance with their responsibilities and authority, based on predetermined performance standards within a specific period, in order to achieve educational objectives. Sinungan (2018: 55) states that teacher performance is influenced by various factors related both to the teachers themselves and to the school work environment and government policies, including education, experience, work enthusiasm, work attitudes and ethics, workload, achievement motivation, discipline, supervision, industrial relations, technology, production facilities, and compensation. In this study, the indicators of teacher performance consist of: (1) Lesson planning, referring to teachers' ability to design and develop lesson plans aligned with the curriculum and students' needs; (2) Instructional implementation, reflecting teachers' ability to conduct learning activities in accordance with plans, apply varied teaching methods, and facilitate the achievement of learning objectives; (3) Classroom management, referring to teachers' ability to create and maintain a conducive learning environment, including managing discipline and student motivation; (4) Teaching skills, encompassing teachers' ability to deliver learning materials clearly, engagingly, and understandably; (5) Use of instructional media, referring to the utilization of various learning media such as technology, teaching aids, and other learning resources; (6) Learning assessment, referring to teachers' ability to design and implement objective and

diverse assessments and provide constructive feedback to students;(7) Learning evaluation, referring to teachers' ability to evaluate learning outcomes and identify improvement strategies for future instructional quality;(8) Communication with students, referring to teachers' ability to communicate effectively, both in explaining materials and in listening and responding to students' needs;(9) Providing student motivation, referring to teachers' ability to encourage students' learning enthusiasm to achieve learning goals;(10) Professional development, referring to teachers' participation in self-development activities such as training, seminars, or research to enhance professional competence;(11) Implementation of character values, referring to teachers' ability to instill positive character values such as honesty, discipline, cooperation, and responsibility;(12) Relationships with colleagues, referring to teachers' ability to collaborate and build positive relationships with colleagues to create a supportive school environment;(13) Involvement in school activities, referring to participation in non-instructional activities such as extracurricular programs and school meetings;(14) Ability to face challenges;(15) Time management, referring to teachers' ability to manage time effectively in instructional and non-instructional tasks;(16) Adaptability to change, referring to teachers' ability to adapt to changes in curriculum, technology, or educational policies; and(17) Use of technology in learning, referring to teachers' ability to utilize technology to support and enhance the learning process, such as educational applications, online platforms, and digital tools.

These indicators can be used to assess the extent of teacher performance in fulfilling their professional roles and can be measured through observation, evaluation of learning outcomes, student feedback, and analysis of relevant documents.

Job Satisfaction

Msuya (2016) emphasizes that job satisfaction plays a crucial role in upholding human resource quality and ensuring long-term organizational viability. Beyond mere contentment, it fosters employee engagement, reduces turnover, and boosts overall productivity, serving as a cornerstone for sustainable growth. In educational contexts, for instance, satisfied teachers are more likely to innovate in classrooms, commit to professional development, and contribute positively to school cultures, ultimately enhancing student outcomes and institutional resilience amid challenges like resource constraints or policy shifts. Sutrisno (2019: 74) defines job satisfaction as teachers' attitudes toward their work, which are related to work conditions, collaboration among teachers, rewards received, and factors concerning both physical and psychological aspects. Previous studies have found that, in educational contexts, many teachers experience job dissatisfaction, leading to relatively high turnover rates that negatively affect school quality (Jha, 2014: 3). Mas'ud (2018: 80) identifies indicators of teacher job satisfaction as follows: (1) Satisfaction with salary and work, where schools provide salaries and allowances

commensurate with teachers' responsibilities and performance, and promotions are granted to high-achieving teachers;(2) Satisfaction with colleagues, referring to positive relationships with fellow teachers and recognition of individual and group achievements by school principals. In this study, indicators of job satisfaction among private junior secondary school teachers in Kudus Regency include:(1) Working conditions, including available school facilities such as comfortable classrooms, adequate teaching equipment, and a supportive environment;(2) Rewards and recognition, both formal and informal, from principals, students, parents, and colleagues;(3) Salary and allowances, including the adequacy of wages, benefits, and incentives relative to teachers' expectations;(4) Professional development opportunities, such as training, seminars, and professional development programs;(5) Relationships with students;(6) Relationships with colleagues and management;(7) Workload, including satisfaction with teaching hours, administrative responsibilities, and extracurricular duties;(8) Policies and managerial systems;(9) Work-life balance; and(10) Physical conditions and health.

The Nature of Work Motivation

According to Uno (2019: 72), work motivation refers to internal and external drives that encourage individuals to perform actions, reflected in both internal and external dimensions. Wibowo (2019: 23) identifies the following indicators of teacher work motivation:(1) Achievement motivation, referring to opportunities for career advancement, higher education, and professional training;(2) Affiliation motivation, referring to opportunities to support colleagues' professional development and receive recognition from society for the teaching profession; and(3) Power motivation, referring to opportunities to influence decision-making and leadership roles. Herzberg (1959) proposed work motivation indicators consisting of:(1) Motivator factors, including recognition, responsibility, opportunities for growth, and achievement; and(2) Hygiene factors, including comfortable working conditions, positive relationships with colleagues, and appropriate policies and salaries.

Based on the above discussion, the indicators of work motivation in this study include satisfaction with salary and benefits, recognition and appreciation, working conditions, relationships with colleagues and supervisors, career development opportunities, responsibility and autonomy, job goals and challenges, a sense of achievement, job stability and security, self-development, and meaningfulness of work. These indicators are interrelated and may directly or indirectly influence an individual's level of work motivation.

Religiosity Values

Glock and Stark define religiosity as a structured system of symbols, beliefs, values, and behaviors centered on matters considered meaningful (Khairudin & Mukhlis, 2019). Didik and Kardoyo (2020) emphasize that religiosity has a positive impact on teacher performance.

Teachers with high religiosity tend to demonstrate sincerity, improved performance despite limited welfare, and a strong sense of teaching as a calling, leading them to perform their duties with enthusiasm, discipline, and responsibility. Batson and Schoenrade (1991) view religiosity as part of universal values shared across cultures and religions. Values such as compassion, justice, and peace taught by major religions provide moral guidance for individuals regardless of religious background. Religiosity also encompasses deep understanding while remaining grounded in reality, high discipline, balance in life—particularly in relationships, work, and spirituality—and usefulness to others. In Islam, individuals are encouraged to benefit others, as the best people are those who are most beneficial to humanity. From the author's perspective, religiosity is not merely a spiritual identity but also a force that shapes mindset, work ethic, and social interactions. Deep religiosity should be reflected not only in religious practices but also in commitment to moral values, responsibility, and concern for others. In professional contexts, particularly in education, religiosity can serve as a primary driver motivating teachers to perform their duties with dedication and exemplary conduct.

Transformational Leadership of School Principals

According to Barnett, McCormick, and Conner (2000), studies on the impact of transformational leadership have been conducted by Leithwood (1994); Leithwood, Dart, Jantzi, and Steinbech (1993); and Silins (1994). The findings of these studies suggest that this leadership style contributes to school restructuring initiatives and, based on teachers' perceptions, positively influences improvements in student learning outcomes.

Moedhr and Anderman (1993), Moedhr and Fyans (1989), as well as Moedhr and Midgley (1991, 1996) developed strong empirical evidence indicating that mediating variables and learning culture encourage schools to become environments in which teachers hold positive attitudes toward their work and students are motivated to learn. Teachers' positive attitudes in the classroom do not

emerge independently but are influenced, among other factors, by the transformational leadership style of school principals. However, this contribution is mediated by other individuals and organizational factors, such as teacher commitment, teaching performance, instructional practices, and learning culture. Therefore, transformational leadership emphasizes the transformation of teachers as the frontline agents of learning. The role of teachers as educators is increasingly oriented toward leadership in the teaching and learning process, requiring them to plan, implement, organize, and supervise instructional activities. In this context, principals' transformational leadership plays a strategic role in empowering teachers to perform these functions effectively.

The indicators of principals' transformational leadership, as proposed by Bass (1985), consist of: (1) Idealized Influence, where principals act as role models for staff and students; (2) Inspirational Motivation, referring to the ability to inspire and motivate followers to achieve shared goals; (3) Intellectual Stimulation, referring to encouraging critical thinking and creativity in decision-making; and

(4) Individualized Consideration, referring to attention to the individual needs and development of team members. Furthermore, Leithwood (1994) identified dimensions and indicators of school leadership as follows: (1) Visionary Leadership, characterized by a clear vision that is effectively communicated; (2) Supportive Leadership, referring to providing support to staff in developing their skills; and (3) Intellectual Stimulation, referring to encouraging innovative thinking in teaching and school management.

In addition, Avolio and Bass (2004) proposed dimensions and indicators of transformational leadership that include: (1) Developing followers' potential, referring to supporting the professional growth of teachers and staff; (2) Building commitment to shared goals, referring to fostering collective commitment to school objectives; and (3) Fostering a positive school culture, referring to creating a positive and collaborative school culture.

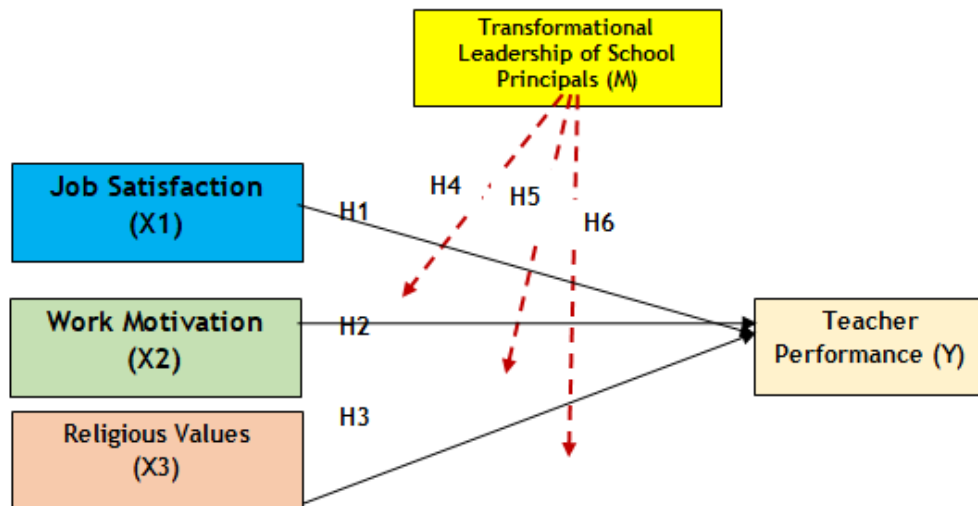


Figure 2 Conceptual Framework

Hypotheses

Based on the conceptual framework above, the hypotheses of this study are as follows:

- 1) Teacher job satisfaction positively influences performance at private junior high schools in Kudus Regency.
- 2) Work motivation exerts a positive impact on teacher performance in private junior secondary schools throughout Kudus Regency.
- 3) Religiosity positively affects teacher performance in private junior high schools in Kudus Regency.
- 4) Principals' transformational leadership moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and teacher performance in private junior secondary schools in Kudus Regency.
- 5) Transformational leadership by school principals moderates the influence of work motivation on teacher performance at private junior high schools in Kudus Regency.
- 6) Principals' transformational leadership moderates the impact of teachers' religiosity on their performance in private junior secondary schools in Kudus Regency..

RESEARCH METHOD

This investigation adopted a quantitative, non-experimental approach through an ex post facto design, focused on exploring causal links between variables without researcher intervention on independents like job satisfaction or religiosity. Such a framework proves ideal for real-world settings where ethical constraints prevent manipulation, allowing retrospective analysis of naturally occurring relationships.

The target population comprised 416 educators from private junior secondary schools across Kudus Regency, Central Java, reflecting a diverse yet accessible group amid Indonesia's vocational education landscape. Using proportional random sampling, 170 teachers were selected to ensure representativeness, minimizing bias while optimizing feasibility yielding a robust sample size exceeding typical PLS-SEM thresholds (e.g., 10 times the largest structural path)

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS (DISCUSSION)

Study Outcomes

Assessment of the Measurement Model (Outer Model)

At the initial stage, Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis was applied as an alternative method of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) capable of handling complex relationships among variables even with relatively small sample sizes and without requiring strict parametric assumptions (Yamin & Kurniawan, 2009).

In the current research, AVE values alongside the square roots of AVE for all constructs are detailed in the accompanying table, demonstrating compliance with these criteria and supporting the measurement model's reliability for subsequent hypothesis testing. Table 1.

Tabel 1. value of AVE

No	Variabel	Nilai AVE	Simpulan
1	Satisfaction (X1)	0,762	0,762 > 0,50
2	Motivation (X2)	0,611	0,611 > 0,50
3	Religiosity (X3)	0,740	0,740 > 0,50
4	Transformational Leadership (M)	0,637	0,637 > 0,637
5	Teacher Performance (Y)	0,652	0,652 > 0,50

Source: Results of SmartPLS 2025 analysis

Based on table 1, all constructs demonstrate AVE values greater than 0.50. The AVE values for job satisfaction (X1), work motivation (X2), religiosity (X3), transformational leadership (M), and teacher performance (Y) indicate good construct validity, as they exceed the minimum threshold of 0.50.

Discriminant Validity Test

Discriminant validity ensures that each indicator more strongly reflects its own construct than any others. A measurement model achieves sufficient discriminant validity when correlations between a construct and its indicators exceed those between the indicators and constructs from other blocks.

Table 2. Results of Discriminant Validity

	Moderating X1*Y	Moderating X2*Y	Moderating X3*Y	Motivation (X2)	Religiosity(X3)	Satisfaction...	Teacher Perfor...	Transformat...
Moderating X1*Y	0.716							
Moderating X2*Y	0.713	0.611						
Moderating X3*Y	0.007	0.005	0.571					
Motivation (X2)	0.253	0.261	-0.499	0.782				
Religiosity(X3)	-0.214	-0.122	-0.402	0.546	0.860			
Satisfaction(X1)	0.384	0.375	-0.422	0.622	0.181	0.873		
Teacher Performan...	0.431	0.447	-0.573	0.693	0.420	0.815	0.807	
Transformational L...	0.414	0.325	-0.416	0.546	0.078	0.923	0.777	0.798

Source: Results of SmartPLS 2025 analysis

As shown in Table 2, the discriminant validity analysis confirms that all latent variables exhibit strong discriminant validity. Specifically, indicators in each construct block load more heavily onto their own constructs compared to those in other blocks, ensuring distinctiveness among variables.

minimizing multicollinearity risks and bolstering model reliability for path analysis.

These results affirm the measurement model's quality, paving the way for reliable structural evaluations in subsequent analyses.

To reinforce this assessment, we applied the Fornell-Larcker criterion, comparing the square root of each construct's Average Variance Extracted (AVE) against inter-construct correlations. This approach, recommended in PLS-SEM literature, verifies that constructs are more closely related to their own measures than to others,

Construct Reliability Test

According to Sekaran (1992), a construct is considered reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value exceeds 0.60. Meanwhile, Henseler et al. (2009) state that an acceptable Rho_A value should also be greater than 0.60. Based on the analysis results, the Cronbach's Alpha and Rho_A values obtained are presented as follows:

Table 3. Construct Validity and Reliability

Variabel	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho_A
Moderating X1*Y	0,985	1,000
Moderating X2*Y	0,973	1,000
Moderating X3*Y	0,950	1,000

<i>Variabel</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>Rho A</i>
<i>Motivation (X2)</i>	0,905	0,920
<i>Religiosity (X3)</i>	0,912	0,913
<i>Satisfacion (X1)</i>	0,955	0,956
<i>Teacher Performance(M)</i>	0,861	0,880
<i>Transformational Leadership (Y)</i>	0,915	0,930

Source: SmartPLS 2025 analysis results

The Smart PLS output results for composite reliability values can be shown in the following table.

Tale 4. composite reliability values

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Crombach's Alpha</i>	<i>Composite Variable</i>
Satisfaction (X1)	0,995	0,956
Motivation (X2)	0,905	0,920
Religiosity (X3)	0,912	0,913
Transformational Leadership (M)	0,915	0,930
Teacher Performance (Y)	0,915	0,930
Moderation X1*Y	0,985	1,000
Moderation X2*Y	0,973	1,000
Moderation X3*Y	0,950	1,000

Source: Results of SmartPLS 2025 analysis

Table 5 Construct Validity and Reliability

<i>Variabel</i>	<i>Composite Variable</i>	<i>Keterangan</i>
SRMR	0,100	According
NFI	0,588	According
Chi Square	3168,871	According
D ULS	5,984	According

Table 6. R-square ValuesTable 4.9 R-square Values

<i>Variabel</i>	<i>R Square</i>	<i>R Square Adjusted</i>
Teacher Performance (Y)	0,849	0,842
Percentage of Influence	84,9%	84,2%

Source: SmartPLS Analysis Results (2025)

Table 4 reveals that the discriminant validity evaluation confirms sufficient distinctiveness for all constructs or latent variables, with indicators in each block loading higher on their own constructs than on those in other blocks. Additionally, validation was strengthened by contrasting the square roots of AVE values against correlations between constructs.

Construct Reliability Test

According to Sekaran (1992), a construct is considered reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value exceeds 0.60. Meanwhile, Henseler et al. (2009) state that an acceptable Rho_A value should also be greater than 0.60. Based on the analysis results, the Cronbach's Alpha and Rho_A values obtained are presented as follows:

As indicated by the R-square values in Table 6, security checks and terminal facilities account for 84.2% of the variance in the teacher performance construct, with the other 15.8% attributed to unexamined factors in this research.

1 Hypothesis Testing

Figure 1 depicts the outcomes of hypothesis testing from this study, along with the overall research model results.

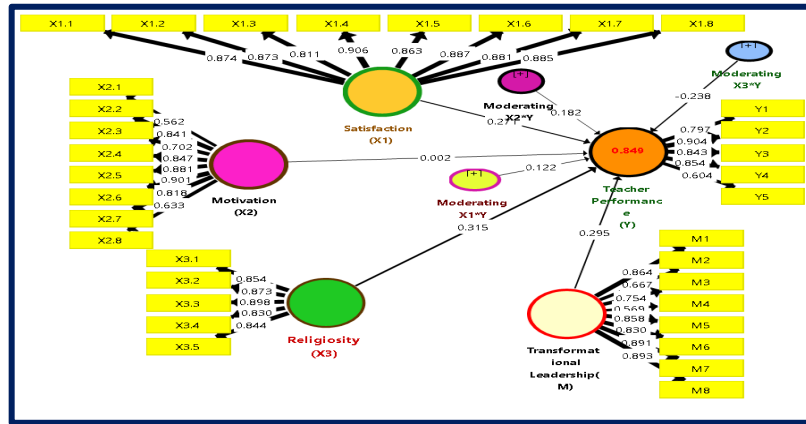


Figure 2 SmartPLS Algorithm Analysis Results

(Source: SmartPLS 2025 analysis results)

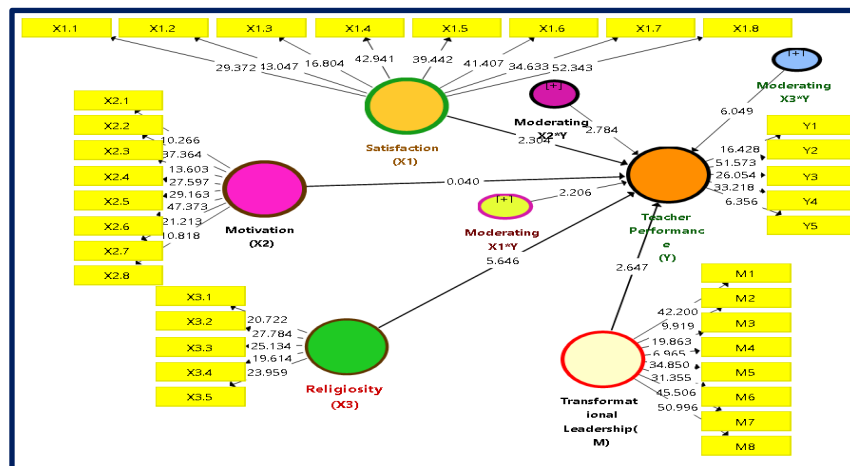


Figure 3 Results of SmartPLS Bootstrapping Analysis

(Source: SmartPLS 2025 analysis results)

Table 7. Path Coefficients Results

Koefisien Jalur						
	Mean, STDEV, T-Values, P-Val...	Keyakinan Interval	Keyakinan Interval Bias-Dik...	Sampel	Salin ke C	
		Sampel A...	Rata-rata...	Standar ...	T Statistik...	P Values
Moderating X1*Y -> Teacher Performance _Y)		0.122	0.154	0.055	2.206	0.029
Moderating X2*Y -> Teacher Performance _Y)		0.182	0.164	0.065	2.784	0.006
Moderating X3*Y -> Teacher Performance _Y)		-0.238	-0.244	0.039	6.049	0.000
Motivation (X2) -> Teacher Performance _Y)		0.002	0.018	0.057	0.040	0.968
Religiosity(X3) -> Teacher Performance _Y)		0.315	0.299	0.056	5.646	0.000
Satisfaction(X1) -> Teacher Performance _Y)		0.271	0.255	0.118	2.304	0.022
Transformational Leadership(M) -> Teacher Perfor...		0.295	0.278	0.111	2.647	0.009

Source: SmartPLS 2025 analysis results

Conclusions of Hypothesis Testing

From the analysis results outlined above, the key findings are as follows:

- 1) The analysis reveals that job satisfaction (X1) has a

statistically significant positive effect on teacher performance (Y). This relationship is robustly supported by a p-value of 0.022, which falls below the conventional threshold of 0.05, indicating strong evidence against the null hypothesis in the context of

private junior secondary schools in Kudus Regency.

- 2) In contrast, work motivation (X2) demonstrates no meaningful impact on teacher performance (Y). With a p-value of 0.968—well above the 0.05 significance level—this finding suggests that variations in motivation levels do not reliably predict changes in teaching effectiveness among educators in these schools.
- 3) Religiosity (X3) exerts a highly significant and positive influence on teacher performance (Y). The extremely low p-value of 0.000 (far less than 0.05) provides compelling statistical confirmation of this effect, underscoring the role of religious values in enhancing instructional outcomes at private junior high schools in Kudus Regency.
- 4) Transformational leadership (M) acts as a significant moderator, amplifying the positive association between job satisfaction (X1) and teacher performance (Y). This moderating role is affirmed by a p-value of 0.029 (< 0.05), highlighting how principals' inspirational leadership styles can intensify the benefits of satisfied teachers.
- 5) Similarly, transformational leadership (M) significantly bolsters the connection between work motivation (X2) and teacher performance (Y). Evidenced by a p-value of 0.006 ($\ll 0.05$), this interaction implies that motivated teachers perform even better under leaders who foster vision, intellectual stimulation, and individualized support.
- 6) Notably, transformational leadership (M) moderates the relationship between religiosity (X3) and teacher performance (Y) in a weakening direction. This is substantiated by a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05) and a negative coefficient of -0.238 , suggesting that while religiosity generally boosts performance, strong transformational leadership may somewhat diminish its independent effect, possibly by channeling influence through leadership dynamics.

DISCUSSION

1. Job Satisfaction Has a Positive Effect on Teacher Performance at Private Junior High Schools in Kudus Regency

On table (Path Coefficients) reveals that job satisfaction exerts a positive and significant influence on teacher performance, evidenced by a p-value of 0.022 (< 0.05) and a moderate effect size of 0.271 (27.1%). This suggests that elevated levels of job satisfaction among teachers correlate with enhanced effectiveness in delivering instructional responsibilities, from lesson planning to student engagement.

This outcome aligns theoretically with Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, positing that fulfillment of physiological, safety, and belongingness requirements propels individuals toward self-actualization, manifesting in superior professional output. Locke (1976) further

supports this by characterizing job satisfaction as a favorable emotional response derived from appraising one's work experiences. Satisfied educators often exhibit greater dedication, allegiance, and accountability, directly elevating their classroom and administrative efficacy. Echoing this, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) distinguishes hygiene factors (preventing dissatisfaction) from motivators like recognition, accomplishments, and autonomy, which actively spur satisfaction and performance gains. In practice, schools can leverage these insights by implementing recognition programs or professional growth opportunities, fostering a cycle of satisfaction-driven excellence, particularly in resource-limited private institutions like those in Kudus Regency. This finding is also consistent with Robbins and Judge (2013), who state that job satisfaction is positively correlated with individual performance within organizations. Previous studies in the field of education have shown that teachers with high job satisfaction tend to exhibit strong work ethics, high dedication, and a strong commitment to teaching and educating students.

Based on the research findings, theoretical foundations, and previous empirical evidence, the researcher argues that in the context of private junior high schools in Kudus Regency, teacher job satisfaction is a crucial factor in enhancing performance. Teachers who feel appreciated, maintain harmonious working relationships, and receive institutional support are more likely to possess strong intrinsic motivation to perform optimally. Thus, job satisfaction serves as a positive driving force that strengthens motivation, commitment, and professionalism in fulfilling educational responsibilities.

2. Work Motivation Does Not Have a Positive Effect on Teacher Performance at Private Junior High Schools in Kudus Regency

The results indicate that work motivation does not have a significant effect on teacher performance, with a p-value of 0.968 (> 0.05) and a very small effect size of 0.002 or 0.2% (see Table 4.10). This suggests that although teachers may possess a certain level of motivation, it is not sufficiently strong to make a meaningful contribution to performance improvement.

Theoretically, motivation is often regarded as a key determinant of performance. According to McClelland (as cited in Suwardi & Joko Utomo, (2011), individuals with strong achievement, power, and affiliation needs tend to be more enthusiastic at work. Similarly, Gibson (as cited in Usmani, 2021) emphasizes that motivation, along with psychological factors, influences performance quality. Locke (1976) also argues that motivation is closely related to job satisfaction and commitment, implying that motivated teachers should theoretically demonstrate higher dedication. However, the findings of this study are consistent with several empirical studies indicating that motivation does not always significantly affect teacher performance. Ika Astuti and Arif Budi Raharjo (2023) and Syamsir (2013) found that factors such as the work environment, workload, job stress, and academic

supervision play a more dominant role in influencing teacher performance than motivation alone.

Based on these findings, the researcher argues that in the context of private junior high schools in Kudus Regency, teacher motivation exists but is insufficient to significantly enhance performance. This may be due to the dominance of external factors such as facility availability, leadership support, work culture, and school management systems. Motivation tends to be personal and internal; therefore, without adequate external support, it is difficult to translate motivation into tangible performance improvements. Accordingly, performance improvement efforts should not focus solely on motivation but also address supporting external factors. Recommended follow-up actions include: (1) Improving school facilities and infrastructure to support instructional activities; (2) Developing effective school leadership through leadership training emphasizing teacher empowerment; (3) Strengthening a positive work culture that promotes collaboration and recognition; (4) Enhancing transparent and fair school management systems; (5) Providing mentoring and professional development programs focused on competence enhancement and stress management; (6) Conducting regular evaluation and monitoring of teacher performance and work conditions.

By integrating internal motivational aspects with supportive external factors, schools can create synergy that significantly improves teacher performance and educational outcomes.

3. Religiosity Has a Positive Effect on Teacher Performance at Private Junior High Schools in Kudus Regency

Analysis from table 7 indicates that religiosity positively and significantly boosts teacher performance, with a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05) and a substantial effect size of 0.315 (31.5%). This points to a clear pattern: teachers exhibiting stronger religiosity deliver superior results in instructional delivery, classroom management, and broader professional duties.

In Indonesia's context, where religious values permeate daily life and education, this finding resonates deeply. Religiosity often instills discipline, ethical decision-making, and a sense of purpose, aligning with theories like Weber's Protestant Ethic, which links spiritual commitment to diligent work. Empirically, pious educators may draw resilience from faith during challenges, enhancing motivation and empathy toward students. Schools can harness this by integrating faith-based professional development, promoting a holistic environment that nurtures both spiritual and pedagogical growth, ultimately elevating overall educational quality. Theoretically, religiosity is viewed as a set of spiritual beliefs and practices that shape individual attitudes and work behaviors. Robbins, S. P., & Judge, (2013) argue that individuals with high religiosity tend to demonstrate discipline, integrity, and a strong work ethic because moral and spiritual values guide their behavior. Gibson (2021)

similarly emphasizes that religiosity serves as a source of spiritual motivation that fosters responsibility, perseverance, and dedication. Consequently, teachers with strong religiosity are motivated to teach sincerely, patiently, and with commitment. Empirical findings support this perspective. Harani (2023) found that religiosity positively influences teacher performance by strengthening intrinsic motivation. Haekal et al. (2022) and Wahyuni et al. (2024) also demonstrated that religiosity enhances loyalty, discipline, and commitment, leading to optimal performance. Studies by Widiyono et al. (2020) and Al Mukalfi et al. (2022) further confirm the positive relationship between religiosity and teaching quality in both public schools and madrasahs.

Based on the findings, theory, and previous research, the researcher argues that religiosity plays a significant role in improving teacher performance in private junior high schools in Kudus Regency. Religiosity not only reflects spiritual identity but also shapes work ethics characterized by discipline, responsibility, and dedication. Teachers who view their profession as a form of worship tend to demonstrate greater commitment in lesson planning, instructional delivery, and collaboration, thereby enhancing overall performance quality.

4. Transformational Leadership of the Principal as a Moderator of the Relationship between Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Teacher Performance

Table 7 confirms that principals' transformational leadership significantly moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and teacher performance, yielding a p-value of 0.029 (< 0.05) and a modest effect size of 0.122 (12.2%). In essence, teachers' job satisfaction translates into peak performance more effectively when principals apply transformational leadership, channeling positive emotions into tangible instructional and professional outcomes.

This aligns seamlessly with Bass and Avolio's (1994) framework, which outlines four core components—idealized influence (serving as role models), inspirational motivation (articulating compelling visions), intellectual stimulation (challenging assumptions), and individualized consideration (personalized mentoring). Such leaders cultivate supportive climates that inspire innovation, boost morale, and personalize support, transforming job satisfaction from passive contentment into dynamic drivers of excellence. Robbins, S. P., & Judge, (2013) reinforce this by noting how transformational approaches build trust, loyalty, and extra-role behaviors, amplifying subordinate effectiveness.

Empirical support abounds: Kesumawati and Kristiawan (2019) demonstrated transformational leadership's dual role in directly enhancing performance while bolstering motivation and satisfaction effects. Setyorini and Suhairi (2022) observed similar strengthening among private MTs teachers in Batang Regency, while Ika Astuti and Arif Budi Raharjo (2023) highlighted its direct and interactive benefits. Lisniasari (2024) further showed how

recognition and empowerment via this leadership elevate satisfaction, spurring optimal effort.

In private junior high schools of Kudus Regency, these patterns suggest principals' transformational style is pivotal for leveraging job satisfaction amid resource constraints, informing targeted training to foster visionary, empathetic leadership that maximizes educator potential. Job satisfaction inherently encourages teachers to perform better; however, when principals are able to demonstrate transformational leadership by providing inspiration, emotional support, and personal recognition job satisfaction becomes more meaningful and is converted into higher levels of performance. Thus, transformational leadership functions as a catalyst that transforms job satisfaction into optimal performance.

5 Transformational Leadership of the Principal as a Moderator of the Relationship between Motivation and Teacher Performance

The results of the study show that the principal's transformational leadership moderates the effect of motivation on teacher performance, with a p-value of 0.006 (< 0.05) and an effect size of 0.182 or 18.2% (see Table 4.10). This means that teachers' work motivation will have a stronger impact on performance improvement when supported by effective transformational leadership. In other words, teachers with high motivation will demonstrate more optimal performance when the principal exhibits inspirational, supportive, and empowering leadership.

These results align closely with the foundational principles of transformational leadership, first conceptualized by Burns (1978) as a process elevating both leaders and followers toward higher moral purpose, and later refined by Bass (1985) and Bass and Avolio (1994) into a structured model. This approach centers on four interconnected dimensions that empower principals to elevate teaching staff beyond routine tasks.

Idealized influence positions leaders as ethical role models whose integrity and vision inspire trust and emulation. Inspirational motivation involves articulating compelling goals that energize teachers, fostering optimism and collective purpose during challenges like curriculum reforms. Intellectual stimulation challenges educators to question assumptions, experiment with innovative methods, and solve problems creatively, sparking professional growth. Finally, individualized consideration provides tailored mentoring, recognizing unique strengths and needs to build personalized development paths.

In practice, principals applying these dimensions create dynamic school cultures where teachers feel valued and motivated, translating inspiration into measurable performance gains—such as improved lesson delivery and student engagement. This framework proves especially relevant in Indonesian private schools, where resource limitations demand visionary leadership to unlock educator potential amid evolving demands. Within the framework of motivation theory, R Herzberg (1959)

emphasized that intrinsic motivators are more effective when supported by a conducive work environment. Transformational leadership creates such an environment, ensuring that teachers' motivation is not only maintained but also directed toward tangible improvements in performance.

The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Hasnawati and Sunarto (2023), who demonstrated that transformational leadership strengthens teachers' intrinsic motivation in improving performance. Research by Setyorini and Suhairi (2022) on private MTs teachers in Batang Regency also proves that transformational leadership significantly strengthens the relationship between work motivation and performance. Likewise, a study by I Made Dwi Adiartha (2021) revealed that the combination of work motivation and transformational leadership explains a very high proportion of the improvement in teacher performance, underscoring the importance of the moderating role of transformational leadership.

Based on the research findings, theoretical perspectives, and previous studies, the researcher argues that in the context of private junior high schools in Kudus Regency, transformational leadership plays a vital role in optimizing teachers' motivation. Teachers' motivation does not necessarily translate automatically into maximum performance, especially when schools face limited resources or external challenges. However, through transformational leadership, motivation can be directed, strengthened, and translated into productive performance. School principals who excel at inspiring their teams, offering personalized mentoring, and fostering innovative practices create environments where teachers feel deeply valued, energized, and dedicated to elevating instructional excellence. For instance, through regular feedback sessions or collaborative problem-solving workshops, such leaders transform routine duties into meaningful pursuits, boosting morale and ownership over classroom results.

Consequently, transformational leadership acts as a vital catalyst, amplifying the pathway from teachers' intrinsic work motivation to tangible performance gains. Rather than motivation remaining an abstract trait, it channels into proactive behaviors like adopting new teaching strategies or going beyond standard expectations ultimately driving sustained improvements in student learning and school effectiveness, especially in demanding private education settings.

6 Transformational Leadership of the Principal as a Moderator of the Relationship between Teachers' Religiosity Values and Teacher Performance

The study's findings reveal that principals' transformational leadership exerts a negative moderating influence on the relationship between religiosity values and teacher performance, supported by a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05) and an effect size of -0.238 (-23.8%). Although religiosity independently drives stronger teaching effectiveness through personal ethics, discipline, and

purpose, this positive link weakens substantially when principals employ transformational styles.

This interaction suggests a substitution effect: highly religious teachers often rely on internal spiritual motivation for consistent performance, but visionary leadership—emphasizing inspiration, innovation, and personalized goals may redirect focus toward external organizational priorities, reducing the relative impact of faith-based drive. In faith-infused private junior high schools like those in Kudus Regency, where religiosity typically fosters resilience amid challenges, transformational approaches might inadvertently create motivational overlap, prompting educators to prioritize leadership visions over purely spiritual imperatives. Practically, this highlights the need for balanced strategies integrating spiritual affirmation into leadership practices to prevent dilution, ensuring religiosity complements rather than competes with administrative direction for optimal holistic performance.

This finding is in line with the study by Yuwanita Suhanda (2024) at SMPIT Adzkie Padang, which found that although religiosity positively influences teacher performance, its effect weakens when moderated by certain forms of transformational leadership. This indicates the potential for value conflict between a form of transformational leadership that is target-oriented and teachers' religious orientations, which emphasize spiritual and moral aspects. Several other studies also suggest that while transformational leadership is effective in promoting innovation and change, if it is not accompanied by sensitivity to teachers' cultural and religious values, it may generate resistance and even reduce the contribution of religiosity to performance.

Based on the research results, theoretical perspectives, and empirical findings, the researcher argues that in the context of private junior high schools in Kudus Regency, transformational leadership does influence the relationship between religiosity and teacher performance, but in a negative direction. Teachers with high levels of religiosity already possess a strong foundation of work ethic, moral commitment, and spiritual motivation. When transformational leadership emphasizes accelerated innovation or high performance targets, some teachers experience value tension, which reduces the effectiveness of religiosity in enhancing performance. Therefore, principals as transformational leaders need to be more prudent and adaptive in managing teachers' religiosity values. Leadership that is able to integrate a vision of change with respect for spiritual values will help prevent conflict and, instead, strengthen the positive relationship between religiosity and teacher performance.

Novelty of the Research

The novelty of this study lies in several key aspects: First, the moderating role of school principals' leadership. This finding represents a new contribution because most previous studies only examined the direct influence of leadership on teacher performance, without highlighting its dual role as both a strengthening and weakening factor in the relationships among psychological and spiritual variables. Second, the integration of religiosity as a primary variable. Incorporating religiosity into a quantitative model of leadership and work psychology represents a novel approach that enriches the field of educational management studies, particularly in the context of value-based religious schools. Third, confirmation and challenge to classical theory. The findings indicate the need for a new understanding of teacher motivation within the context of private junior high schools in Kudus. Fourth, contextual and local contribution. This study provides specific insights into how leadership and motivation theories are applied in practice, generating findings that can serve as references for developing locally-informed school management policies.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion, the conclusions are as follows:

- 1) Job satisfaction has a significant effect on teacher performance at private junior high schools in Kudus Regency, indicating that higher levels of job satisfaction lead to better performance.
- 2) Work motivation does not have a significant effect on teacher performance, suggesting that motivation alone is insufficient to improve performance without support from external factors.
- 3) Religiosity positively affects teacher performance, with moral and spiritual values serving as the foundation for work ethic and professional dedication.
- 4) Transformational leadership moderates (strengthens) the effect of job satisfaction on teacher performance, meaning that higher job satisfaction has an even greater impact on performance when supported by transformational leadership.
- 5) Transformational leadership strengthens the influence of work motivation on teacher performance, indicating that teacher motivation is more effective when guided by inspiring and empowering leadership.
- 6) Transformational leadership weakens the effect of religiosity on teacher performance, as a strong innovation-oriented leadership approach may sometimes conflict with teachers' religiosity, which emphasizes spiritual balance.

Theoretically, this research adds value by validating principals' leadership as a key moderator that shapes how job satisfaction, work motivation, and religiosity impact teacher performance. The findings enrich educational leadership theory, particularly in the context of the interaction between psychological and spiritual factors, which have rarely been studied together. Therefore, this research expands the understanding that leadership functions not only as a direct factor but also as both a strengthening and weakening moderator in the dynamics of these variables.

From a practical perspective, the study emphasizes the importance of school principals in effectively managing teacher satisfaction and motivation while respecting teachers' religiosity. Private schools in Kudus Regency can use these findings to develop more targeted leadership strategies, such as integrating programs that enhance job satisfaction, strengthen motivation, and honor teachers' religious values within managerial practices. Additionally, leadership training and development programs for principals should be enhanced so that they can effectively serve as moderators to strengthen teacher motivation and satisfaction, ultimately improving performance.

This study also has policy implications, particularly for the Kudus Regency Education Office and related institutions. The findings can serve as a basis for developing policies focused on enhancing the leadership capacity of school principals, especially in fostering leadership styles that respond to teachers' needs. Policies that promote the emotional, psychological, and spiritual well-being of teachers are expected to result in more sustainable improvements in teacher performance.

Research limitations, such as the scope being limited to private junior high schools in Kudus Regency, should be considered in future studies.

Subsequent research is expected to expand the coverage to include public schools and other education levels, enabling the examination of the consistency of findings in more diverse contexts. Additionally, other variables that may affect teacher performance, such as academic supervision, work environment, or organizational support can be incorporated to provide a more comprehensive understanding.

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