

# Work Experience as an Intermediary: The Influence of Work Motivation and Transformational Leadership on Teacher Performance

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## Abstract

This study aims to determine and analyze the effect of work motivation and transformational leadership on the performance of kindergarten teachers in Kupang City, with work experience as an intermediary variable. This type of research is descriptive quantitative research. A total of 190 kindergarten teachers who participated in this study were selected based on the Krejcie table with a significance level of 5%. This research instrument used a Google Form questionnaire. Hypothesis testing uses a normality test, significance test, linearity test, multicollinearity test, heteroscedasticity test, coefficient of determination test, and Sobel test. The results of this study indicate that better work motivation and the application of transformational leadership can improve teacher performance through work experience. With good work motivation from a teacher, it will be a driving force in improving teacher performance. The better a principal who applies aspects of transformational leadership well can create a supportive work environment to increase teacher effectiveness. Work experience is also an important factor in improving teacher performance, where teachers who are new to teaching show better performance in matters related to current topics of various general knowledge. Principals are advised to support training and professional development programs for teachers so that they can share experiences that then improve teacher performance. For further research, it is expected to explore other factors that affect teacher performance.

## Keywords

Teacher Performance; Transformational Leadership; Work Experience; Work Motivation

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the main issues often raised in Indonesia's education system is teacher performance. Teachers have an important role in shaping students' personalities and skills, and excellent performance standards significantly impact the country's education progress. The work motivation and leadership of the principal in an educational institution and work experience can influence how well education is implemented there.

Teacher performance reflects the teacher's workability, as seen in his work performance and duties. If a teacher's workability is good, his performance will also be higher. Vice versa, if a teacher's



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workability is not good, then his performance will also be lower. Teacher performance can be seen and measured based on specifications or competency criteria that each teacher must possess; related to teacher performance, the form of behavior in question is the teacher's activities in the learning process, namely how the teacher plans to learn, carries out learning activities, and assesses learning outcomes (Kholis, 2022); (Pratiwi et al., 2021); (Mulyani & Wiarta, 2021).

Several factors, such as salary, facilities and infrastructure, work environment, teaching ability, community relations, discipline, and work climate, also influence efforts to improve teacher performance. Principal leadership and motivation can also affect teacher performance, where the better the motivation of someone at work, the better the performance. Vice versa, the lower the motivation, the more difficult it will be to achieve optimal educational goals (Alfrida Retnodiani & Hartono, 2023); (Pratiwi et al., 2021); (Rianahsari et al., 2023); (Suskawationo et al., 2021); (Maknun et al., 2023).

Although teacher performance is one of the drives that support the achievement of learning objectives in educational institutions, in reality, the performance of existing teachers is not optimal, (Paizal et al., 2019); (Eldiana Harahap et al., 2023). Research conducted by (Wijayanto et al., 2021) Shows that work motivation is proven to significantly and positively affect teacher performance. The positive regression coefficient calculation results produce a significance value of  $0.000 < \text{the } t \text{ table value of } 0.05$ , which indicates that the better the teacher's work motivation, the better the teacher's performance. This is in line with the results of research conducted by (Jumiati et al., 2022), showing a significant influence between work motivation and teacher performance. Motivation can be formed from an employee's attitude in dealing with situations. Owned motivation can move teachers to achieve predetermined goals, and teachers with high work motivation will tend to feel comfortable and excited at work, resulting in good performance.

In addition, Yulk's research shows that transformational leadership is also defined as a leadership style with methods of encouraging important changes in the perspectives and assumptions of team members and making them committed to predetermined goals. Transformational leadership style in leading a school has a very important role in teacher performance. This is supported by the results of previous research, where the more appropriate transformational leadership style will support teacher performance for the better. A good transformational leadership style will support teacher performance to be able to adapt to various developments and new knowledge (Hsieh et al., 2022); (Arman et al., 2023); (Efendi et al., 2023); (Mutoharoh et al., 2023); (Jaya, 2021).

Robbins and Timothy stated that work experience is based on the knowledge and skills possessed by teachers. The period of work or the period the teacher has been working and the type of work done during a certain period is the basis of a person's work experience. In line with this, Sedarmayanti states that work experience is a skill a person has from his working life. The longer the working hours, the more he knows about working life (Eni, Razak, & Dandu, 2022).

Various efforts to create good performance are not easy because, in reality, there are still many teachers who have not mastered their management skills and expertise in their work, which can be caused by lack of or even no work experience (Ode et al., 2023). Interestingly, Topchyan and Woehler's study found that length of work experience did not affect teacher work engagement as it relates to teacher performance (Täht et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the initial research showed that the principal's leadership style is still not good. This is because teachers see that the principal's leadership is still not good, and the principal does not cooperate with teachers in preparing lesson plans. The principal is also not open about other matters related to the school, such as school development plans. The principal is also considered less assertive in disciplining teachers who are often late and still less than optimal when working.

Based on the results of previous research, it is known that poor leadership factors can cause low teacher performance. An educational institution must have a leader who can carry out activities related

to the institution's scope. Regarding the influence of leadership roles on teacher performance, of course, it cannot be separated from the leadership of school institutions as a way of guiding, motivating, and guiding all elements in the group, including teachers, students, parents of students, and other related parties to achieve the expected goals and enable teacher performance to run optimally. Principal leadership can create a conducive school climate so teachers, students, and other education personnel can properly carry out their duties. The principal's leadership style is one of the external factors that can affect teacher performance (Täht et al., 2023; Kadarsih et al., 2020); Maknun et al., 2023).

The researcher believes a more thorough investigation of how these three variables can enhance teacher performance is needed in light of the previously provided explanation and some gaps in the issues faced by kindergarten teachers in Kupang City. A study on kindergarten teachers in Kupang City is the starting point for the researcher's goal, which is to ascertain how work motivation and transformational leadership affect teacher performance using work experience as an intervening variable.

## 2. METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with multiple regression models and path analysis. The research sample was obtained using the Krejcie table with an error rate of 5% of the total population of 381 teachers, so the research sample was 190 kindergarten teachers in Kupang City using a random sampling technique (Sugiyono, 2011). Researchers distributed instruments to respondents before conducting trials with validity and reliability tests. This study used a closed questionnaire consisting of 14 questions for work motivation variables, nine questions about principal transformational leadership, 12 about teacher performance, and 12 about work experience. The total number of questions in the instrument was 47 items. This study uses multiple linear regression models and path analysis, where there are several prerequisite tests, including the normality test, significance test, linearity test, multicollinearity test, and heteroscedasticity test. Multiple linear regression models determine the contribution of X1 and X2 to the dependent variable (Y). Furthermore, hypothesis testing will be carried out using the t-test and F-test to determine the effect between variables both partially and simultaneously. Data analysis in this study was carried out with the help of SPSS version 25 and the Sobel Test.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Prerequisite Test Analysis

#### *Validity test*

The validity test was carried out by comparing the calculated r value with the r table value. The basis for decision-making in validity testing is the Sig value. < 0.05, then the item is declared valid, and vice versa if the Sig value is. > 0.05, then the item is declared invalid. The questionnaires that have been distributed are then processed using SPSS to obtain the significance value as presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Significance Value

Variable	Item	r value	r table	Evidence
Work Motivation	X1.1	0,737	0,396	Valid
	X1.2	0,449	0,396	Valid
	X1.3	0,651	0,396	Valid
	X1.4	0,478	0,396	Valid

Variable	Item	r value	r table	Evidence
Transformational Leadership	X1.5	0,701	0,396	Valid
	X1.6	0,455	0,396	Valid
	X1.7	0,473	0,396	Valid
	X1.8	0,481	0,396	Valid
	X1.9	0,422	0,396	Valid
	X1.10	0,651	0,396	Valid
	X1.11	0,428	0,396	Valid
	X1.12	0,798	0,396	Valid
	X1.13	0,794	0,396	Valid
	X1.14	0,607	0,396	Valid
	X2.1	0,559	0,396	Valid
	X2.2	0,808	0,396	Valid
	X2.3	0,850	0,396	Valid
	X2.4	0,873	0,396	Valid
Work Experience	X2.5	0,775	0,396	Valid
	X2.6	0,842	0,396	Valid
	X2.7	0,755	0,396	Valid
	X2.8	0,803	0,396	Valid
	X2.9	0,784	0,396	Valid
	Z1.1	0, 631	0,396	Valid
	Z1.2	0,710	0,396	Valid
	Z1.3	0,629	0,396	Valid
	Z1.4	0,633	0,396	Valid
	Z1.5	0,659	0,396	Valid
	Z1.6	0,628	0,396	Valid
	Z1.7	0,547	0,396	Valid
Teacher Performance	Z1.8	0,612	0,396	Valid
	Z1.9	0,534	0,396	Valid
	Z1.10	0,801	0,396	Valid
	Z1.11	0,824	0,396	Valid
	Z1.12	0,744	0,396	Valid
	Y1.1	0, 436	0,396	Valid
	Y1.2	0,630	0,396	Valid
	Y1.3	0,812	0,396	Valid
	Y1.4	0,788	0,396	Valid
	Y1.5	0,818	0,396	Valid

Variable	Item	r value	r table	Evidence
	Y1.6	0,675	0,396	Valid
	Y1.7	0,457	0,396	Valid
	Y1.8	0,811	0,396	Valid
	Y1.9	0,782	0,396	Valid
	Y1.10	0,738	0,396	Valid
	Y1.11	0,584	0,396	Valid

### Reliability Test

The reliability test shows the consistency and stability of measuring instruments in research. Sugiyono (2011) states that data is generally considered reliable if the Cronbach Alpha value exceeds 0.70.

**Table 2.** Reliability Test Results

No.	Variable	Cronbach Alpha's	Criteria
1	Work Motivation	0,826	Reliable
2	Transformational Leadership	0,903	Reliable
3	Work Experience	0,874	Reliable
4	Teacher Performance	0,887	Reliable

### Normality Test

Based on these results, it is found that the normality test results obtained a significance value of 0.200 and exceeded 0.05 at the 5% level, which means that the data distribution of all variables is normal. Therefore, this study's normality assumption is met to continue the test.

**Table 3.** Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

One-Sampel Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		190
Normal Parameterrs <sup>a,b</sup>	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	2.38524057
Most Extreme	Absolute	.050
Differences	Positive	.050
	Negative	-.047
Test Statistic		.065
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 <sup>c,d</sup>

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

### Linearity Test

The linearity test is used to determine whether there is a linear relationship between the research variables. From the output, it can be seen that the significance value in the linearity of work motivation,

transformational leadership, and work experience on teacher performance is less than 0.05, so it can be concluded that between work motivation variables, transformational leadership, and work experience there is a linear influence. The linearity test results are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Linearity Test

No.	Variable	Sig.
1	Work Motivation	0,000
2	Transformational Leadership	0,000
3	Work Experience	0,000

### **Multicollinearity Test**

A multicollinearity test in a model is conducted to test whether the regression model found a correlation between independent variables. Based on Table 5, it can be seen that the VIF value of the work motivation variable, transformational leadership, and work experience VIF value of this variable is far below 10, so it can be concluded that the regression model is free from multicollinearity cases. The results of the multicollinearity test can be seen in Table 5.

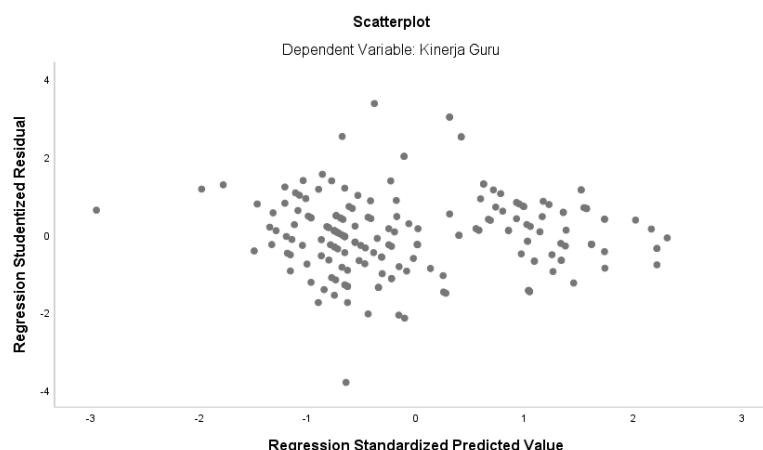
**Table 5.** Multicollinearity Test

		Coefficients				Collinearity Statistics		
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
		B	Std. Error	Beta				
1	(Constant)	-4.100	2.476		-1.656	.099		
	Work Motivation (X1)	.355	.048	.387	7.394	.000	.576	1.735
	Transformational Leadership (X2)	.199	.062	.185	3.191	.002	.469	2.133
	Work Experience (Z)	.450	.070	.389	6.401	.000	.428	2.339

a. Dependent Variable: Teacher Performance (Y)

### **Heteroscedasticity**

The results of the heteroscedasticity test of research data using SPSS version 25 can be seen in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Heteroscedasticity Test Chart

Based on the output above, the studentized residual regression diagram shows that the points spread randomly and are spread both above and below the Y-axis number, thus indicating no heteroscedasticity in the regression model.

### Autocorrelation Test

The results of testing autocorrelation using the DW test as shown in Table 6. Table 6 shows the Durbin Watson (DW) value of 1.848. This value lies between -2 to 2, so it can be concluded that there is no case of autocorrelation in this regression. Based on the results of testing the regression model above, it can be concluded that the resulting model has met the classical assumption requirements.

**Table 6.** Autocorrelation Test Results

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.841 <sup>a</sup>	.707	.702	2.42238	1.848

a. Predictors: (Constant), Work Experience, Work Motivation, Transformational Leadership

b. Dependent Variable: Teacher Performance

### Hypothesis

#### Structure Model Path Coefficient 1

**Table 7.** Structure Model Path Coefficient 1

Coefficients					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	-2.263	3.029		.456
	Work Motivation	.439	.050	.487	.000
	Transformational Leadership	.271	.069	.193	.000
	Work Experience	.209	.038	.293	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Teacher Performance

The significance value of the path coefficient of work motivation on teacher performance ( $P_{x1} = 0.487$ ) is 0.000. Because  $SIG(P_{x1y}) = 0.000 < 0.05$ , it can be concluded that there is a direct effect of work motivation and teacher performance. The significance of the transformational leadership path coefficient on teacher performance ( $P_{x2} = 0.193$ ) is 0.000. Because  $SIG(P_{x2y}) = 0.000 < 0.05$ , it can be concluded that there is a direct effect of transformational leadership and teacher performance. The significance value of the path coefficient of work experience on teacher performance ( $P_{zy} = 0.293$ ) is 0.000. Because  $SIG(P_{zy}) = 0.000 < 0.05$ , it can be concluded that there is a direct effect of work experience and teacher performance.

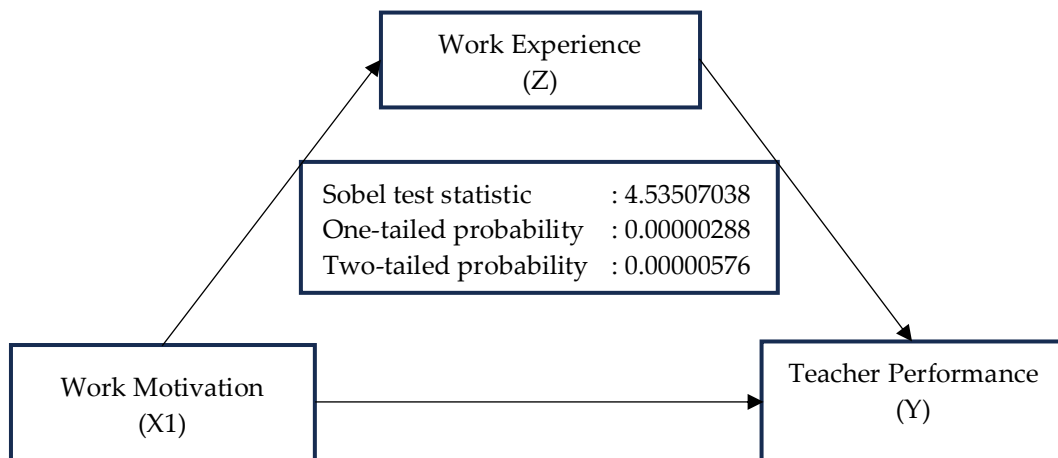
**Path Coefficient of Structure Model 2****Table 8.** Path Coefficient of Structure Model 2

Coefficients					
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t Sig.
1	(Constant)	47.565	4.670		10.186 .000
	Work Motivation	.670	.083	.530	8.033 .000
	Transformational Leadership	.430	.130	.218	3.310 .001

a. Dependent Variable: Work Experience

Table 8 shows that the significance value of the path coefficient of work motivation on work experience ( $P_{x1z} = 0.530$ ) is 0.000. Because  $SIG (P_{x1z}) = 0.000 < 0.05$ , it is concluded that there is a direct effect of work motivation on work experience.

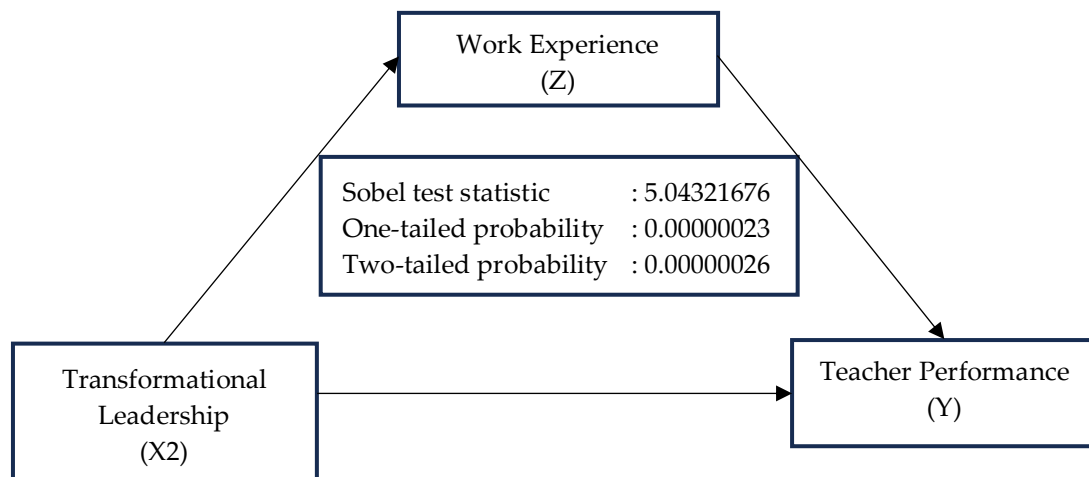
The significance value of the transformational leadership path coefficient on work experience ( $P_{x2z} = 0.218$ ) is 0.000. Because  $SIG (P_{x2z}) = 0.000 < 0.05$ , it can be concluded that transformational leadership directly affects work experience.

**Path test X1-Z-Y****Figure 2.** Sobel test results of work motivation on teacher performance through work experience

Based on these results, the effect of work motivation on teacher performance through the work experience of kindergarten teachers in Kupang City shows that the acquisition of the Sobel test statistic value of 4.53507038  $> 1.65$  with a two-tailed probability p-value of 0.00000576  $< 0.5$ . It can be concluded that the work experience variable can mediate the work motivation variable on teacher performance.



### Path test X2-Z-Y



**Figure 3.** Sobel Test results leadership on teacher performance through work experience

Figure 3. The results of the Sobel test of the effect of transformational leadership on teacher performance through the work experience of kindergarten teachers in Kupang City show that work experience is significantly able to act as an intervening variable (mediator). This can be seen from the acquisition of the Sobel test statistic value of  $5.04321676 > 1.65$  with a two-tailed probability p-value of  $0.00000046 < 0.5$ , meaning that the work experience variable can mediate the effect of transformational leadership variables on teacher performance.

The results showed that 1) Work motivation (X1) has a significant direct effect on teacher performance (Y) with a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . While the correlation coefficient of work motivation (X1) on teacher performance is 0.487, 2) Transformational leadership (X2) has a significant direct effect on teacher performance (Y) with a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . While the correlation coefficient of work motivation (X1) on teacher performance is 0.193, 3) There is a significant direct effect of work motivation (X1) on work experience (Z) with a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . While the correlation coefficient of work motivation (X1) on work experience (Z) is 0.293, 4) There is a significant direct effect of work motivation (X1) on work experience (Z) with a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . While the correlation coefficient of work motivation (X1) on work experience (Z) is 0.530, 5) There is a significant direct effect of transformational leadership (X2) on work experience (Z) with a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . At the same time, the correlation coefficient of transformational leadership (X2) on work experience (Z) is 0.218.

The results of this study, (Imran et al., 2021) Explain that teacher performance is a real behavior teachers display as work performance based on standards determined or set by their role at school. To achieve more optimal teacher performance in educational institutions, it is necessary to empower and develop teacher professionals who need to be carried out continuously, (Hamsal , Nurman, 2023). According to Pratiwi et al. (2021), work motivation is an important factor in improving teacher performance because it is the main driver for a teacher in carrying out his duties and responsibilities following applicable regulations.

Motivational factors are formed from an employee's attitude in dealing with work situations. Work motivation arises because it is learned through experience, interaction with others, or social interaction. A teacher with high work motivation will tend to feel comfortable and enthusiastic about doing his job (Wijayanto et al., 2021).

The principal is an internal part of education and has an impact on improving teacher performance, so the principal's responsibility is to organize learning activities, manage schools, provide training for education personnel, and use and maintain every available facility, both facilities and infrastructure

(Maknun et al., 2023).

The results of this study also follow the opinion (Arifin & Jannah, 2023) One of the efforts to improve teacher performance is implementing a transformational leadership style. Principals who adopt transformational leadership will have a strong and clear vision of the direction the school wants to achieve, pay attention to the needs, desires, and personal development of staff, and inspire others through positive behavior and communication (Efendi et al., 2023). The results of (Windasari et al., 2022) A transformational leadership style is needed to encourage the creation of small-scale and bottom-up innovation to realize sustainable change in school institutions or organizations.

The results of this study also follow the opinion (Arifin & Jannah, 2023) that one of the efforts to improve teacher performance is to implement a transformational leadership style. Principals who adopt transformational leadership will have a strong and clear vision of the school's direction, pay attention to staff needs, desires, and personal development, and inspire others through positive behavior and communication (Efendi et al., 2023). The results of (Windasari et al., 2022) research stated that a transformational leadership style is needed to encourage the creation of small-scale and bottom-up innovation to realize sustainable change in school institutions or organizations.

An educator's work experience will impact his performance in teaching and learning activities. The better the professional experience (Nabila et al., 2022), the better the teacher's performance. Sedarmayanti argues that with work experience, a person can increase self-understanding and control over his ability to work, and this can be seen from the level of competence and skills possessed (Fazira, 2023).

Research shows that a teacher's tenure or work period and the type of work done during a certain period form the basis of a person's experience (Fareed et al., 2023). Adequate work experience will support the quality of teachers in carrying out their duties, which directly impacts the quality of education in an educational institution. This is in line with the results of research conducted by (Salim & Aseptia, 2019). Increasing work experience toward a more positive direction will affect achieving an organization's goals.

The results of this study are also in line with the opinion of (Rifqi & Meliantari, 2023) Increasing teacher work motivation will tend to be followed by a desire to develop themselves and realize all their abilities and competencies to achieve maximum achievement. Low motivation to self-develop can inhibit increasing experience, even though work experience can positively influence teacher performance (Yulis, 2022).

The results of this study are in line with (Varelasawi et al., 2023) This states that transformational leadership is needed to develop schools where leaders can create innovative learning environments, motivate teachers to achieve maximum potential, and improve teacher professionals who will impact teachers' experience. To improve work experience, efforts are needed to create leadership that motivates, supports, and creates a vision of change by the principal as a leader so that teacher professional development can be carried out continuously to improve teacher experience or skills (Nasution, 2016) .

The study's results (Aulia et al., 2021) State that work motivation affects teacher performance through work experience. Work experience has an impact on improving teacher performance in carrying out the tasks assigned to him, improving teacher teaching skills continuously (Nabila et al., 2022). Along with that, (Ode et al., 2023) State that longer work or teaching experience does lead to an increase in the capacity of educators. Work experience is measured by the length of work, the level of knowledge and teaching skills, and mastery of the field of education that the teacher has well mastered.

The results of this study are in line with the research of (Aditya et al., 2021) That suggests that work experience shapes a personality, which makes a person wiser in thinking and acting. The higher the work experience, the better the performance because when employees get pressure from the leadership,

they can use their experience to overcome their problems. State that an employee's work experience will hone the ability to conduct examinations and expand the employee's knowledge in his field, improving the quality of his performance (Chang & Sung, 2024). So when the employee faces a task with a high level of complexity but is supported by high work experience, the child produces better performance quality. The results obtained from the research have to be supported by sufficient data. The research results and the discovery must be the answers, or the research hypothesis stated previously in the introduction.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The results of this study have a positive influence on teacher performance, simultaneously through independent variables, namely work motivation variables and transformational leadership variables, and work experience variables (mediating variables) of kindergarten teachers in Kupang City. It is expected that teachers maintain good work motivation and enthusiasm at work. Teachers are also likely to be active in teacher professional development so that they can support work experience, which has a direct impact on improving teacher performance. Principals are expected to make changes or improvements in increasing teacher work motivation by applying a good transformational leadership style, where the principal always involves teachers in all decision-making and policies together through cooperation and discussion and increases professional development efforts for teachers so that they can support improved teacher performance. In this study, the researcher realizes that there are still many shortcomings and weaknesses in the implementation of research in the field due to the researcher's limited time, cost, and energy. Researchers hope this research can be a reference for principals, teachers, and future researchers who will discuss similar topics and add other variables not examined in this study.

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